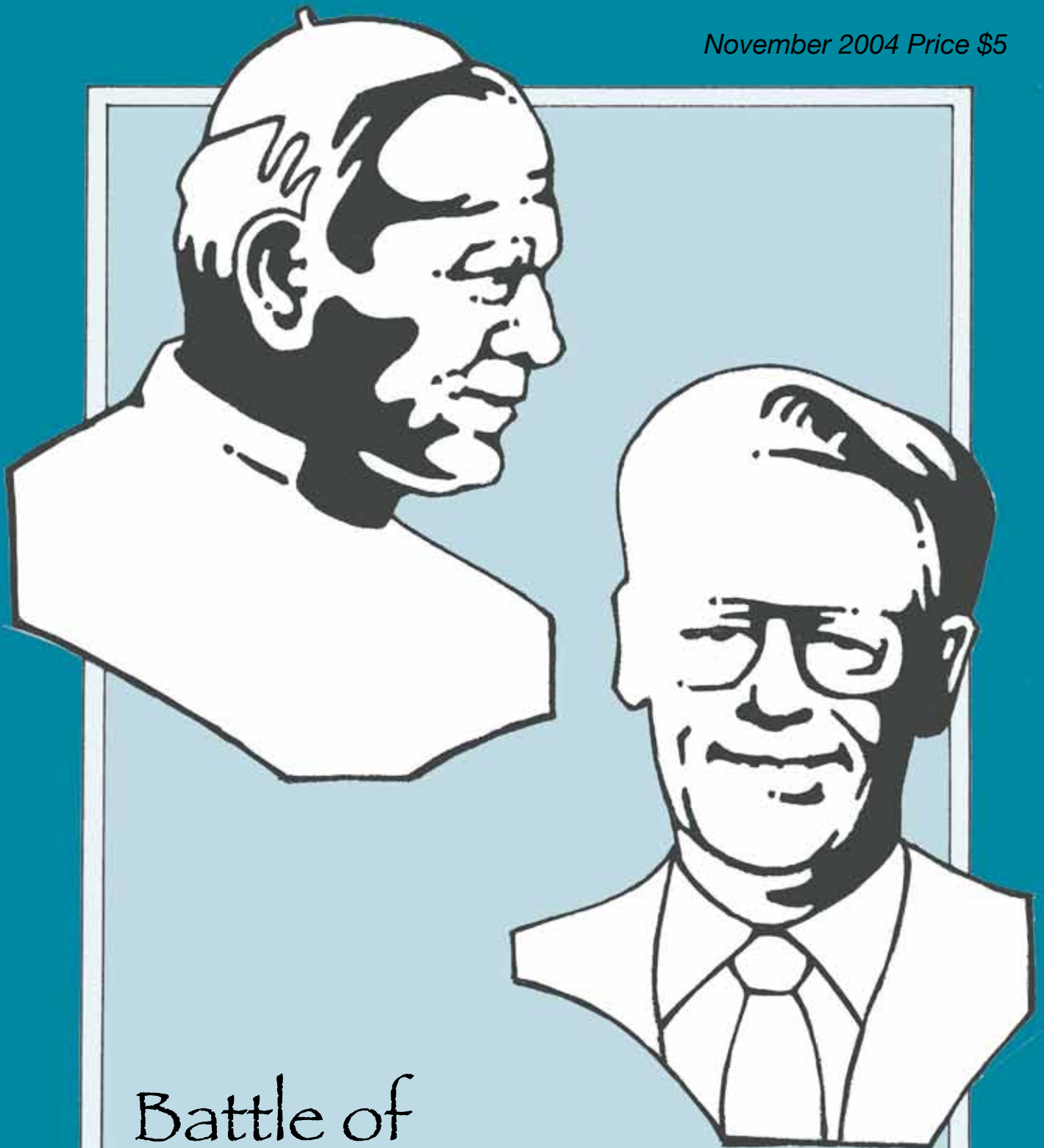


# Tui Motu

InterIslands

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Battle of  
the Titans





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*Battle of the Titans* is a somewhat melodramatic title: one at which Hans Küng would instantly demur. It is chosen to set in contrast two differing world-views of Roman Catholicism. Do we see the Catholic Church as a basically *inward-looking* institution? Do we see it still as the 'tempest-toss'd church' of the traditional hymn?

Or do we instead see it in terms of the prophetic model proposed by Jesuit theologian Avery Dulles after Vatican II? Dulles would see the church's function as the bringing about of the kingdom which Jesus proclaimed. In such a model the primary emphasis must be to *look outwards*: to seek dialogue with the world as it is, to search for common ground and co-operation with non-Catholic Christians, to listen, and constantly to monitor the pulse of new world movements, ever striving to build a more just, peaceful and God-fearing world. In a word – to be *ecumenical*.

There can be no doubt where Küng stands in this dichotomy. As a young theological 'expert' at the Second Vatican Council, he strove to promote the newly emerging ecumenical movement within Catholicism. A critical moment occurred during the preparation of the two Declarations – *on the Jews* and *on Religious Freedom*. On 6 October 1964 Küng discovered that Pope Paul VI had yielded to political pressure from outside and from the Roman Curia to take both Declarations out of the hands of the Council and give them instead to a special commission. Küng saw this move as the kiss of death.

He took the risk of deliberately violating 'Council secrecy' and leaking the news to the Press. At the same time he persuaded Cardinal Josef Frings of

## Battle of

Cologne and eight fellow cardinals to draft a letter of protest to the Pope. The Pope was prevailed upon to think again, and so these two Declarations took their place among the Council Decrees.

Later Pope Paul tried to woo him to work in Rome, but Küng realised that simply to become an apologist for the Vatican would muzzle his freedom as a theologian. Instead he returned to his position as Professor of Dogmatic Theology in Tübingen. According to Karl-Joseph Kuschel, Küng's successor in the chair of Ecumenical Theology, his self-appointed task was "to dismantle the bastions of Roman traditionalism in order to free Catholic theology for true catholicity". He was to become the Catholic champion of ecumenism.

After John Paul II became pope, Küng in 1980 was stripped of his Professorship, and his licence to teach as a Catholic theologian was withdrawn. The University reacted at once by making him Professor of Ecumenical Theology, where he remained up to his official retirement in 1996. His thinking has proceeded towards an ever-expanding ecumenism, culminating in the book *Global Responsibility* (1991) and the founding, in 1996, of the *Global Ethic Foundation*, whose aims and purpose are delineated on pages 10-11.

Why has the Pope been so hostile to Küng's thinking? After all, John Paul himself has written inspiringly on the prospect and hopes for church reunion in his 1995 Encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* ("That They be One"). Moreover, the Pope has been a prime mover in many recent peace



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*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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## the Titans

initiatives. A clue may be found in the writings of the late Vaticanologist Peter Hebblethwaite. John Paul's dream appears to be to restore 'Christendom', a Europe of nations bound together as of old by a common Christian faith – under himself.

John Paul is a Pole. His character was honed in the fight to maintain the integrity of Catholicism – and a very traditional Catholicism at that – during the decades of Communist domination. When he was elected in 1978 he seriously considered taking the name Stanislaus, after the Polish martyr-bishop, put to death by King Boleslaw in 1079. Like Thomas à Becket, Stanislaus was slain in his own church in Cracow. As a young actor, John Paul had taken the part of the killer king, playing him as broken and penitent. In the ideal Christendom the king/emperor will always submit to the spiritual power of the Church.

These events all happened a long time ago – both in history and in the life of the aged Pope. Hans Küng has continued to serve both humanity and the Christian church by his lecturing and writing. Last month he celebrated 50 years as a priest. Surely the time is ripe for John Paul to look more towards reconciliation than to the perpetuation of old feuds. What a fine gesture it would be if he were to restore Hans Küng to his rightful place as a Catholic theologian!

Karl-Josef Kuschel has launched a public appeal for this to happen, requesting the local bishop "to initiate proceedings for the revision of measures taken against Hans Küng by his predecessor in December 1979 under strong pressure from Rome. Such a measure would not only undo a historical injustice, but also give a sign of consistent renewal of the church in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council..." Pope John Paul should listen to this appeal, do the generous thing and act on it forthwith.

M.H.



### Your subscription

During last month, our database carrying all information about subscriptions, picked up a gremlin. An exorcist was called in – and all was put right.

However, we suggest you check the label on your envelope.

Above your name to the right is the date (month) when your sub is due for renewal, as recorded in our database. If you think this date is incorrect, please contact our office.

The number above left on your label is your unique subscriber number. If you quote it, there is less danger of your sub. being confused with anyone else's.

### More good news!

Dear reader(s)

We know you're going to be busy in December. That's why we are giving you a month's notice of *Tui Motu*'s most ambitious promotion initiative to date. It is my pleasure to tell you that you are part of it! At least, you are invited to be an essential link in the promotion chain. *Tell me more*, did I hear you say?

This coming December an additional 2000 copies of *Tui Motu* will be printed and your envelope will contain an extra copy. Can you please begin now to identify the fortunate neighbour/friend/relative who will receive it with your personal recommendation?

"Well," you might be thinking, "what a time to drop this on me". You have my sympathy, but what an opportunity it presents to help celebrate Christmas! Giving is such a Christmas thing to do. The issue will be all about Christmas too, including a Christmas cover which hopefully will be the equal of any card you could might send.

We are confident that your approach will be well received because compliments about *Tui Motu* from

readers we meet or who write in, are abidingly positive and appreciative. By extending our readership you will be making the good news available to more potential readers. You will also be helping secure the magazine's future.

Part of the frustration of *Tui Motu*'s success is that it is not attracting a wider readership. Think about someone for whom TM would be a good companion. We need you to ensure that they get a chance to take a good look at a good issue – and ideally to become a regular reader.

Can you do it for *Tui Motu*? 1. Identify the fortunate person. 2. Send them or hand on the extra Christmas issue when you get it: you can re-use the envelope. 3. Follow up to see how they enjoyed it. 4. Point out the page that provides subscription options and the Freepost address. Total cost to you – a little trouble and one postage stamp.

We are approaching you with some confidence, because experience has taught us that the best promoters of *Tui Motu* are its readers.

With best wishes for you and yours,

Tom Cloher

## 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 altering meaning.

Response articles (up to a page) are also welcome, but need to be by negotiation

### Liturgy of welcome

"Any comments, Catholic readers?" asks Tom Cloher about Catholic priests transferring to a new parish... Yes, indeed. I have on my desk a copy of the *Liturgy of Installation and Welcome* put together by the liturgy team at St Francis Xavier, Whangarei, when I was welcomed on 5th February 1997 as their new parish priest.

Symbols of ministry were presented by representatives of groups in the parish: the Scriptures in Maori and in English; oil for use in the sacraments; a basket – a sign from the parish of their willingness to share their goods for the care of souls; a stole, a sign of leadership and a call to be a leader in sacrament and prayer; a candle as a sign of the light of the faith I was charged to help keep alive in my own heart and in the theirs; a book of prayers, reminding me of my primary task in the parish to pray daily for those in my care.

The most moving formal moment for me was when the people were asked if they would "pray for their new Parish Priest, help him in his ministry, and welcome him to the parish". The response was heartfelt and strong: "We will".

They did that night – and they did for the following seven years. The ceremony was unforgettable as it was held in the local Anglican Church in the presence of their co-pastors. We were sharing church buildings at the time. I wonder how many new Catholic priests have been installed in their new appointment in an Anglican parish church?

Mike Wooller SM, Auckland

### Missing Sunday Mass (Oct 04)

A priest in Ireland was tired of listening to the same old excuses from people who did not attend church, so he wrote the following item:

#### *Ten reasons why I never wash*

- (a) I was made to wash as a child.
- (b) People who wash are hypocrites. They say they are cleaner than other people.
- (c) There are many different soaps, so I could never decide which one was right.

## letters



- (d) I used to wash, but it became boring, so I stopped.
- (e) I still wash on special occasions like Christmas and Easter.
- (f) None of my friends wash.
- (g) I'm still young. When I'm older and a bit dirtier I might start washing.
- (h) I really don't have time.
- (i) The bathroom is never warm enough.

Margaret Hurley, New Plymouth

### Homosexuality revisited – again

Peg Cummins' letter (October issue) fails to distinguish between physiological orientation, which is morally neutral, and gay sexual activity, which does have moral connotations because the persons concerned have a choice in the matter. The Catholic Church is simply pointing out that extramarital sex (of which gay sex is one version) is immoral.

Catholics who err in a serious way in sexual matters know that that they cannot approach the sacraments until they have put a stop to it and have been reconciled. Homosexual people and heterosexual people are not treated any differently.

If a person chooses not to marry or is unable to find a partner who will marry them, this does not give them exemption from the law of God. The same applies to homosexual Christians for whom also life can be extremely painful.

Peg wants the Catholic Church to examine this question and come up with a solution, but the Church, while having the greatest compassion, will never give its blessing to extramarital sex.

P.Cronin, Nelson

*Christian tradition has consistently condemned sexual promiscuity and infidelity. Regarding homosexuality, the most honest thing to say is there is a massive rethink happening. Premature judgments would seem ill-advised.* (ed.)

McIndoe ad



## Vatican hijacked by GE lobby

Peter Murnane O.P.

On September 24 a conference was held at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. It was convened by the US Ambassador to the Vatican with help from the *Pontifical Academy of Sciences*. Its pretentious title was *Feeding a Hungry World: the moral imperative of biotechnology*.

Even before the conference began, objections were raised by experts in biotechnology, Catholic environmental groups and bishops' conferences. The Australian Columbans expressed "major concerns" about the scandal that the US Embassy was using the *Pontifical Academy of Sciences* to endorse genetically engineered (GE) foods for profit, in a spectacular public relations coup by the GE corporate lobby.

Columbans work among the poor in many cultures. They pointed out that most cultures abhor the prospect of manipulating life-forms or subsequently patenting them. This Conference's agenda was failing to address the real moral question of biotechnology's impact on the whole web of life.

It was also throwing aside the *Precautionary Principle*, important in medicine and health, which warns that it is not sensible to take risks until we have adequate knowledge of their effects on people. For GE involves huge risks. Scientists do not know the long-term consequences of 'engineering' the intricate DNA at the heart of living cells, nor of swapping genetic material between unrelated species.

Perhaps the Columbans' strongest objection was that the conference title spoke of "feeding a hungry world" with GE food, but ignored the real roots of hunger and famine – social inequalities that can be remedied. Malnutrition will be not cured by selling super-seeds to the poor: are corporations likely to give them away? It will be cured by land reform and by helping small farmers find cheap credit.

Brother David Andrews, director of *The National Catholic Rural Life Conference* <[www.ncrlc.com](http://www.ncrlc.com)>, pointed out the sad irony that the *Pontifical Academy of Sciences* was abandoning its original purpose – research and dialogue – for unsophisticated advocacy. He showed that the Conference ignored Catholic teaching, which has already analysed causes and possible solutions of world hunger, disregarding the US Catholic Bishops' Conference document *For I was hungry and you gave me food* (2003) and clear statements on biotechnology's moral perspectives from Bishops' Conferences in South Africa, Philippines, Brazil and other places.

Pope John Paul II over the years has been cautious about the alleged benefits of biotechnology, warning that it "cannot be evaluated solely on the basis of immediate economic interests". It "must be submitted beforehand to rigorous scientific and ethical examination", lest it become "disastrous

for human health and the future of the earth." This is far from calling biotechnology a "moral imperative."

Andrews showed that the Conference ignored Catholic rural movements representing millions of farmers in dozens of countries, and Pontifical Councils like *Cor Unum*, which already work for hungry populations. Its attitude tramples the principle of Collegiality which the Second Vatican Council strongly encouraged in the world-wide church.

The Philippines Bishops' *Commission on Social Action* challenged the Conference to take seriously the ethical study of food by promoting Sustainable Agriculture; ensuring that biotechnology's benefits reach the poor; and promoting integral, holistic development as Pope Paul VI taught in the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*.

The conference was not listening. It scorned all these requests based on genuine moral imperatives. Its biased list of speakers presumed a moral imperative for using GE foods as the only way to solve hunger. Using the language of politics and advertising, they accused opponents of GE of propagating "myths". Renowned environmentalist, Columban Fr Sean McDonagh, called the conference "a disgrace; a sustained exercise in propaganda for GE seeds", since no voice was heard from the development community and there was none of the dialogue so essential in science.

One of its speakers was Dr C.S. Prakash, a lobbyist for international GE corporations, who travels the world using dubious claims to promote their technology. In Tanzania he claimed that GE crops "double production"; in the Philippines, that they reduce farmers' losses because they have longer shelf life. He cited Kenyan GE sweet potatoes as a shining example of how GE can help Africans. In fact, trials now show that these failed miserably.

Recently Prakash told poor farmers in Vietnam that adopting GE crops will create jobs for 60 percent of the labour force. But the herbicide-resistant GE crops he promotes seriously damage the environment, actually reduce the need for labour and so worsen rural unemployment and increase poverty! Another conference speaker, Peter Raven, although a member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences has been described as "a paid travelling salesman for Monsanto."

It is now well recognised that GE corporations, by funding research scientists, universities and even food-testing organisations, are corrupting their research and forcing them to endorse the agenda of their corporate backers. Sadly, it now seems that this infection is spreading even to the heart of the Catholic Church.

(Fr Peter Murnane is a member of the Dominican mission team)



## *Encounters with Hans Küng*

*Frank Hoffmann (pictured left), of Drury, South Auckland, has called twice on the famous Swiss theologian, Hans Küng, – in 1975 and this year. He reports on Küng's struggles with Rome and his wonderful ecumenical endeavours*

Hans Küng has lived and worked for many years in Tübingen, near the Black Forest, in Germany. I have been there twice and visited Küng each time. Tübingen has a refreshing environment: it's a place dominated by the young, away from the rat race atmosphere of many German cities. It is a major University town, a little like Dunedin. In the market place you see the young people miming and playing music, while displaying a healthy disrespect for authority!

The resident population is barely 20,000, but it doubles when the students are in residence. The University is spread throughout the city, and the university life permeates the old buildings. Like that other famous university city, Heidelberg, it lies on the River Neckar. The University of Tübingen celebrated its 500th birthday a few years ago. The reason for my visit in 1975 was to see my brother, who was the Professor of German literature there.

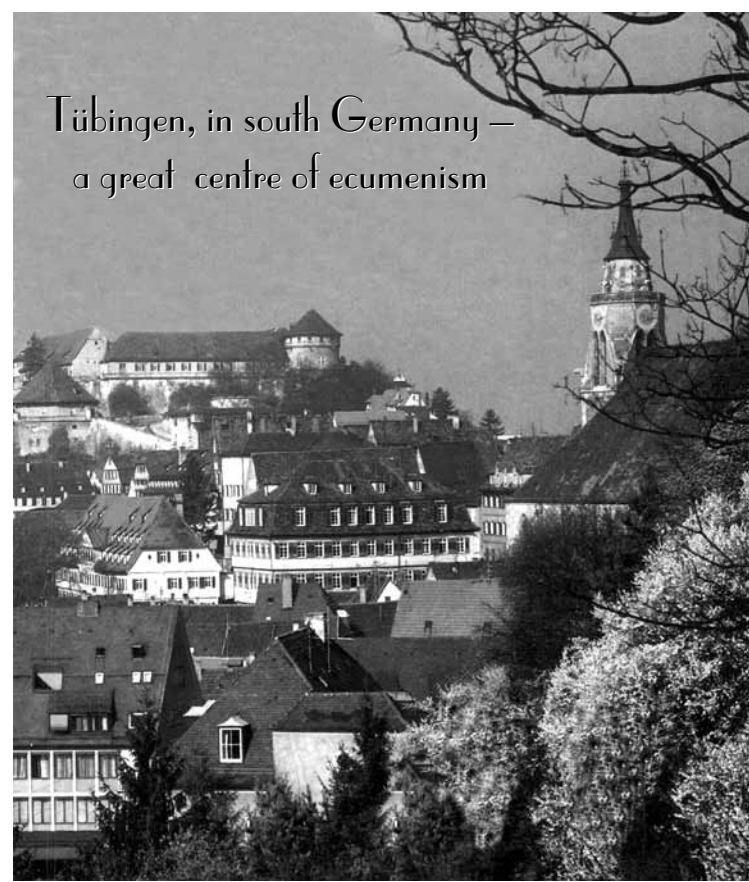
Tübingen has one of the principal Theology Faculties in Germany. The town lies between Catholic and Lutheran areas of Germany. Most of the theological 'chairs' are endowed by the churches, but the churches work together. The chair of Fundamental Theology, which Küng had held at Tübingen, is endowed by the Catholic Church with an absolute right to appoint the Professor as well as to sack him. When in the early '60s he had been offered this position, probably the youngest theologian ever to be selected for this task at a university which prides itself on its diverse theological facilities, it was principally because he was so highly thought of by his peers.

Shortly after Küng's move to Tübingen, Cardinal Leibrecht wanted to 'borrow' him as his advisor at the Vatican Council. The authorities saw this as a tribute to the University and agreed to let him go. But after the

Council, Küng decided to say publicly what he needed to say, even if it cost him this job he loved.

At the time of my first visit in 1975, Küng's position as Professor of Dogmatic Theology was 'under threat' from the Vatican, among other things because of the critical views he had expressed in his book *Infallibility, an Inquiry*. Küng had been to New Zealand in 1973. He had just written his book, *The Council and Reunion*. Since we had heard him in Auckland, my wife and I determined to go and visit him again in Tübingen.

I recall that we discussed with him the threat he was under of losing his Professorship. He said that what he would miss most would not be the loss of his job and salary but



Tübingen, in south Germany –  
a great centre of ecumenism

the loss of what he loved most – training young, gifted students who were preparing for the priesthood.

I asked him if he would remain in the priesthood, if the church moved against him. He said that he must stay, because if he was to work for change in the church it could only come from within. He was loyal to his vocation. Since that time I myself have sometimes felt like leaving the church in despair, but the example of Hans Küng has helped sustain me as a Catholic.

Küng was eventually sacked by the church from being Professor of Dogmatic Theology in 1980, and lost his licence to teach. But at once the University made him head of the Ecumenical Faculty, where he remained until his retirement in 1996. In that post he was simply carrying on the ecumenical work that he had been doing during his years of teaching dogmatic theology.

Four months ago I went back to Europe and visited my brother's widow in Tübingen. I wanted to see Hans Küng again, but I was told it might be difficult. Just before my arrival, Küng and Cardinal Lehmann had been received with acclaim by the many thousands who had attended a Catholic Congress in Ulm.

An open discussion with Küng under the heading 'Dialogue at the Sickbed' had been arranged at the invitation of the Cardinal, who obviously shares Küng's concern over the crisis the church needs to address. Cardinal Lehmann is President of the German Catholic Bishops' Conference and is highly respected in Germany. The German press has treated Küng's meeting with Lehmann at Ulm as a great step forward. Catholics and Protestants rejoiced at this initiative.

All the ground floor of the building where Küng now lives is taken up by the headquarters of the *Global Ethic Foundation*, which he founded. The students thought that I would have difficulty getting past Küng's secretaries. But when I phoned it was Küng who answered, and when I said I had come from New Zealand, he said at once he would see me. When I arrived at the house, he welcomed me and put me at ease by inviting me to sit out on the balcony looking over his beautiful garden.

Sitting opposite this man on his balcony, I felt here is a person motivated by an earnest desire to help bring an ailing church back to health. I reminded him of my visit in 1975, when he already lived in the shadow of dismissal from his chair of doctrinal theology.

So how had he felt, I asked, when this dismissal actually happened a full four years later? "I have shown in the last 25 years that one can get on well in the world without a Roman driver's licence when one has earned an international one instead. I have fought for and won a freedom which has enhanced my credibility within my church and outside it."

I noted he had been encouraged by Cardinal Lehmann, in Ulm, to speak openly of his vision for the future of our church. So how had he responded to that?

"For the church in the 21st century it seems to be the most important task to strip off the eggshells of the 11th century (the celibacy rule, clerical tutelage, papal centralism and absolutism), and to replace those mediaeval church practices by reflecting instead on the constantly relevant Gospels.

"Instead of the personality cult of a 'façade' church, I would like to see more effective help for the many parishes in Germany who have no priests. Instead of closing doors we should be opening windows, as John XXIII did. We need a pope who is Gospel orientated. My hope is the next pope will be more of a John XXIV than a John Paul III.

"Our present pope, on his travels, advocates justice, peace and dialogue. Hopefully the next pope will realise these in the church itself. Contrary to the intentions of Vatican II, the Catholic church, under John Paul II, has returned to an authoritarian system with totalitarian traits.



Hans Küng today

"Critical theologians have been muzzled, there is discrimination against women, discussion of key topics is prohibited, mutual participation in the Eucharistic meal with other Christians is prohibited, the desires of the people are ignored, and denunciations are encouraged. The bishops should regain their voice so that they will be known as leaders of their dioceses recognised by the people of God, rather than 'sacristans of the Vatican'."

Küng had been summoned to Rome after the Council and offered advancement. He declined because he would not "sell his soul for the sake of power in the church". Otherwise he might today have been Cardinal Hans Küng! "I could not have taken a different road," he said, "It was not just for the sake of freedom – which I value – but for the sake of truth. Cardinal Ratzinger took the other road. I hope he is now as happy and contented as I am".

He told me about his travels in his new work for establishing a *Global Ethic*, and how he had gone beyond Christian ecumenism and had visited the East to make contact with the other great world faiths. Küng maintains that without peace between the religions of the world there can be no peace between peoples. He felt his vocation was to work for this peace. I think that Küng, being a person of great faith, used his dismissal as an opportunity for a new vocation. It was his moment of *kairos*, of new beginning.



# The theology of Hans Küng

*More than any other Catholic theologian  
Küng reached out towards those outside the church.  
His ecumenical theology caused him to lose his  
license to teach as a Catholic theologian*

Küng's theology is centred on his spirituality. Fundamentally, this consists in a profound belief and radical trust in God who is always greater, more mysterious and more gracious than one could ever imagine. In intellectual terms theologians use the term *justification* – a process first described by St Paul and articulated in our own age by the great Protestant theologian Karl Barth.

Simply, this can be expressed as follows: God who freely chose Israel (not because the people deserved it), also justifies the godless in Jesus Christ – again, not because they deserve it, asking no more from human beings than unconditional trust in the divine goodness.

If you believe that God wants you, loves you and forgives you, then this is enormously freeing, not in the sense of making you autonomous but in the biblical sense of a 'liberated freedom':

the freedom Paul speaks of when he cries out: "... Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (*Rom. 8:38 ff*). As a theologian Hans Küng is a free spirit, and it is perhaps this freedom that especially irks the ecclesiastical power-brokers in the Roman Curia.

From this central foundation arise five dimensions to Küng's thought:

## **(1) that the Christian belongs primarily to this world**

Küng greatly admires St Thomas More, who was a successful man of the world and yet sought always a life orientated to God's will. A Christian must know "how to be abased and how to abound" (*Phil. 4:12*). The Spirit leads each of us, he says, along different life journeys.

Yet, in his book *On Being a Christian*, Küng is highly critical of the modern world, especially in its greedy compet-



Hans Küng, taken about the time of Vatican II, where Küng was an 'expert' itiveness and its worship of science and technology, when they are founded on godlessness and inhumanity. Küng notes how moral standards give way to aesthetics: 'what pleases me' displaces 'what is the right option'. Commitment to principle is repudiated, and the guiding purpose in life becomes self-fulfilment.

Küng proposes that the Christian churches have a function to hold up a mirror to society, critiquing its greed,

➔ Küng is not bitter about the way the church has treated him. I found him very cordial and he put me at ease. He looks to me to be a contented human being. He told me he was very pleased with his meeting with Cardinal Lehmann and hoped that it wouldn't end there. He felt that people in Germany expected more. Not all the German bishops, however, would be happy with the Cardinal's initiative.

Küng pulls no punches. He is a Swiss, and the Swiss are like the Scots: they say what they think without beating about the bush! Both Küng and Schillebeekx were summoned to Rome. But Küng would not go until he knew what he was being accused of. Küng is not a diplomat, like Cardinal Koenig or Schillebeekx. So he was censured. Yet in his book *Infallibility, an Inquiry* he is careful not to debunk the principle of infallibility, but only to question certain aspects and propose definitions which could make this controversial dogma more acceptable.

When British Prime Minister Tony Blair visited Tübingen and spoke with Hans Küng, he endorsed the need for Küng's foundation. When the students booed Tony Blair, Küng apologised, but Blair said: "Don't worry; I get worse treatment back home!"

I feel we in New Zealand could contribute substantially to Küng's new enterprise. We could certainly make it better known here. I am also keen that the concerns of the *Global Ethic Foundation* should extend to care of the earth.

I wrote to Küng's successor, Karl-Josef Kuschel, suggesting the Foundation should embrace this too. He agreed and promised to send me further material, concluding: "Our environment should not be thrown as fodder to the Moloch of economy". ■

*Frank Hoffmann is an ardent environmentalist  
and belongs to St Mary's parish, Papakura*



its declining values and its pursuit of pleasure. In recent years this belief has led Küng to propose the need for the discovery of a *global ethic*.

## (2) the church, no less than the Gospel, is historically situated

According to Küng, theology must always be rewritten critically in the light of a history of Christianity, which reveals that the church has not only been loyal to the Gospel of Christ but has also betrayed it.

Therefore any theology which claims to be orthodox and

outside the norms of historical criticism is always dangerous. In every age Christian thinking must be constantly critiqued against the person of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Gospels through his actions and preaching.

And what we discover is a *Person* who cannot be domesticated or controlled by the church or defined by its theology. The question we must not cease to ask is: 'Would Jesus have understood this, have accepted this?' Küng asks:

- would he who warned the Pharisees about placing intolerable burdens on people's shoulders, have declared all 'artificial' contraception to be a mortal sin?
- would he who was constantly accompanied by women (as his support group) and whose apostles were and remained married men, have forbidden marriage to ordained men and ordination to women?
- would he who took adulterers and sinners under his wing, have issued harsh verdicts on issues which have to be judged in a nuanced and critical fashion, such as premarital intercourse, homosexuality and abortion?

## (3) Catholicity is still an incomplete process within Christianity

To return to the basic simplicity of the Christian message consists in the preservation of what is decisive and essential. For instance, in *The Church* (1967), he notes the wicked persecution of Jews by the Christian churches and the unjust treatment

of 'heretics'. "Few things," he says, "harmed the church so much as the violent treatment of heretics... the road to 'pure doctrine' cannot be driven over corpses... It is only a little step from 'orthodoxy' to that blind and ruthless fanaticism which is the very soul of all inquisitions".

Küng's ambition is the achievement of a true catholicity, an outreach of the various denominations to each other as

the church has not only been loyal to the gospel but has also betrayed it

they undertake a search together for their common Gospel origins. To achieve this it is necessary for Catholics to rethink the Vatican I decrees regarding Papal infallibility. Ultimately the Catholic Church should aspire to spiritual leadership, controlled by conciliar and synodical structures as checks and balances, acceptable, therefore, not only to Roman Catholics but also to their brothers and sisters of other denominations.

## (4) ecumenical reconciliation between the churches

The excommunication between the churches, says Küng, is a scandal needing to be resolved. Vatican II set the agenda with its *Decree on Ecumenism*, which encouraged dialogue, common prayer and charitable works. The Catholic Church abandoned its claim that the 'kingdom which Jesus preached is synonymous with the church', and instead proclaimed an openness to reunion. The road is open towards an 'evangelical catholicity' in which Christians attempt to be evangelical in a catholic way or catholic in an evangelical way.

## (5) dialogue with non-Christian religions

To be truly catholic means that you cannot contain the ecumenical process within the ambit of Christian faiths. Küng seeks a minimal ethical consensus from all religions and world-views, on which he hopes a future global ethic can and should be built. Dialogue becomes a single process: internal and external ecumenism are simply two sides of the same coin.

The first phase of this was the abandonment of the theological tradition that 'all those not baptised as Christians are damned'. Then, studies in comparative religion revealed how much the various faiths have to learn from each other. Finally, attempts were begun to establish an inter-religious ecumenical theology. It is now recognised that the Holy Spirit works universally and not just within the confines of Christian churches.

Hans Küng is realistic in warning Christians not to become so submerged in this process as to lose their various Christian identities. Comparisons between faiths, he insists, must be truthful and unsparing. However, he also claims that in this process the person and cause of Jesus Christ will by no means suffer by comparison.

As the poet Dorothee Solle writes:

*Compare him quietly  
with other greats  
socrates  
rosa luxemburg  
gandhi  
he bears comparison  
with them all  
but it is better  
if you compare him  
with yourself. (Meditationen  
und Gebrauchstexte, Berlin 1969)*

In this process Hans Küng is being faithful to St Paul, that at best a human being can only perceive the truth which is God "in a glass darkly". Christianity too must, in its encounter with other faiths, see itself as being on pilgrimage.

Hans Küng concludes his search like this: "In the end there will not be Buddhism or Hinduism, nor Islam and Judaism either... not even Christianity. At the end there will be no religion, but the one Inexpressible towards whom all religions are directed". ■

*This digest of Küng's theology is drawn from Professor Karl-Josef Kuschel's address: "Theology in freedom: basic dimensions of the theology of Hans Küng", delivered on the occasion of Küng's retirement in 1996*

# Global

In 1990 Hans Küng wrote a book entitled: *Global Responsibility. In search of a New World Ethic*. A 'parliament of the world's religions' gathered in Chicago in 1993, and made a commitment to explore four areas of endeavour towards achieving a world global ethic.

*Below and right* are written

- (1) Hans Küng's *mission statement*,
- (2) the way in which the world's major religions express the '*golden rule*', and
- (3) a development of these *four areas of endeavour*.

## *Mission statement*

No peace among the nations  
without peace  
among the religions

No peace among the religions  
without dialogue  
between the religions

## *Four areas of endeavour.*

### HAVE RESPECT FOR LIFE

*Thou shalt not kill* – or, more positively,  
*have respect for life*

*let no one be deceived*

There is no survival for humanity without global peace!  
Young people must learn at home and in school  
that violence may not be a means of settling  
differences with others.

Only thus can a culture of non-violence be created.

### DEAL HONESTLY AND FAIRLY

*Thou shalt not steal* – or, more positively,  
*deal honestly and fairly*.

*Let no one be deceived*

There is no global peace without global justice!  
Young people must learn at home and in school  
that property, limited though it may be,  
carries with it an obligation, and that its uses  
should at the same time serve the common good.  
Only thus can a just economic order be built up.

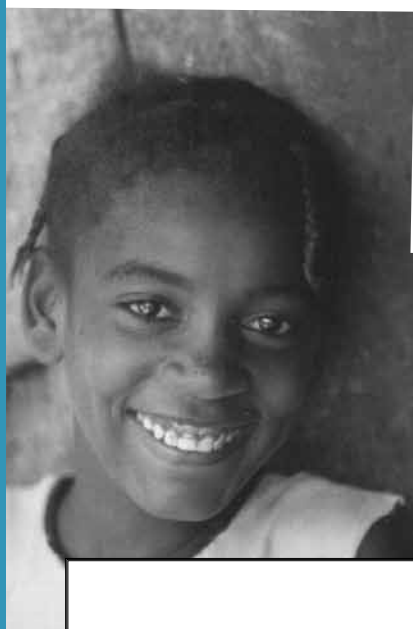
## *The 'golden rule'*

**HINDUISM:** *This is the sum of duty: do nothing to others which would cause you pain if done to you.* (Mahabharata XIII 114.8)

**JAINISM:** *A person should treat all creatures as he or she would be treated* (Sutrakritanga 1.11.33)

**CONFUCIANISM:** *Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.* (Analects 15.23)

**BUDDHISM:** *A state which is not pleasant or delightful to me must be so for him or her also; and a state which is not pleasant or delightful to me, how could I inflict that on another?* (Samyutta Nikaya V. 353.35-354.2)



# Ethic

No dialogue  
between the religions  
without global ethical standards

No survival of our globe  
without a global ethic



## SPEAK AND ACT TRUTHFULLY

*Thou shalt not lie* – or, more positively,  
*speak and act truthfully.*

*Let no one be deceived*

There is no global justice without truthfulness and humaneness!

Young people must learn at home and in school to think, speak and act truthfully. Without an ethical formation young people will hardly be able to distinguish the important from the unimportant. In the daily flood of information, ethical standards will help them discern when opinions are portrayed as facts, interests veiled, tendencies exaggerated and facts twisted.

## RESPECT AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER

*Thou shalt not commit sexual immorality* – or, more positively, *respect and love one another.*

*Let no one be deceived*

There is no authentic humaneness without a living together in partnership.

Young people must learn at home and in school that sexuality is not a negative, destructive or exploitative force, but creative and affirmative.

The relationship between women and men should be characterised

not by patronising behaviour or exploitation,  
but by love, partnership and trustworthiness.

**JUDAISM:** *Do not do to others  
what you would not want them to do to you.*  
(Rabbi Hillel, Shabbat 31a)

**CHRISTIANITY:** *In everything do to others  
as you would have them do to you.*  
(Matt 7.12; Lk 6.31)

**ISLAM:** *No one of you is a believer  
until he desires for his brother or sister  
that which he desires for himself.*  
(40 Hadith of an-Nawawi 13)

*Chart taken from an Exhibition brochure  
prepared by the Global Ethic Foundation.  
Permission kindly given by its Director,  
Dr Hans Küng, pictured above*





### From *Zella Horrell, Riversdale* (parent)

Our Catholic schools are a legacy left to us to cultivate. It is our responsibility to make them institutions of spiritual growth, not simply maintain them as secure places for indoctrination in an increasingly secular society. My husband is a farmer, and in the 20 years we have been married he has changed his breed of sheep, his type of pasture, and the brand of motorbike he drives to stay progressive, but he is still on the same land and is still defined as “a sheep farmer”. We do not have to sacrifice our heritage as Catholics, but it would be wise to acknowledge that we have a new breed of young person and that their spiritual needs are different to our own.

Sr Siobhan Larkin supports the idea that when religious education classes are validated through a rigorous academic structure, the four traits of adolescent spirituality: friendship, prayer, mystery, and doubt, are lost. She points out that “it would be a pity if children passed all their assessment tasks but never experienced a sense of the awe and wonder of God.” Dr Cunnane offers wise counsel when she tells us that our “failure to recognize that young people’s emotions may hold the key to their spiritual life, limits our ability to accompany them on their spiritual journey.”

Sr Siobhan speaks of the important role a religious education teacher plays. I want to extend that thought. Life and spirituality are complex. There is no singular approach to either, so there can not be one singular recipe for success in a ‘subject’ designed to promote adolescent spiritual growth. Many ordinary teachers can become “dynamic, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable” when they are speaking from the heart and not conforming to criteria set by another person or group. Friendship was first on the list of Michael Carotta’s traits of adolescent spirituality. When religious education teachers are allowed to befriend the young people entrusted to their guidance, they can truly begin to address the “dearth of opportunities in which to reflect upon, explore and express their experiences of God”. Adults must respect the ‘emotions and imagination’ of the young people within their sphere of influence.

If we demand ‘measurable outcomes’ from the teachers who are trying to activate a young person’s hunger and desire for spirituality, then we are not only limiting their range for success, but we are encouraging them to ignore the needs and ideas of the very people they are employed to assist. The spirit cannot be measured. Our ‘being’ cannot be assessed.

Joy Cowley wrote a beautiful children’s picture book called *The Children’s Friend*. She writes: “They walked with him. They talked with him. They laughed with him. They danced with him.” Roger Payne’s illustrations are of a laughing, smiling, happy Jesus; they make the parent, who is reading this aloud to their future teenager, think, “That’s where I want my child to be. That’s how I want my child to feel.”

Maybe, in this competitive, commercial world, we occasionally take ourselves too seriously and lose the plot. If parents and school administrators have such limited faith in their religious education programmes that they need to be continually tested, then it is little wonder students have such little faith themselves. Would teachers lose control if a religious education programme were based on discussion? Would schools lose respect if doubt was allowed to raise its ugly head? Would faith not be

## The Spirituality of

### Responses to article by Dr Finola Cunnane in the October

better served if more decisions were left up to the individual teachers? We’ll never know if we don’t try, and as Gandhi said, “Cowardice is not a sign of belief in God.”

### From *Robin Kearns, Auckland* (parent)

The *October Issue*’s education essays brought us a timely reminder of younger people’s spiritual journey. For this to be more than just a reminder, the challenge for us is to see beyond our own capacity for ‘adulthood’ – that tendency to treat young persons as morally weaker and less intelligent. In other words, we can feel that we have ‘arrived’ as adults and be tempted to feel that youngsters risk never ‘arriving’ unless they make our point of view their destination.

Finola Cunnane writes of “youth culture today” as having lost many familiar markers such that “we were never this age”. True, young people live in a world very different to that of our youth. But surely ours is not the first adult generation to despair. We have short memories if we forget that an earlier generation dismissed rock’n’roll as devil’s music! Unencumbered by mortgages and not yet committed to marriages, young people have different freedoms with which to seek meaning in life.

In the lives of many, we see God known differently from the way we know God. Younger people often live lives of extremes – passionate about social causes, contemplative as diarists, ‘hard-out’ as party-goers. To disallow the possibility they know God in all this is to close off an avenue through which we ourselves may, in turn, know God more fully.

But in my use of ‘they’ for younger persons, I hint at two ‘adulthood’ temptations that Cunnane succumbs to: homogenising younger people and setting up a binary construct of ‘us’ and ‘them’. Throughout her essay, she writes of ‘the adolescent’. How does a younger person feel reading this? Let us hear their reactions! How do we feel reading about ‘the adult’ search for identity? The up-side of the contemporary postmodern sensibility is a recognition of difference. If we strive to acknowledge a diversity of views and journeys, we will be less prone to establishing ‘us and them’ dichotomies.

Let us learn from those younger than ourselves – about their faith, their music, their feelings. Let us risk the possibility that God, and our knowledge of the divine, will grow through a deeper entry into the world of the young. Let us be inspired by their enthusiasm and conspire to change the world through refusing to succumb to resignation. Rather, journeying with young people can make us ‘people of the possible’.

Why, for example, does the annual *Parachute Festival* of Christian music at Mystery Creek draw thousands? In those I talk with, I hear the call to community and the quest for peace. The next time your parish music group grinds out the same old songs to a congregation bereft of adolescents, pause for thought. As Neil Young sang in the ’70s, “it’s better to burn out than it is to rust”. With that message of passion and commitment, no wonder he still has a strong following among the youth.

# the young person

## and interview with Sr Siobahn Larkin issue of *Tui Motu*

From **Jan Goulding, Gore** (parent, school counsellor)

I noticed a strong sense of irritation and unease for me while reading these two articles, and when sitting still with that I became aware that my irritation is around 'Life becoming too complicated'.

I feel as a society we have moved away from the simplicity of things and instead delve too deeply into trying to find answers or meaning in things, to analysis rather than to just simply slowing down and being with ourselves and in relationship to others.

Teenagers that I work with always comment that no one listens, no one cares, no one 'understand me and no one actually really even takes the time to see me'. In part, this is also a reflection of how teenagers see themselves and of their struggles within teenage years. It is also a reflection of our fast pace society that has, in my belief, led to a disconnection from God, the divine, a greater power, or what ever you want to call it.

Hence this materialistic and money-making machine of a world has rubbed off onto our young people; so more and more young people are caught up in the materialism of our world, the pressures and the busyness of life. What I feel our young people want more than anything is for someone to simply care, to take the time to listen and understand, to honour their spirit, and to bring forth what is already naturally found in them.

In relation to our education system, instead of teaching curriculum subjects such as Religious Instruction, Maths, English, Science etc, if we were to met our young people through role modelling concepts such as Awareness, Responsibilities, Honesty, and, as the article states, in the traits of adolescent spirituality – Gratitude, Doubt, Friendship, Prayer, Mystery etc, then I feel a major step forward and a reconnection with self, with each other and with God would start to happen.

From **Peter Tolich, Hamilton** (parent & teacher)

Peter is D.R.S. at Sacred Heart, College, Hamilton

In Dr Finola Cunnane's article on the *Spirituality of the Young Person*, she notes Michael Carotta's four activities for Spiritual Growth. They are *Attending to Stories*, *Building Skills*, *Honouring the Senses* and *Offering Solidarity*. Each of these points has merit, but I would briefly like to focus on the fourth point.

*Offering Solidarity*. Cunnane states that "Offering solidarity means being present to young people in certain ways". She then details some examples and then finishes with an encompassing summary of the points she is making, with the statement "I will be there for you". For me, this encapsulates the role of the teacher in a Catholic School, who is trying to reach out and support young people.

This process can take many forms in any school, but at Sacred Heart Girl's College, Hamilton, it manifests itself in the staff facilitating groups such as *Young Vinnies*, *Enact*, *Caritas*, *Amnesty*, Home of Assisi visits and lunchtime prayer groups. The College liturgies, assemblies and religious dramatic

performances are also part of the process that are often student led with staff in background support.

In times of crisis, such as the tragic loss of a senior student recently, we saw young people being enabled to grieve through the support of their peers, the staff and the wider College community. Finally, a positive initiative resurrected by senior students this year was to go out to Sunday Mass in their parishes so they could take their school back to their home faith communities. The examples cited here are common in many of our schools and are a real sign of being there for young people.

For those challenged to work with the young in our Catholic schools, we can draw on our on faith formation. For some of us, that may have occurred outside the Catholic school system: the solidarity of the *Search* weekends of Father Felix Donnelly and his team had a profound effect on the young people of that era.

To move it forward a bit in years, the retreats offered in our Catholic Schools by the Marist retreat team with the likes of Brother John Paul Wilson, have had a tremendous and profound effect. Cunnane's emphasis on Solidarity invites us to reflect on how we were formed and what we can be open to, so as to assist young people today.

If, as Cunnane concludes, we "approach the cultural world of the young person with reverence, conscious that God is there before us", we can, with time and patience, possibly offer support for young people as they grow in their own unique spirituality, whilst knowing that God will show us a path that we may choose to walk with the young people we are called to serve. ■

## Adult Education Trust Christchurch

Father Cyril Hally speaks on interfaith  
relationships: responding to the signs of the  
times and finding meaning

**Christchurch:** Monday 29 November 2004,  
7.30 to 9.30 pm

Mercy Library, 11 Caledonian Road  
Suggested donation/koha \$5

Fr Hally is a Columban Father and a former Director and current staff member of the Pacific Mission Institute (now Columban Mission Institute). He is President of the South Pacific Association of Mission Studies and Convenor of the Columban Centre for Churches and China.

Fr Cyril Hally was awarded the Philia Prize for Vision and Initiative in Religious Work in Australia by the World Conference of Religion and Peace in November 1995 and the 2002 Pax Christi International Lifetime Achievement Award for Contribution to the work of Pax Christi in Asia and the Pacific.

**Contact:** ph 03 942 7954  
<http://homepages.paradise.net.nz/aet/>

# *Liturgical Abuses. Are they really the agenda?*

*A recent Roman document implies that celebration of Eucharist is commonly subject to abuse through unliturgical practices. Joseph Grayland suggests there may be another agenda*

Judging an abuse is always a serious matter. The word abuse carries with it a sense of deep and pervasive violence. When we speak of 'liturgical abuse' we must be careful not to overstate the case. At its weakest, it is an infringement of rubrics that may make communal functioning difficult. At its most violent it is an attack on the intimate, communal and legitimate theological relationship between a Christian community and God. In this instance, a community may feel they are being prevented from worshipping within their tradition of faith and may fear that their worship is not orthodox.

Worshipping in the tradition of faith is not the same thing as praying according to traditional styles or a traditionalist ethic. For a Christian, to 'worship in truth' is to believe and pray according to the truth of the self-revelation of God hidden in Christ and made known by the Spirit of God. True worship is an act that expresses in symbol the centrality of the divine revelation that is at the heart of human existence.

To abuse liturgically, then, is to stand between the believer and God by calling into question the essential truth of divine revelation. Liturgical abuse is always a serious issue for the church, because it is an abuse of divine revelation and, more often than not, it is a act of power over a person or a group, played out or manifested in an act of worship that attacks the community of believers at its core.

While there are, without doubt, unjust uses of power within the liturgical setting, in most instances these arise out of struggles for power that belong outside. In this instance the liturgy *itself* is being used abusively.

Accusations of liturgical abuse, at the weaker end, are generally conflicts over perceptions of what is 'right' and 'godly' on the one hand, and what is 'degenerate' and 'profane' on the other. Personal opinion and perception are not sufficient to judge this: one needs another tool to discern the truth of an allegation. That tool is the liturgical rite itself and liturgical documents. Discernment must be exercised with insight, because the tools themselves require, at times, very prudent interpretation.

Take for instance the following questions. Where would you place them on the scale of liturgical abuse?

- Is it an abuse for the congregation to receive communion from the tabernacle at Sunday Mass and not from the altar?
- Is it an abuse for priest, bishop or deacon not to prepare their homily?
- Is it an abuse when a priest, who is tired or not gifted as a homilist, offers this ministry to a lay person so that the congregation may be nourished by Scripture?
- Is it an abuse in lay-led prayers to use forms of worship that mimic the Mass because we are unwilling to address the real issues of liturgical leadership?
- Is it an abuse to prefer boy altar-servers over girl altar-servers on the basis of gender and the boy's potential vocation to priesthood?
- Is it an abuse to hear confessions during Mass in the same church?
- Is it an abuse of the assembly to retain priests who are disruptive of parish life and destructive in their manner?

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops' letter, following the publication of the recent Roman document, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, pointed out that not all the examples of liturgical abuse referred to in it concern New Zealand.

This does not mean that there are no instances of liturgical abuse here. But, in a country not prone to witch-hunts and unused to polite robust debate, the Bishops' letter rightly sought to avoid an attack on a small and tired group of pastoral ministers, lay and ordained, male and female.

## **Creating a barrier between laity and clergy**

I am not convinced that the present drive to rectify liturgical abuses is motivated solely by concern for the liturgical framework of salvation. I suspect its motivation is to preserve a mediaeval edifice of priesthood in the face of a growing lay pastoral ministry.

Forty years ago Yves Congar, in *Power and Poverty in the Church* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1964), noted that many forms of deferment, prestige and language present in the church were elements contributing to a structure that "not only... keep people at a distance from us [clergy], they keep us at a distance from them, so that the real world of their life is morally inaccessible to us" (quoted in *Readings in church Authority – Gifts and Challenges for Contemporary Catholicism*, ed. Gerard Mannion).

I wonder whether *Redemptionis Sacramentum* is not more concerned with the maintenance of this hierarchical distance – between the liturgical functioning of the cleric and the liturgical functioning of the lay person – than it is for deep, rich and vibrant liturgical prayer.

Could that be the motivation behind its directive that priest and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion are not to receive communion at the same time? Could it also be the reason behind



the provision always permitting priests unable to celebrate or concelebrate Mass to receive communion under both kinds, while communion under both kinds for the lay person is possible only where “due consideration should be given to the circumstances...”[*Redemptionis Sacramentum* 99]?

Yves Congar says: “We have an idea, we feel, implicitly and without admitting it, even unconsciously, that the church is the clergy and that the faithful are only our clients or beneficiaries. This terrible concept has been built into so many of our structures and habits that it seems to be taken for granted and beyond change. It is a betrayal of the truth”.

Gerard Mannion suggests Congar’s assessment to be as valid today as 40 years ago. Is the maintenance of liturgical separation between ordained and lay members of the church essential to the liturgy – or is it simply a symptom of an ongoing power struggle?

According to Vatican II, liturgical functioning belongs to the baptised by right (*Sacrosanctum concilium* 14) and to the ordained through ordination (*Presbyterorum ordinis* 1). Liturgical ministry is grounded in the sacrament of baptism/confirmation, through which “all the faithful are made a holy and kingly priesthood” (*Presbyterorum ordinis* 2) and “are appointed by their baptismal character to Christian religious worship” (*Lumen gentium* 11).

This truth is not denied in the statement that “though they differ essentially and not only in degree, the common priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood are nonetheless interrelated; each in its own way shares in the one priesthood of Christ”(LG10).

Christ is the only priest, and it is essential to remember that every ministerial act is an “exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ” (SC7). The priesthood of Christ admits of both the priesthood of baptism and the priesthood of orders. Both are essential for liturgical prayer and both are part of the framework of salvation.

Therefore, it is not the task of the clergy to protect liturgical prayer from the laity. So too, it is not the task of the lay person to protect the liturgy, or the worshipping community, from the priest.

### Sidelineing the clergy

We have reached what Gerard Mannion describes as a crisis of competency where clergy are increasingly perceived as no longer having any claim to legitimate authority and leadership. As Mannion correctly points out, addressing this question is essential for the future well-being of the church.

In the worlds of public affairs and academia the cleric has been superseded. But what is more frightening is a growing perception in the religious-liturgical world to view clerics and their world view and concept of worship as a hindrance. For many people, the clergy appear to be less professionally and liturgically skilled than their lay peers. It would not be uncommon, now, for lay believers in many countries to choose a lay-led Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion, in preference to a Mass presided over by a priest, on the basis of the lay leader’s liturgical presiding and homilising skills.

If that situation is even half true, it will strengthen the separation between lay liturgical leadership and an utterly distinct and unassailable ordained ministry. When each faction is so thoroughly convinced that their position reflects sound theology, the ordinary believer may be hard pressed to distinguish theological sense from theological nonsense.

What is at risk here is the crucial theological relationship between laity and ordained, which is intrinsic to the liturgical framework of salvation. What we need is a renewal of both ordained and lay ministry more intelligent and more honest than we presently have.

The *Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences* wrote recently: “There is no one-sided renewal of clergy or laity. In a church of communion we, clergy as well as laity, are mutually related and mutually

conditioned. We feel the need for a basic change of heart. In a church which is a communion that tries to liberate others from oppression and discrimination, collegiality and co-responsibility are urgently needed... the clergy leadership has a duty to make the initial moves to foster lay involvement and to recognise the emerging leadership of the laity”.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* itself begins its description of the liturgy as the work of the Trinity, a community of co-eternal, co-equal, and co-divine persons in the relationship of perfect charity. If we stay faithful to such a vision, then we will be able to discern when the use of power is exercised as true authority (exercised with regard for the opinions of those who invest the authority figure with authority) and we will follow it; but we will also recognise the use of raw power (against those from whom the authority has been derived) and we will condemn it.

The new Roman document *Redemptionis Sacramentum* might have provided us with a more visionary leadership if it had attempted to address these deeper issues of ministry and ecclesiology. The Archbishop of Dublin, Diarmuid Martin, notes: “Much more interesting would be a review of the vocation of the laity itself within the churches, and of the forms that their spiritual celebrations take... unfortunately, Catholic authorities are so far removed from radical thinking in this area, if not actually hostile to it, there is no apparent prospect of any exciting developments...”

“The old relationships between people and priests will never be restored, because society has changed too much to want what was once thought right for it. But there will always be a need to find fresh structures, within which people can express their spirituality, build community and transcend the everyday”. Amen. ■

*Fr Joseph Grayland is a liturgist teaching at Good Shepherd College, Auckland*

# People of

**W**e are people of the Earth. We come from the Earth. We are sustained through the Earth. We are inspired by the Earth. Music must have risen in the human spirit out of bird-song, the sound of waves breaking upon the shore, the sigh of wind in the trees, the drumbeat of our own hearts. The soul of the natural world pours out of us in poetry.

We plumb the depths of a Ponderosa Pine or a Monarch Butterfly – and suddenly we are more ourselves, more present, more whole. Suddenly the world opens to us as we open to it, as we enter what seems other than us and discover our own authentic selves in the encounter.

Inside this clay jug there are canyons and pine mountains – and the Maker of canyons and pine mountains! All seven oceans are inside, and hundreds of millions of stars. The acid that tests gold is there, and the one who judges jewels. And the music from the strings that no one touches, and the source of all water.

*If you want the truth, I will tell you the truth:  
Friend, listen: the God whom I love is inside.*

*(“The Clay Jug”, by Kabir – version by Robert Bly in The News of the Universe, 1980, Sierra Club)*

“Friend, listen, the God whom I love is inside,” says 15th century Indian poet, Kabir. Inside this clay jug, inside this human body of bone and blood, is the genetic memory of stars and the originating energy of the universe.

Inside are canyons and pine mountains and the maker of canyons and pine mountains. The whole glorious universe lives within us. As a human being I am able to reach out with my mind, with my spirit, and enter into any created thing because somehow I carry it within my own being.

This awareness presses in on me. There is so much of myself, my larger Self, yet to know, yet to be entered. There could be more than 30 million species in the world today. Yet we have studied less than 100,000. And how many have any one of us truly entered?

To facilitate this entry into the interior depths of the natural world is the eco-contemplative work of Skyline. We want to call you into your own depths, into contemplative presence to yourself and your world. And we want to bring this into communal expression, celebration and ritual through what we call Earth Liturgy, Earth People’s Work.

What is the work of Earth’s people at this critical junction of the human-cosmic journey? Cultural historian and Geologist, Thomas Berry, suggests that we are at the end of a 67 million year venture called the Cenozoic era. We are standing at the threshold of a new age. Will we choose to commit ourselves to what he calls the “technozoic,” a future of increased exploitation of Earth as resource, all for the benefit of humans?

Or will we commit ourselves to what he calls the “ecozoic,” a new mode of human-Earth relations, one where the well-being of the entire Earth community is the primary concern? Earth Liturgy brings to ritual expression the commitment to the dawning ecozoic age. The work of Earth liturgy, Earth people’s work, is quite simply, the work of communion.

*Take and eat.*

*This is my body:*

*Light*

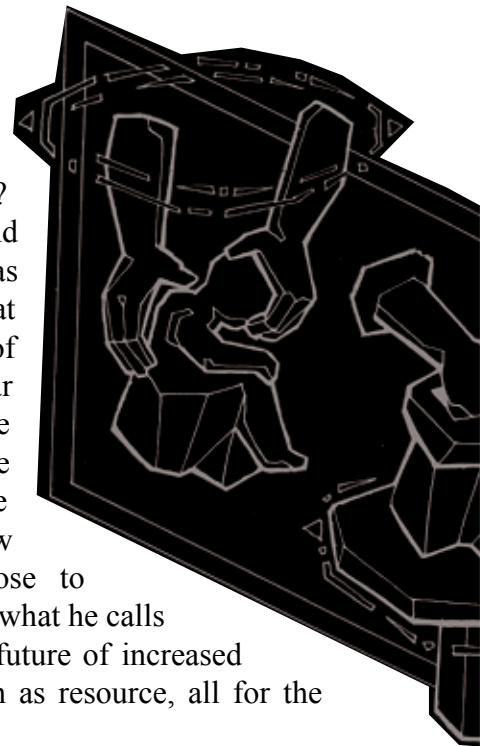
*turned green in tongues of grass,*

*turned flesh in grazing herds,*

*turned love in human hearts.*

*Take and drink.*

*This is my blood:*



# the Earth

Diane Pendola

## Life

*rising in springs, flowing in rivers,  
swelling the seas, salting your tears,  
your veins full of me.*

*Take and eat*

*this sun and soil.*

*Take and drink*

*this wind and rain.*

*Remember me –*

*Light's long journey out of Night,*

*Light's long journey into Life.*

*Remember me –*

*Love's dawn journey into Day.*

*(Communion poem by Diane Pendola.*

*Diane Pendola, September 2004)*

## Communion.

Many of us respond to the word in its Christian context, remembering bread and wine as the gifts Jesus gave to his friends as an ongoing symbol of his abiding presence with them. In *Earth Liturgy*, the depth breadth of that symbol expands to whole universe. Communion then transcends its historically and culturally conditioned context to become truly universal in its scope.

It remains a meaningful symbol for the Christian community without being defined or exhausted by it. It embraces and celebrates the whole cosmic journey, arising out of Mystery to give birth to stars and supernovas, galaxies and planets, earth and single-celled life, plants and animals, human beings and reflective awareness. With the dawn of human consciousness comes the capacity of the myriad world to reflect on itself, to know itself, to love itself

and to love every other as itself.

Communion is constitutive of reality itself. As Thomas Berry puts it, “to be is to be related” – for relationship is the essence of existence.

Regarding this communion reality Raimon Panikkar declares: “The Mystical Body does not mean just a small group of humans. It extends to the breadth of the entire universe in its proper status”.

In this context we could understand Jesus to have named this communion reality not for an exclusive few, not even for an exclusive humanity, but for the whole wide sacred web of life.

Here at Skyline we celebrate *Earth Liturgy*. We celebrate the wind and the sun, the waters and the soil. We open ourselves to all our relations: the turtle dove in her soft call; the cry of the young hawk off on his own to fend for food for the first time; the prong-horned buck whose curiosity brings him close to our human circle of drumming and singing.

We pass figs and nuts and juice squeezed from grapes whose vines have grown here for over one hundred years. We recognize, in the words of Thomas Berry, that nothing is itself without everything else. We exist, and not only exist, but thrive because of the great graciousness and gratuitousness at the heart of the universe.

We seek forgiveness for the ways we rend the sacred web of life, and pray for the light of awareness to illumine so much of the darkness of our human world. We ask to be full participants in bringing the dawn of love into the fullness of day. We acknowledge that the work of Earth's people is to enter, with love, awareness and thanksgiving, into kinship in this Great Communion of Being.

## Some literature

*The Dream of the Earth*, by Thomas Berry, Sierra Club Books, 1988.

*The Universe Story*, by Brian Swimme & Thomas Berry, 1994, HarperCollins.

*Diane Pendola is co-founder of Skyline Harvest, an eco-contemplative center in Northern California. Website: [www.medushiim@cs.com](http://www.medushiim@cs.com)*



# Celebrating difference

Glynn Cardy

**T**oday I want to give a straight response to queer theology. I want to walk out onto that holy ground of meeting, like Moses did, barefoot and tentative. I want to talk straight to the heart.

I think the time is past where it can be assumed that a straight priest has a relevant message for queer people. Like a man speaking at a feminist conference, or a pakeha speaking on a marae, one is conscious of coming from a very different place and walking gently out onto the holy ground of engagement.

Let me begin, as philosophers do, by talking terms. By 'queer theology' I mean the lived, ongoing, engagement with God by homosexual, bisexual and transgender people who identify themselves as queer. I don't mean written theology espoused by academics. I mean the stuff that happens in your life – the 'ups' and 'downs', the resurrections and crucifixions, the days when God is the very air you breathe and the days where God is nowhere to be found.

Each of us will bring different associations to the word 'God'. For some it is a personal being – a 'him' or a 'her' or a 'both/and'. For some God is a verb, breaking out of the straightjacket of being noun. For some God is a potent energy of ecstasy, or a deep rootedness of being. These words, ecstasy and rooted, of course have sexual connotations and I use them purposefully. I think when we get into the holy places of our lives sexuality and spirituality intertwine.

'Queer' is a word that, while once a derisive insult, has been reclaimed by the homosexual community – not unlike how some hip-hop artists

are reclaiming the word 'nigger' – a reclaiming in order, as I hear it, to celebrate difference from the straight world. The message is: 'We don't want to fit into a hetero-normal mould, we just want to be. Yes, we want to be accepted, but for who we are, not for whom you want us to be'.

I have a little 'straight' theory that goes like this: *When we are born we think everyone is like us – thinks like us, talks like us, has passions like us, etc. Bit by bit we learn otherwise. We find people have different bodies to ours. Their minds too are different from ours. Some have different languages and cultures. All this difference can be scary and despite most of us having an outward acceptance of difference inside we are trying to blend everything – mix it all together in the kitchen whiz to make it look the same. When it looks the same, when it's all smoothie, we feel more in control.*

**if we don't know about difference, then common ground is not a holy place – it's a hiding place**

This little theory helps me understand the people who are always 'looking for what we have in common'. They want to talk about common ground, our common baptism, and our common unity in Christ. All of which, of course, has a place. Yet if we don't know about difference – the difference of our neighbour – if we haven't really gone into the frightening places of otherness, then common ground is simply a common hole to climb in and pretend. It's not a holy place; it's a hiding place.

The flipside to blending is rejection. Those who like to blend everything and everyone, even God, into one

great thickshake can, when something or someone doesn't mix, violently reject them. If you dress like us, sound like us, have relationships more or less like us, we, the homogenisers, are quite happy. But when you refuse to fit our categories, won't be blended, we can get angry, revolt, and throw you out down the drain.

I know those feelings of wanting everyone to fit. It's the little child who wants all to do it 'my way'. That same little child when given power can become a tyrant. I know the blender, the homogeniser, who lives within me. We have regular arguments. Knowing those forces within myself helps me to recognise them in others, and in the policies of churches and governments. I suspect those who call themselves queer know those feelings of being unsuccessfully blended, then rejected and thrown out.

**T**he homogeniser is not the only thing that lives within me, thank God! There is also the great delicatessen, a banquet of multiple choice and wonderful variety. It is the delicatessen that takes faith. To live with difference, to celebrate the delicatessen of difference, is to come to terms with your fears. Fears usually have a bit of reality about them. We know we could get hurt. We know things could get out of our control. To step beyond our fears, into the risky unknown, takes faith.

Back to defining terms. Faith is not a series of beliefs we subscribe to. Faith is rather the risky act of following

the unpredictable God, wherever she/he leads. Faith is about courage, loneliness, and awe.

I'm using the metaphor of delicatessen to talk about the great, variegated richness of the world. A delicatessen carries a lot of stock that produces little income. It is there simply as part of the diversity that is the essence of a deli. The stock that produces lots of income supports the stock that doesn't. It has a vested interest in variety. To work for change, straights like me need a vested interest in the outcome. To homogenise everything shuts down the variety and creativity of my spirit. My spirit would drown in sanitised sameness.

We can become obsessed with trying to keep everyone happy. The words attributed to Jesus in *Luke 14:25-33* are some of the harshest in the New Testament.

*"Anyone who comes  
to me without... hating  
his own life cannot be  
my disciple... None of  
you can be my disciple  
without giving up all that  
you own."*

*(Luke 14: 26, 33)*

They are addressed to disciples who were becoming captivated by 'the family'. They are being pulled into keeping the family happy, being loyal to the family, to the detriment of following the radical anarchist, Jesus. Just as some would have us strive for unity in the Church, keeping the Church 'family' happy, being loyal to the Church, to the detriment of those excluded from its norms.

Unity in Christ I think is more an accidental unity, rather than an intentional unity, of people committed to Jesus' vision. When unity in Christ becomes a club, or a family, or a 'One Holy Church', we need to be very careful. Loyalty to the group can supersede all else.

Moses was encountered by a talking, burning bush. Instead of turning and fleeing, he walked forward. He overcame the fear inside him, the fear of the different, and the unknown. On instruction, he took off his shoes – a symbol of vulnerability. And there in that holy place of engagement he heard the call of God on his life. And, as we do at St Matthew's, argued about it. He asked for God's name and received an answer: YHWH – the best translation of which is "I will be who I will be".

"I will be who I will be". This is the name of the God who is always queer, and more than queer. This is the God who is always repelling each and every attempt to be constrained and controlled, who is outside our categories and doesn't want to come inside.

This is the holy God who speaks to my heart. <sup>n</sup>

*Glynn Cardy is Vicar of  
St Matthew-in-the-City, Auckland*

### **Threat of peace**

*From the back I saw  
shoulders squared and set  
against the future.*

*From the front I saw  
sash and flag  
troubled by the wind.*

*From inside I saw  
power blinded  
by an orange sun.*

*From now on I know  
a place tormented  
by the threat of peace.*

**Anne Powell**

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*There are few who realise what God would make of them if they abandoned  
themselves into Gods hands and let themselves be formed by God*

(St Ignatius Loyola)

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# Light and shadow in the Pacific Islands

*Samoa is not the first holiday destination for most  
palangi New Zealanders But for Peggy Lionet and  
family, holidaying in Samoa was a delightful experience  
– although with one or two surprises*

Escaping the winter weather was the thought uppermost in our minds when booking a recent trip to Samoa. As it turned out, we had a far more interesting trip than we had foreseen. Most of our friends had expressed surprise on hearing of our intended holiday destination. Samoa doesn't have the same profile as places like Tahiti and Fiji, so we set out to look, learn and enjoy ourselves along the way.

The Samoan national motto is 'Founded on God' and with 60 churches in the 35km between the airport and the main town, Apia, the motto seemed extremely apt. Victorian missionaries had a huge impact on society when they arrived in Samoa during the 19th century, resulting in a complex mix of traditional and religious lifestyle in the modern Samoa.

Thanks to some local contacts we were invited to a secondary school concert/speech competition. Starting at 6pm it lasted until 10.45pm. The younger children sat on the floor throughout and we marvelled at their patience and good behaviour throughout the lengthy event. The hall was filled to capacity as the students' families crowded in.

The evening's entertainment concentrated on the English that the students had learnt, songs which leaned more towards the modern American style, and poetry by Samoan writers. All of these were delivered with great energy and enthusiasm.

The musical talent was very impressive, but it was the finalists in the senior speech contest that provided the biggest surprise. One boy spoke of the conflict between the old ways and the 'modernisation' of Samoa, the other five boys and girls spoke about youth suicide.

We sat in the front row, listening to their well thought out, eloquent speeches, delivered with great feeling. None of the speakers resorted to using notes. They pulled no punches and what we learnt left us more than a little shocked.

Samoa has the highest rate of youth suicide in the South Pacific. A fact not lost on the evening's speakers. We heard a plea for more dialogue and understanding from very strict parents, in one speech. Another speaker exhorted his peers to think twice before getting a girl pregnant. "Are you ready to bring up a child? If she has to leave home can you help support her?" he asked.

According to the young people speaking that night, the strictness of many families sees too many young people finding themselves in intolerable situations having either brought shame, or a perceived shame, on the family. Some Samoan families, who feel they have been shamed, see violence as the only way to avenge their sense of shame.

Following the severe punishment meted out to them by family members, many young people are unable to cope with the deep sense of shame. Tragically, they see the only way out of their situation is to hang themselves. The high rate of youth suicide is a matter of great concern in the community.

We will not forget these bright, intelligent young people and hope that in the future they will be part of a breaking of the cycle of violence and despair. We were aware of a certain level of domestic violence in the Pacific in general, but what we learnt that night was at odds with the slow pace and relaxed, friendly style that we had encountered in Apia.

Later in our holiday we paid a fleeting visit to Savaii, the larger of the two main Samoan islands. Life in Savaii is lived far more



traditionally than on Upolu, where Apia is situated.

Here we visited the largest open air chapel in the Southern Hemisphere, built for a local synod in the style of an open fale. In the complex there is one huge chapel with an altar and a background mosaic of the Divine Mercy. Outside the main fale is a large grassed area that is skirted by



Above: Synod Chapel on Suvaii, Samoa, largest open-air chapel in the S.Hemisphere



Left: Market scene in Apia. Towers of the Catholic Cathedral in the background

ten smaller fales. These fales represent each of the ten parish districts of Samoa. The complex was very large and we could not help wondering when it would be used in its entirety again. Wonderful for a Papal visit perhaps?

The Cathedral in Apia is large and airy, well as airy as possible in 30 degrees of heat! There was a definite sense of occasion about the Mass here. That the singing was superb goes without saying, but it was the Offertory Procession that stands out in my mind.

There were one or two Pacific touches that set the offertory apart. They included flower garlands for the priest and for the laypeople involved in the Mass. A long chain of lovely white flowers was placed towards the front of the altar. It was so long it hung down the sides of the altar. An unfamiliar Communion hymn appealed to me, the theme being "Jesus I've just come to say 'thank you' instead of asking for things". The

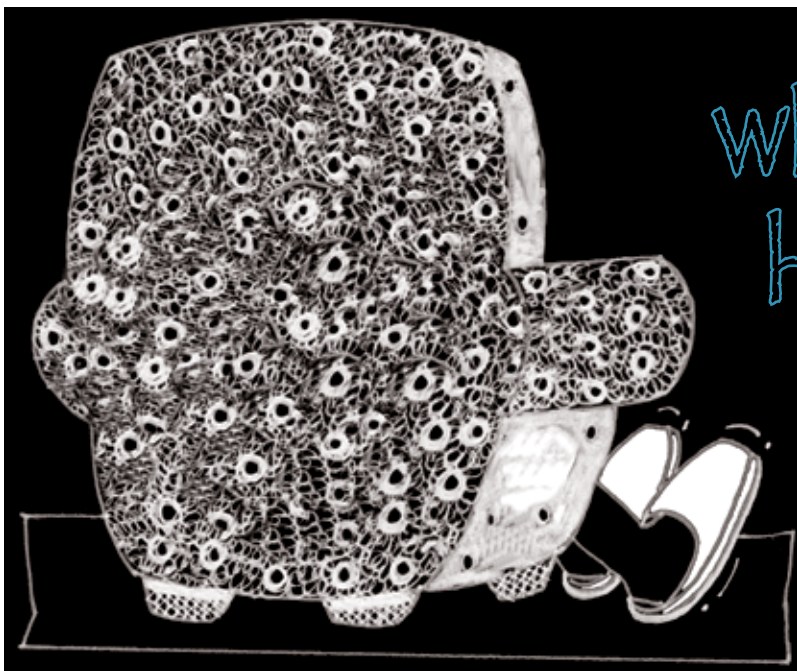
Mass was an uplifting celebration in a warm and friendly environment.

Before going to Samoa, we had been told that ladies should wear a skirt to Mass. On arriving at breakfast on Sunday morning, one of the waiters at our hotel smiled and asked "Are you planning to spend some time with Jesus today?" It must have been the skirt!

Later in the week, Our Lady's birthday was celebrated by having a birthday cake with a single candle on it taken up at the Offertory and placed in front of the altar. After Mass everyone was invited to come for coffee and a piece of the cake to celebrate. I am not sure how cake would be recieved at the early hour of 6.30 in many a New Zealand parish!

We got back home feeling we had seen a bit more than just 'tourist' Samoa. We had been delighted by the friendly welcome of the people and uplifted by beautiful liturgies. But we had also observed some of the shadow side of Pacific Island society. ■

## Bible Society Ad



# Why do bad things happen to good people?

Mike Marshall

If the last year or so were to be measured by the number my friends, parishioners or colleagues who have been diagnosed with cancer, it would not shape up as a memorable time. Sadly, our neighbour died only six weeks after hearing his diagnosis. Please God, the others will continue to live many years, the cancers held in check by medication. Please God...hmm. Where is God in all of this?

I went searching my bookshelf for a little book I haven't read in many years entitled "When Bad things happen to Good People" by a Rabbi, Harold S. Kushner. Written from a Jewish perspective, it mirrors a section in the book by Fr Kevin Burns and Pauline O'Regan RSM entitled "Parish, for the People in the Pews". The insights from these writers contrasted with the deeply embedded sayings of my own grandmother, who was, to my mind, a classic benchmark for pre-Vatican II thinking.

Here's what I have learned.

Nature has a way of letting things happen to both good and bad people. We can no more choose who gets cancer than who wins *Lotto*. We may have a propensity in our genes, we might smoke, it might be purely random. It is not a punishment from God. *God is not a winged avenger*

My Gran used to tell me that God would punish me for being a bad boy. School re-enforced it so it must have been right. This could be for something trivial to something major. Kissing for more than 5 seconds – mortal sin. Girl sitting on boy's knee – mortal sin! My first fumbling sexual explorations were followed by time when I just waited for the thunderbolt from Heaven. Taken to extremes, people quite properly suffer and die because they have been bad? Nations are punished for their evil ways?

*No. God is not a winged avenger.*

Why does God allow evil in the world? When we see graphic footage of events in Beslan or Iraq, children facing unthinkable suffering and death, we ask what kind of Loving Parent would let this happen? God does not allow it, we allow it, we do it to one another. *God does not play X-box*

When God gave us freedom, we were given the ability to choose between good and evil. If God intervenes every time we choose evil, then we do not have freedom. God is not playing a game where he can control the destiny of the world at a whim.

*No, God does not play X-box.*

Is it part of God's Plan? Is everything pre-destined? If God knows everything that's going to happen then surely it's fixed and we can't change it? Well, he might know all the permutations of how the balls will pop out in *Lotto* next week and who will be affected, but knowing doesn't make it happen one way or any other. There is no celestial plan.

*God does not have a plan*

I see it more of a wish list. It probably contains stuff like everyone having food, shelter and warmth; people looking after one another; people having jobs; sharing the world's resources, because there is enough for everyone. But even if this were to come about, there will still be suffering and separation and loss. This is not meant to be Heaven, after all.

But does God care? If we accept suffering as part of our earthly condition we reluctantly accept there will be evil and pain. My Gran used to say "God never gives you a cross too heavy to carry." Often I find this very hard to believe. But I do believe that God weeps with us when the load gets too heavy.

*Has God stopped caring?*

When we ask “Where is God in all of this?”, he could be manifest through the skills of nurses, doctors, peace envoys and aid workers, as well as the care and support from those neighbours and friends. But before we get too glib, a reality check. How long will it be before the families of those massacred in Beslan begin to see God again? *But, no, God never stops caring.*

If there is so much pain and evil in the world, can we get God to change the way things happen? What about the power of prayer, novenas, Lourdes, nine first Fridays? Can we get God to intervene? God does not grant wishes or make deals.

*God is not a trader*

*“Dear God, if I’m really really good and say the rosary every night, can you make that girl like me; let Canterbury win; let Mum be cured....”*

If we want to change the way things happen we have to do it on our own. There is a lot we can do ourselves, and I guess there are many things way out of our power to affect. *But no, God is not a trader.*

**M**y Gran said “God answers every prayer.” Oh yes? That was later refined by a different person many years later, who added “Yes, every prayer is answered, but the answer is often ‘No’.” Yeah, right! If bad things in the world happen because of some natural selection or human behaviour, what, then is the point in praying? If God does listen to our prayers, is there a “yes” or a “no”? It would be nice to think that God directly answered our prayers, but how could we justify the fact that some prayers get answered, and some are seemingly ignored? Does God pick and choose who he responds to?

Many of those who have been to Lourdes come away reflecting on miracles – not the discarded crutches hanging over the Grotto, but the change in perspective of those

who travel home still crippled. This is a miracle of peace, or understanding or acceptance. Gran said “God gives you what you need, not what you want.” I think this one is spot on, Nana. Prayer opens communication with God, and it may not provide a ready fix, but opens us to gifts like courage, wisdom or fortitude to deal with tribulation. And it may not become apparent for some time how God has answered our prayers.

Where do miracles fit into all of this? I don’t know. Rabbi Kushner suggests we simply be grateful and accept them. Fr John O’Connor remarked that good things we put down to coincidence could well be called Godincidence. Despite everything I have learned above, I find immense comfort in the idea that God not only takes a parental interest in the detail of our lives, but from time to time gives it a little push in the right direction to remind us, like a watchful mother, that she cares.

Will it change my shopping list approach to prayer? *“Dear God please let the weather be good for the barbie; let my kids drive safely; let my friend not suffer the pain of arthritis.”* I don’t think the human condition will let this go easily. Nor should it. We hang on to the belief that God can intervene to make things better and that’s the start of communication. We forget sometimes too, that there is more to prayer than asking for things. So my process of prayer will be a difficult one to change, especially when I think of those people and families affected by cancer and I want it cured. *Now.*

Rabbi Kushner concludes his book with this question: “... will you be able to recognise that the ability to forgive and the ability to love are the weapons God gives us to live fully, bravely and meaningfully in this less-than-perfect world?” ■

## CENACLE MINI SABBATICAL

4 March 2005 – 14 April 2005

**In Mark 6:30 Jesus said:**

*“Come away to some quiet place all by yourselves and rest for a while.”*

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*“... the ecological crisis is a moral issue. Christians, in particular, realise that their responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith.”*

*Pope John Paul*



# That's how caste works

*This story was sent us by a New Zealand priest  
working in India. It is about the night-soil workers in  
Rajasthan, who are amongst the most lowly  
of the 'untouchables'*

Everyday Patasi Bai collects a roti from each of 25 households in Sikar. Once a month, some of them give her a few rupees. She is not seeking or getting alms though. Those giving her the rotis (*rotis are chappattis, or bread rolls*) would not dream of eating with her. Patasi Bai's work is indispensable to their homes. But they take special care to avoid any sort of contact with her.

She is the manual scavenger who cleans their dry latrines. "Yes, I carry night-soil", she says. "The payment is one roti a household daily and maybe 10 rupees a house each month. I clean around 25 homes every day. We do have to carry the night-soil in baskets on our heads to the dumping place." That could be half a kilometre from the latrines she cleans.

Patasi Bai is one of hundreds of women in Sikar forced to earn their living this way. That is, as scavengers who clean out dry latrines by hand and who carry excreta that polite society calls 'night-soil', in baskets on their heads.

The women use metal pans to scoop up the night-soil with short brooms in their hands. Officialdom labels Patasi Bai a *bhangi*, a member of the scavenger caste. A few of these groups are beginning to call themselves *balmikis*. The work she does earns her no more than 250 rupees a month (\$NZ10). Often less. "Some households give no money. The basic payment is one roti a house".

How many manual scavengers does India have? Even the flawed data that exists suggests that about a million dalits

work as manual scavengers. The real figure could be higher. They could be cleaning the latrines as Patasi Bai does, or disposing of dead animals with their bare hands, as Bana Das does in Churu.

Their work draws the worst penalties of ritual 'pollution' in the caste system. Untouchability, on a large scale, haunts every minute of their existence. The *balmikis* are 'untouchable'. "You can tell a *balmiki* colony by its extreme squalor", notes one observer in Sikar.

Rajasthan is one of many states that have, in 50 years, done almost nothing about scavenging. Defining a scavenger is itself a bit of a problem. Most come from families in sanitation work. Some family members may hold jobs as sweepers.

The girls clearing night-soil in Sikar are often young. Shakuntala, 16, Lachchi and Reena, both 14, are just three among many. "Some months ago, we had something like a strike", they told us when we met them. "For two months we abandoned this work. Nothing happened. No one came to our aid. We were given no other options. So we resumed, though we hate it. Only women do this job."

"The men of our households make us do it." The men we spoke to made lofty declarations against it. "If we had trolleys or wheelbarrows it would be better", says Patasi Bai. "We keep asking for them. The authorities say 'yes' but never give us any."

The women also want longer brooms. It is pointed out: "They get much shorter

brooms here than in other places. This means bending much more and the direct contact with the muck, with all the attendant health risks."

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot insists that he wants to act on this issue. He told us that the government would enforce the law soon. In Sikar the women would like to end *gandhagi* – the code word for night-soil. They are united on that. But almost all are united on another thing. They must be recompensed for the loss of earnings a real ban would entail.

Governments often claim a lack of funds to convert dry latrines to ones that have a water flush. "It's a funny country", says Shymalji Kalla, a left-wing activist. When the practice of carrying night-soil is banned, those who have served this society in the most degrading capacity are to be penalised. They will get nothing. That is how class works."

He wants to be proven wrong. It is not only about money: it is about justice. Even when the *balmikis* have improved their financial status, social standing has not kept pace. In many towns they have a near monopoly on sweepers' jobs.

But their 'monopoly' is on a kind of work no one wants to do. So they are still looked down upon. Change has been there – but too slow. And often, very bitter. Because, as Kalla says: "That's how caste works". ■

*This article which first appeared in  
the Hindu Magazine, was sent to us  
by Fr Aidan Cunningham IC*

# New Zealand Jesuits in India....

## Care for the Poorest of the Poor

*...an extract from a letter from a parish priest in our mission...*

"I was visiting a village school, there was Sushila, teaching! Five years ago she had come to me in tears wanting to go to primary teacher training, but her parents could not afford to pay her fees. I was already sponsoring eight high-school students – what do I do? I decided to cut my own living costs still further to find the difference to educate the girl-teacher.

Now Sushila is making big changes in the village. Besides teaching school, she teaches the village women and girls the values of hygiene, nutrition, childcare and girl-child education, the benefits of small savings and of village unity. These are the things that break the poverty cycle."






### *Girl-Teachers bring about Change*

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- \$50 supports a girl-teacher at Teachers' Training College for a MONTH



Whatever you give will be greatly appreciated. Cheques should be made payable to:  
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*Education Breaks the Poverty Cycle*

# Visiting the convent

Paul Andrews

*Look thy last on all things lovely  
Every hour*, said the poet. Some experiences we easily take for granted and no longer relish their special flavour. For instance, visiting a convent. In days to come we will be trying to describe to our grandchildren those quiet places where veiled women went silently about their business, friendly and smiling. Everything was polished and in place; no dirty clothes lying on the floor, no TV screen flashing in the corner of the room, no cans of drink or packets of crisps in people's hands. You detected a sense of purpose.

These women knew what they were about. They were busy, but not in the way that business people were busy. There was an air of timeless calm, and a sense of an important presence in the house – Jesus in the chapel. Kate O'Brien left a brilliant picture of it in *Presentation Parlour*. More recent writers, in their eagerness to show they have grown out of it, have often caricatured that extraordinary way of life. Before it disappears, we may remember it with affection and respect.

From St Declan's, the national school where I worked for 20 years, we used to visit the nearby Holy Faith convent in the weeks coming up to First Communion. I had often said Mass there, and took it for granted. So I marvelled at the impact it made on 10-year-old Vanessa.

Vanessa had grown up in a chaotic one-parent household in a new housing estate, and had never seen anything remotely like the life of these nuns. It bowled her over with its beauty, its sense of order and purpose. On the walk back to school she was jubilant: *I'm going to be a nun*. It was a 10-year-old's enthusiasm, and it did not last;

but no doubt it was one of those good memories that helped to sustain her in the rough years ahead.

More than most children, Vanessa needed a sense of security and affection, and she saw that in the convent. Hers was the earliest stage of religion, what has been called the *institutional*. We are drawn to God by what we see and hear. As children we see parents praying; we see this huge building, the church, and if we are lucky we see bright vestments, splendid ceremonies and good music there, smell the incense, light the candles, giving us some feeling of God as different and awesome.

*a faith that can carry us  
through darkness, doubt  
and suffering*

We see the respect paid to the Pope. It can make us feel we are on the winning side. We hear about the spread of the church through the world: 1.8 billion Christians, two-thirds of them Catholics, one-sixth of them Orthodox, and the last sixth including all the non-Catholic Christians: the largest body of religious believers on this planet. That is the *institutional* phase. We never leave it entirely behind us, but as we get older we see below the surface.

In our teens we go beyond appearances and start to argue about God, and compare the life of Jesus with the life of his followers. We become *critical* which is the next phase; it is the religion of young minds, impatient to prove their elders wrong or inadequate, comparing them with the patient and brilliant work of scientists.

There was a time when adolescents expressed their rebellion by smoking. Now they often defy parents by refusing to go to church, and may rationalise

it by arguing about the history of the popes or the difficulty of living a chaste life. At the same time the person of Jesus, who was such a rebel against the religious authorities of his time, can have immense appeal to the young and idealistic.

The third phase is when we have seen it all, and know that we have to live our lives with a faith that can carry us through darkness, doubt, and suffering. They call it the *mystical* phase, and many of you are there. We have known disillusion and tragedy, children dying young, suicides, abortions, betrayals. We understand why the Passion is so central in our faith.

We have not left the *institutional* phase behind, but carry it with us: we still love the sights and sounds of worship well carried out, and the sense of participating in a great body of believers. We have not left the *critical* phase behind, but carry it with us: we use our heads about our religion, and have no illusions about the weaknesses of Jesus' followers – after all, Peter, the first Pope, had to live with the memory of denying the Lord publicly, again and again. But when we have argued about all the great questions of human existence, especially the mystery of evil, we realise that we rely more on the gift of faith than on clear-cut reason.

In the person of Jesus we see the possibility of a love that survives darkness and suffering. It is not that we have all the answers, but we have enough to sustain our faith and love. *Love is the fruit of faith, that is of darkness*. It is based on God's faithfulness. What children pick up from us is not what we say, but the love and faith in our lives; not a love that is all sweetie-pie, shying from arguments, but a love that can survive tensions and disagreements.



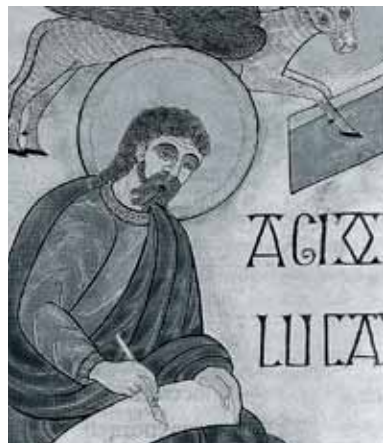
# Reflecting on Luke

Susan Smith

As we move toward the end of the liturgical year, so too do our gospel readings invite us to focus on times of crisis, of persecution, of famines and wars.

Luke 21:5-7 foretells the imminent destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The first temple built by Solomon was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC, and then rebuilt by the Jews when they returned from exile around 536-515 BC. The building programme initiated by Ezra and Nehemiah was continued by Herod the Great who in 20-19 BC began reconstructing the temple, doubling its size. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish pilgrims flocked from around Palestine and from Diaspora Jewish communities in the Roman Empire to worship in the Temple, the dwelling place of God, and the socio-religio-political centre of the Jewish universe.

Jesus' prophecy that it would be razed to the ground with "not one stone left upon another," was fulfilled in 70AD when the Romans destroyed it. Several centuries later, between 687-691AD, the Muslims built a holy shrine on



the temple site, renaming it the *Noble Sanctuary*, while today Jews refer to as the *Temple Mount*.

Both Jew and Muslim attribute an extraordinary significance to the Temple Mount, and it is pivotal in the religious life of both communities. The present *infantida* or Palestinian uprising against the Israeli government began approximately four years ago when Ariel Sharon, surrounded by security and military personnel entered the Temple Mount, thereby inflaming Palestinian passions. Muslim feeling is further inflamed by right-wing American evangelicals and some

orthodox Jews who want to rebuild the Temple there – on one of Islam's most holy sites.

As we reflect on the appalling situation in Israel today and see how a supposedly sacred place generates such conflict, we might think about how and where God is present to us. Do we think of God as present in a building made by human hands, or in a place designated as holy by human persons? Or is God present everywhere in creation? Can we believe in a God whose presence is not restricted to certain holy places and buildings?

When Jesus died, the curtain in the Temple was rent in two. This is often interpreted by New Testament scholars as meaning that God's presence is no longer restricted to the Holy of Holies. God is now present to all peoples in all places. If it were possible for us to believe in God's loving presence in creation rather than in designating some buildings as holy and by extension, others as not so holy, then our world might conceivably be a more peaceful place. If Jesus were preaching today, he might well say: "Do not put your trust in buildings." ■

➡ Children are fuelled by our hope, approval and enjoyment of them; they are shattered by our disappointment in them. At the end of every day ask: have we blessed them or criticised them more, brought good news or bad. Raise your voice more in joy at what they are than in vexation at what they are not. Work harder at your relationship with them, than at their behaviour. When we are old, our powers of study and argument weaken, but one thing we can still do effectively: we can bless and encourage those who have it all in front of them. ■

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## A book for those who wonder if God really loves them

*Father Joe – the man who saved my soul*  
by Tony Hendra

Random House 2004

Price: \$34.95

Review: Mike Crowl

**T**his true story is about Tony Hendra and his spiritual journey. Yet the person we remember at the end of the book – as is Hendra's intention – is the childlike yet sage, humorous yet deeply spiritual Father Joseph Warrilow.

Hendra was only 14 when he almost became the lover of a local married woman whose husband couldn't see she was starved of affection. This couple were Catholics, as was Hendra. The husband, disturbed by Hendra's relationship with his wife, marched him off to Father Joe, a Benedictine priest living in a monastery on the Isle of Wight. It was the beginning of a lifelong relationship between Hendra and this unworldly man.

In the following year, Hendra had a spiritual experience that convinced him he should join the monastery. To his dismay, the priests had other ideas, and insisted on him finishing his university education. However, at university, he went off the spiritual rails, and his only link to God for the next three decades was the aging Father Joe.

Hendra became an exceptionally successful writer and performer. But through all of his wayward, God-forsaking life, Father Joe remained an imperturbable rock, sustaining Hendra's flickering faith by giving him God's love in human form. It's an amazing story of redemption and salvation, and all the more so for being about someone who plumbs the depths, and takes so long to climb up again.

To the pure all things are pure, and Father Joe never seems fazed by anything Hendra does. He always has the right words of wisdom and love to bring

him back on track, even if it does take a length of time. And he's finally able to show Hendra that his true vocation was never to be a monk, but to fulfil his role as a husband and father. Father Joe knows his God, listens to God's voice, and helps others by passing on God's wisdom. He's always compassionate, always reaching out. Readers may well wish they too had access to someone with such gifts.

This isn't a sloppy religious book – Hendra's wit and sharp writing is too good for that – nevertheless it's aimed at the heart rather than the head. Thus, the intellectual Superior of the monastery gets very few lines to say throughout, and the theological discussions between Father Joe and Hendra are fairly low level. For this reason it's a book that will have considerable appeal to believers and non-believers alike, especially to those who wonder whether God really loves them. ■

(Available OC Books)

*Mike Crowl is a freelance writer and reviewer in Dunedin*

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## Book Bytes

### For dads alone

*Single Dad's Survival Guide – how to succeed as a one-man parenting team*  
by Mike Klumpp

Waterbrook Press 2003, 180 pp

Price: \$24.95

**T**his book is aimed squarely at men in the community, especially fathers who have wound up as the prime carer for their children.

Klumpp has been through everything he discusses, and he shares it with humour and insight. His wife left him with four children, and he had to discover for himself a number of the solutions to the difficulties he presents in this book. But more than that, he writes that a solo father has to 'be a man' – not in the sense of being macho, but being well-rounded in all areas: spiritual, physical, emotional. This means, too, that such a man has to deal with anger, hurt and fatigue on his own – or find other men who will stand alongside him.

He's aware of the way men parent differently to women and that these approaches won't be enough in every circumstance. As a result, he's been willing to ask for help from women friends and neighbours when he just doesn't have the experience or know-how to deal with some issues. Highly recommended for its down-to-earth style. ■

### Learning Lewis

*Mere Theology – a guide to the thought of C S Lewis*

by Will Vaus

IVP 2004 – 266 pp

Price: \$39.95

**I**n this book, Vaus works through Lewis' writings in a roughly chronological fashion, drawing out of each book a different facet of his theology, and covering, in the process, most of the major themes of Christian theology in general. Lewis was a great believer in 'amateur' theology, and the idea that all Christians should think things through theologically, since our understanding of God must deepen as we mature as Christians. Besides the discussions of theology, this book provides an excellent introduction to Lewis' major and minor works. ■

# Surely the Lord is in this place

*Land and Place: Spiritualities for Aotearoa New Zealand*

Edited by Helen Bergin o.p. and

Susan Smith r.n.d.m.

Accent Publications

Price: See coupon below

Review: John Bluck

**T**he Pakeha experience of the New Zealand landscape is not so much a blank cheque as a savings account reliant on deposits from Europe. This new collection of provocative essays changes all that. It shows that we have a much bigger investment in the spirituality of this land and place than we knew. "Surely the Lord is in this place?" asks contributor Maurice Andrew, then goes on to suggest that God can't address us, let alone meet us, unless we're able to make a commitment to this Aotearoa place we dare to call home. The essay (and this book) provides a whole new way of reading the debate that Dr Brash began in Orewa.

Not that the real impact of this book is immediately apparent. It sneaks up on you as you read it and wander with the writers through gardens being planted, along rivers and beaches, musing on relationship with the natural world

we often take for granted as social backdrop rather than theological foreground. I hadn't thought of our landscape as a "spiritual classic" before, to be read alongside the Bible. Alongside and not separately, for there are several essays that exegete not only First Testament texts, bi-culturally as Maori have long done, but also the Gospels and the distinctive relationship that Jesus had with his own landscape, a topic rarely addressed by biblical scholars.

The beauty of this collection is that it comes at the spirituality of land and place from a dozen different angles. We see it through the macro lens of globalisation and colonisation, and all the way down to the micro view of a community garden in Mt Eden, equally complex in miniature, and showing equally clearly that there is no such thing as an empty place where God has not already walked and talked. And yet, as a revealing essay on "The Dark Night of Creation" proposes, the nearer we think we are to God, the less we see and know.

Every New Zealander who is even mildly curious about where we belong, and how God engages us here, like nowhere else, should read this book. You'll never look at a garden or a landscape in the same way again. It literally shifts the ground beneath your feet. ■

*John Bluck is the Anglican Bishop of Waiapu*

*The right book for the right time  
& the ideal Christmas gift*

## Land and Place

**He Whenua, He Wāhi**

**Spiritualities from Aotearoa New Zealand**

Edited by Helen Bergin o.p. & Susan Smith r.n.d.m.

This is a book for our time

A book our country needs to read

This book puts into words - especially for pakeha -

that unique feeling that who we are is shaped by living in this land of Aotearoa.

Already attracting enthusiastic reviews.

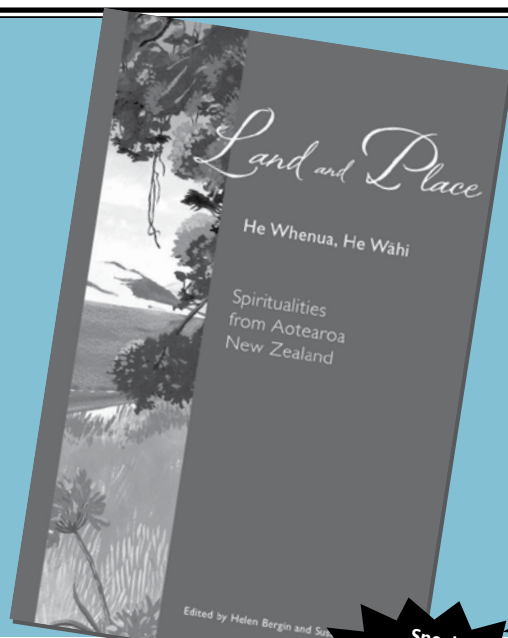
*"At last, a wonderful collection of essays which does justice to the spiritual significance of land and place. This insightful volume brings together a vast range of perspectives and spiritualities to recognise and celebrate the life which this particular land gives to all who are sustained by it. Written by those who know what it means to have their soul replenished by the generous life-giving power of land."*

Mike Riddell, New Zealand writer and poet

13 well known New Zealand writers – 11 Pakeha and 2 Maori – share their spirituality of the land.

Paul Dalziel, Jane Higgins, Susan Smith, Helen Bergin, John Dunn, Alice Sinnott, Ann Gilroy, Maurice Andrew, Dorothy Urlich-Cloher, Robyn McPhail, Elizabeth Julian, Tui Cadogan, Peter Murnane & Mary Horn

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## ‘High Noon’ again over Canberra

Last month, Prime Minister John Howard was re-elected with a decisive majority. The Canberra cowboy, with great political skill, defeated the Labour Party led by Mark Latham and Australians move on. But in what direction? The inevitable endorsement came from President George W. Bush, “Australia is a great ally in the war on terror and John Howard is the right man to lead that country.” Helen Clark remarked that it was “business as usual”.

For Australians, the war in Iraq was of lesser importance than the economy, so John Howard avoided the fate of Spain’s José Aznar. Australia is booming. The 200 Australian troops actually in Iraq are of only symbolic importance. The close relationship with America will continue and Howard will persist with his mantra that he has no regrets about the Australian commitment to ‘the coalition of the willing’. Like Tony Blair, he refuses to apologise for the discredited reasons for going to war. However, it seems certain that he will shift his defence policy closer to home should Bush lose his bid for a second term.

By default, Australian voters have endorsed Howard’s foreign policy on Iraq. They cannot complain should America seek further financial and military assistance in any future pre-emptive war in the Middle East. The road for Australia points to potential trouble in the Muslim stronghold of Indonesia. It points to the widening of the gap between New Zealand’s policy of not supporting such conflicts, without the United Nations, and Australia’s unilateral decisions in support of America. John Howard is committed to his role as Deputy Sheriff. He is gambling on Australians not forsaking him should *High Noon* force his hand.

### E-day looms in USA

This column is being written two weeks before the American presidential election. When the result is known, it will be the subject of much comment and analysis the world over. This is because the winner of the American presidential contest will have an enormous impact on the rest of the world. The election can be considered as a referendum on the Bush Administration’s new foreign policy of pre-emptive war which led to the invasion of Iraq. It is indisputable that the reasons for going to war in Iraq have been totally discredited.

Let us be clear about this foreign policy. Pre-emptive war refers to a direct specific threat which must be faced at once. In the case of Iraq, the correct term should be preventive war, which refers to a potential and therefore speculative threat. As Arthur Schlesinger points out, the distinction is

### Crosscurrents John Honoré

between legality and illegality. America’s war in Iraq has thus polarised the world into being ‘for or against’ George W. Bush.

At the time of writing this column, “the coalition of the willing” is unravelling. Eight nations have now left the coalition and other countries are reducing their contingents. It is obvious that no sovereignty has been transferred to Iraqis. Paul Bremer simply transferred authority to the undemocratically appointed interim Prime Minister, Iyad Allawi. The torture at Abu Ghraib has alienated the Iraqis, which leaves the American forces isolated in a hostile country and in the face of increasing anti-American feelings. Tony Blair is the only European leader who still supports Bush, but this blind devotion to a lost cause is costing him dearly. France is becoming more and more anti-American. Jacques Chirac now courts trade and favour with China. At every possible occasion, he reiterates his refusal to commit troops to Iraq.

So the new president of the US (hopefully, legally and indisputably elected) faces an enormous task of settling a war in Iraq, which has only served to increase terrorism. If there is to be any solution, the new man must first reign in the Israelis and stop selling them millions of dollars worth of war matériel. He must learn to live with others and seek alliances. He must stop destroying the environment and stop the huge corporations from raping the earth for the sake of profit. But most of all, he must regain the confidence of true allies and prove to the American people that their choice has been a wise one. Is this the potential of the man we now acknowledge as the President of the United States?

### Demise of a pitbull

While on the subject of elections, the crushing defeat of John Banks in Auckland seemed to bring a sigh of relief to the whole country. In his final year as mayor of Auckland, even his voice on radio made listeners tune in to anybody but him – even Cliff Richards.

John Banks became Minister of Police in 1990. I can remember him in the ’90’s arguing aggressively for the right of the individual to import American pit bull terriers. He was not going to stand in the way. I don’t blame him for not standing in the way of a pit bull, but since then he never stopped imitating one.

Bank’s confrontational style (unbelievably supported by Act and National) and his total belief that he was always right became more and more unbearable. The people have spoken or rather voted. Now, if we can only get rid of another Auckland, Paul Holmes. ■

## I have a dream...

The local media blew up a single sentence in the Pope's address to our bishops during their recent ad limina visit to Rome into a headline story about Catholics in New Zealand being unduly given to Sunday sport and entertainment. The real problem was that the bishops' address to the Pope and his reply were so predictable that it was difficult to find anything newsworthy in them.

This led me fall into a dream about what our bishops might have said and how the Pope might have replied.

"Holy Father, we were deeply disappointed by the letter you issued after the Oceania Synod. Important matters highlighted by several of us were completely ignored by you. Notable among these was the call for a reconsideration of the continued refusal of Holy Communion to those in uncanonical second marriages. Such silence on key issues in letters purporting to summarise the outcome of synods is one tragic result of the capture by Rome and its curia of control of such gatherings. These are now little more than charades of the exercise of episcopal authority.

"We commend to you the proposals put forward by sociologist Andrew Greeley in the September issue of that estimable little publication produced in our country, *Tui Motu*. Just one of his many excellent suggestions is that the international synod could have its own offices, enabling it to prepare its own agenda, free of curial domination.

"One other thing, Holy Father, we feel obliged to say to you. You have proclaimed a *Year of the Eucharist*. You have pointed out the importance of Sunday Mass and the grave obligation of pastors to make it available to the faithful. As you well know, the number of candidates for ordination has greatly diminished in lands like ours. We foresee that within only a few years, it will be impossible to provide many of the faithful with the opportunity to attend Sunday Eucharist.

"The admission of married men to the priesthood would not be a full answer to the problem. But it would certainly be a help. We find your refusal even to discuss the possibility of the ordination of married men in the Latin Church to be in contradiction to the grave obligation you have said lies on pastors, whether ourselves or yourself,

to facilitate the faithful's access to this key element in Catholic life."

In my dream I heard the Pope reply. "Thank you, bishops of New Zealand, for what you have said to me. Your words serve not just your own people but the entire body of the Church. I am an old man with little energy remaining. It is easy for me to fall back into the ways of thinking of my earlier days and of my background. It is easy for me to allow the forceful men who surround me to capture the flow of events and propel the statements and policies of the Apostolic See in directions that are not truly those of the Gospel.

"It cannot be long before I must stand before my God in judgment. Many of the things that I have achieved by his grace in my life will plead on my behalf. But other things will not. I am grateful to you, bishops of New Zealand, that you provide me with a stern challenge. There are things that must be amended in my way of acting as supreme pastor. I thank the Lord that he gives me the time and the challenge to do this."

At this stage I woke from my dream. Maybe it was just as well. ■

*Humphrey O'Leary*

*Fr Humphrey O'Leary is rector of the Redemptorist community in Glendowie, Auckland*

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## Someone Else's Country

After eight years in the cupboard, on 24 October TVNZ finally screened Alistair Barry's extraordinary documentary, *Someone Else's Country*. The film examines the ideology of Rogernomics, its continuation by the National Party and its impact on the country. It concludes with New Zealand adopting the election system MMP in 1993. The two themes are related. After riding roughshod over the rights of workers and ramming radical right-wing changes through parliament, without any popular support, something had to change. The very definition of democratic representation with the implicit requirement of a clear mandate was in peril. MMP had to come.

The ideology of the New Right proposed by the Treasury, which advised both parties when in power, carried the theory 'markets know best' to a level that no other democratic country in the world would have been able to enact. Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan

never achieved such radical changes in such a short time frame. The new Labour Government of 1984 removed government controls on finance markets, abolished export incentives, reduced the protection and support of local industries and commenced a sell-off of public assets at bargain prices to foreign investors. Jobs were lost, unemployment rose and control of New Zealand's resources such as coal, electricity and land growing millions of dollars worth of forestry trees, went to the 'big-business' elite.

During these three years of unprecedented change, the rights of Maori were forgotten. The Treaty of Waitangi was considered a hindrance to foreign ownership and a disincentive to private investment.

The economy went into recession, the share market collapsed, yet assets continued to be sold. Airlines, natural gas, oil refineries, shipping lines, forests

and NZ steel were all sold to the highest bidder. Government services were cut, the Public Service dismantled and education and health services radically altered on the way to privatisation.

In 1990 the incoming National Government persisted with the new right agenda. Ruth Richardson continued with her 'mother of all budgets', cutting benefits for sickness, the dole and related social security payments. In all of this, there was never any public support nor any semblance of a mandate from the people. There was indeed bitter resentment. Education and health were put on a 'user pays' footing. The asset sales continued. We are experiencing the repercussions of all these policies today.

Is New Zealand a better place? Rather the question must be asked, is this democracy? In that era, the *First Past The Post* system was, in effect, an elected dictatorship. The only thing people could do was vote decisively for MMP. This documentary was TV at its best. ■

John Honoré



## Riding the gravy train

Some interesting facts are now emerging which clearly prove the concerns expressed by the Catholic Caring Foundation throughout the course of this year.

Late last month a report was released by the Ministry of Social Development which details the extent to which Kiwis are sinking deeper into debt.

The facts themselves might be shocking enough but of even more concern is the reason why. According to the report more than 15 percent of Kiwi households now owe more than they own.

The report confirms our own anecdotal evidence that more and more people are struggling to meet their basic living expenses.

An increasing number of people are also taking out loans with short-term lenders which causes serious problems for some. The Ministry's findings only confirm what budget advisors around the country already know.

They regularly deal with people in danger of losing household necessities because of short term loans.

## Christmas on a card

*In spite of the fact that thousands of Kiwis will this year reach for their credit card over Christmas there are thousands more who don't have the 'luxury'.*

*This Christmas will be a tough time for large numbers of people who struggle to make ends meet for most of the year. For them Christmas is a time of worry.*

*You can help us to help them by becoming a member of the Catholic Caring Foundation.*

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