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Tui Motu

InterIslands

Being a Life-Affirming Community

NEIL DARRAGH, TUI CADIGAN, MARY THORNE

Understand Co-government

SUSAN HEALY

Why We Need to Take Misinformation Seriously

PETER HEALY, SANJANA HATTOTUWA

The Influence of Elizabeth Mackie OP

JANE HIGGINS

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Alive to Community
Ora i Roto i te Hapori

INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC MAGAZINE

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COVER PHOTO

Sunrise by Adele Payman on
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Editorial

Arise in Love

WE'RE AN EASTER PEOPLE — well, we're struggling to be. There's lots going on in our country and world to cause us to doubt this claim, not least the eruption of disinformation. It's divisive. It feeds on people's loss and confusion and engenders such vitriolic speech and behaviour that it is damaging the neighbourliness, care of one another, diversity and trust in authorities that we've worked towards and rely on. It could prevail if we don't hold to the love that overcomes violence and death-dealing — that fierce, celebratory, golden love of Christ rising among us.

The contributors in this issue give us much to reflect on the challenges of being Easter people — people who value life and community, people of hope and love, people critically alive to the signs of the times and committed to life to the full for everyone.

We can look out for Christ-minded people around us and take on some of their habits. Elizabeth Mackie OP who died in February is one such person for us at *Tui Motu*. Elizabeth inducted me as the new editor into *Tui Motu* magazine. She had been associated with the founding, governance and promotion of the magazine through its 19-year-life and had five years earlier joined Kevin Toomey in the production of the magazine. Elizabeth was experienced in every aspect while I was fresh from journalism school. I relied on her knowledge and relationships and imagined that we'd be a team for years. But in our second month working together Elizabeth joined her Dominican Sisters at General Chapter and was elected as their Congregational Leader. From then on her responsibilities for her Sisters grew and Elizabeth had to change roles — from *Tui Motu* staff member to our frequent visitor, encourager and sounding board.

Elizabeth was a storyteller, a person of fun and friendship. So many of her friends through the years wrote for *Tui Motu*, volunteered in our office in Dunedin, promoted the magazine around the country, served on the Board or as trustees of the Tui Motu Foundation. At the gatherings for her vigil and Requiem we heard tributes about Elizabeth from people in Aotearoa and from around the world. As a Christian World Service (CWS) worker, she had facilitated partnerships with groups across the globe committed to their community's development. At the time when Elizabeth began working for CWS she was recovering from depression and her gradual involvement drew her from isolation into a wide ecumenical and interfaith world of commitment and love in which she thrived once again. Jane Higgins reflects further on Elizabeth's influence in "Cross Currents" in this issue.

We are grateful to all the contributors to this 280th issue. As we read, their thoughtfulness, artistry, skill and generosity may bolster our imaginations of being Easter people now.

And as is our custom, our last word is of blessing and encouragement.



Tuimotu



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It's About Giving Service

SINCE LEAVING POLITICAL life in 2020, I'm regularly asked two questions. The first is: "Do you miss public life?" To that, my answer is a flat "No". But then I pause and confess: "Well, I miss the contact with constituents."

The second question is: "How's retirement going?" This infuriates me because I'm not retired. I need to work because there's still the mortgage to pay, and because I want to make a positive contribution. When I respond with a slightly huffy: "I'm not retired", the inquirer usually comments: "But I thought politicians received a pension for life!"

Let me clear up this myth. Anyone elected to parliament before 1992, and who has served continuously from that date, is entitled to membership of the Government Superannuation Fund scheme which provides a pension when they leave parliament commensurate with their years of service. (1992 is over 20 years ago and I'm not sure there's anyone left in parliament now who would qualify!)

Members of Parliament (MPs) elected after 1992 are entitled to a superannuation subsidy contribution during the time they serve as an MP. All New Zealand employees are entitled to this subsidy. The MP scheme is generous. An MP can gain a maximum of 8 per cent on top of their salary, if they choose to contribute 8 per cent of their own salary. But that's it. When they leave parliament they receive three months' salary from the time of their leaving, which for me was the date of the 2020 election. These conditions are documented on the Remuneration Authority website.

The perks for former and existing MPs were phased out in the mid to late 2000s. The reasoning was sound. There is no cause for elected representatives to continue to benefit from the taxpayer once they cease to be an elected representative.

When I was a new MP I remember sitting in the Labour caucus listening to some of the debates about restricting perks. I was still in awe of the privilege my position provided and would not argue to hold on to allowances

and extras afforded to retiring MPs. But I remember the impassioned counterarguments.

I wonder at the lack of media coverage of these changes — then or now. Does the media want to keep alive a false narrative that politicians are "pigs with their heads in the public trough"? I suspect that many people believe that being a member of parliament is a lifelong ticket on the taxpayer-funded gravy train.

The reality is that political life is mostly hard graft, long hours away from family, almost no social life and a lot of stressful moments. Tenure in parliament can be uncertain — you can be voted out, or booted out because of a scandal. And yes, there are many rewarding moments.

Which brings me to the admirable and painful steps two of my former close parliamentary colleagues and friends took in the last months. When Jacinda Ardern announced in January she was stepping down as Prime Minister, her decision would have been the culmination of months of introspection. Sleepless nights. It was not a spur-of-the-moment decision.

And when Chris Hipkins stepped up as prime minister, his was by no means an easy decision. Politics can be thrilling. It is ego-boosting. But it can also be ego-deflating and dangerous to the psyche and to physical health. That Chris chose to step up was a more selfless decision than most will ever know. Whether we support their political party or not, we owe Jacinda and Chris our respect — for themselves and for the generosity of their service.

As a friend I'm relieved for Jacinda and I worry for Chris. And I'm tremendously proud of both of them. 💎

Photo: Look Up Look Down Photography on Unsplash

Clare Curran, former MP, is a committed advocate and representative on social justice issues and writer of novels.



RESURRECTION

Life Being Transformed

Neil Darragh *discusses the transformation of the Church in our time to be a more life-affirming community.*

EASTER IS THE CELEBRATION of life being transformed. It recognises that life triumphs over death. As the preface of the Mass for the Dead says: "life is changed not ended".

Christian belief and practice is centrally about resurrection. In the not-too-distant past, theological discussion about the resurrection of Christ tended to concentrate on just how "real" resurrection could be. Did Christ's resurrection happen in the real objective world or was it something that occurred in the minds and hearts of the disciples but not in the real biosphere?

This was a serious debate and it suited the atmosphere of secularism and individualism that people needed to grapple with at that time. But it was also a distraction because it obscured two other important dimensions of resurrection to which we really did, and still do, need to give serious attention.

In Planet Earth

One of these dimensions is that the resurrection of Christ was and is an event that occurs, as we would say now, in the planet Earth. The resurrected Christ is not a ghost or a disembodied soul somewhere out in space. Nor will we be at our resurrection. Resurrection is bodily and happens within this planet. Belief in it commits us forever to the planet Earth in all its material and spiritual dimensions, including our relationships to the other Earth beings and processes with which our lives interact.

We do not leave this planet at death by collapsing into nothing or by escaping into a ghostly form of celestial travel in space. If we leave



a ravaged environment around us, we will stay ravaged along with it until someone restores it. It is not just our home for the next few years or decades but, in the timescale we can imagine, for ever. We don't just disappear from this planet at death. We shift over into some other dimensions of it that we had not paid much attention to before.

A Social Transformation

A second important but often overshadowed dimension of resurrection is that it is not primarily about individuals. In the New Testament communities, beliefs about a resurrected Christ are that resurrection involves them all. Hence so much emphasis on the community as the body of Christ. The life strands

of the Christian community and the risen Christ are interwoven to the point of identification.

Resurrection is not then just about our own individual lives — my resurrection, your resurrection, Christ's resurrection. Resurrection is a corporate project and an ongoing one. We are engaged in community transformation and social transformation.

At Easter, then, we are searching again for an ongoing transformation of the community. Our own personal transformation is important but it is not just about that. Easter is about more than a collection of individuals enjoying a better lifestyle than they had before or even having a better life after death than before. And community transformation is not just a vague ideal. Most of us have seen it embodied now and then, and here and there, in the concrete actions that characterise a life-affirming community.

A Life-Affirming Community

Some years ago, the Council for World Mission provided this description of what a "life-affirming" community would look like:

- It lives a spirituality of engagement, which is reflected in its worship, and in the nurture and support of its members;
- it is attuned to the wider communities in which it is set and is alert to the needs of the world, so that it is willing to stand alongside and speak out with those who are suffering or are marginalised;
- it does not work alone, being in active partnership with other groups who share similar concerns;
- it is a learning community, with its members taking seriously their re-reading of the Bible and their reflection on their experience, both as individuals and as a community.

If we are becoming like this, or on the way to being like this, we are a community of transformation, a community in ongoing resurrection.

Yet most of us also know that we are not yet like this. Within our communities, there still remain defects — personal, communal and

structural — which are barriers to achieving that transformed life. Ours is a Church with alarming defects; and in recent years spectacularly so. The period of Lent leading up to Easter has been about actively seeking to eliminate these barriers. This is not just an individual exercise. It is a community exercise, a corporate exercise. It includes a reformation of the community itself, reformation of the Church.

At the present time we are experiencing "synodality", our "walking together" — a process which, if we can get it right, may be a powerful tool to renew, reorganise, redirect and bring about a transformation of the Church at both the local and international level.

Walking Together: Synodality

In the way this "walking together" is being understood today in the Catholic Church (slightly differently in other Churches), one of its major dimensions is "participation" (the two other major dimensions being "communion" and "mission").

"Participation" emphasises that we all have gifts, a rich diversity of gifts, to share. We are called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on making pastoral decisions. There is an emphasis here also on ensuring the inclusion of those at the margins or who feel excluded.

This is not about bishops "consulting" the people. It is about all members of the Church playing a part. This is something new, something unusual here within the Catholic Church. Many smaller groups and organisations within the Catholic Church and many non-Catholic Churches have tried this kind of participation in the past. But the sheer scale of the attempt to refashion the whole enormous institution of the Catholic Church in the style of synodality is new. No one is quite sure how it will work or whether it will work at all.

Where I live, beside the Auckland harbour, it is a common sight to see a huge passenger or cargo ship moving rapidly up the harbour at a seemingly impossible pace.

At a certain point, this enormous momentum is redirected as the bow of the ship is dragged around in a great arc away from its direction up the harbour. Its own engines and steerage with a team of tugs push and pull this behemoth around at right angles to its former momentum and force it towards its berth against a wharf.

The sheer scale of the attempt to refashion the ... institution of the Catholic Church in the style of synodality is new. No one is quite sure how it will work or whether it will work at all.

The huge bulk of the institutional Church with its thousands of passengers and crew, its structures and power centres, is gradually being hauled around, partly using its own momentum built up over thousands of years, partly powered by its own engines, and partly pushed and pulled by smaller forces towards a new destination. This is the task of synodality.

Even the movement towards synodality, new as it is, has its own momentum. So the language is beginning to change. What started as a lead-up to a "bishops' synod" is already morphing into an "ecclesial synod". An ecclesial synod is more than and wider than a bishops' synod. The language changes as people walk together.

Resurrection is a life transforming process. It is a communal process and a planetary process of tugging and pulling on the huge momentum of a defective and unruly Church yet still full of power and life. 💎

Artwork: *Fun Time Tugs* by Tammy Blais ©
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Neil Darragh is a pastor, theologian and author of *But What Is the Church For?* (2022)





HE WAKA EKE NOA

Tui Cadigan describes our interdependence on people and Earth as like “a canoe which we are all in with no exceptions”.

THE WHAKATAUKĪ/PROVERB “he waka eke noa” focuses on our collective reality. Together we are responsible for our own health which depends on the health of our environment — we’re intrinsically and inextricably linked. The peoples of Aotearoa are dependent upon these islands for our health and well-being. Recent weather events which required states of emergency in the areas of Auckland, Northland, Te Tairāwhiti and Hawke’s Bay, highlighted our dependence on nature. We discovered very quickly that conditions can change in a flash and threaten our safety and survival.

Cyclone Gabrielle is not the first disaster of its kind in recent years

and comparing the magnitude of destruction of each has little value. There are points of response and reaction that we have come to expect from the Government, Emergency Services, Local Councils and communities themselves.

I don’t want to debate their responses other than to say that lives were lost, and many were saved by those who risked everything out of concern for others.

RECOGNISE OURSELVES IN CREATION

My interest is in changing our relationship with “nature”. Let’s look at the essence of the whakataukī “a canoe which we are all in”, and how as gospel people we are living

in relationship with the rest of creation in Aotearoa. What does it take to activate the commitment of individuals for the well-being of all? It is gratifying to see people making use of rubbish and green waste bins to maintain their personal environment. But how many of us are prepared to speak out, or stand in support of those who do, when something needs to be addressed more broadly?

In *Laudato Si’* Pope Francis speaks to the issue of care for our common home. To what extent are we listening and can we say we are living the relationship with integrity?

TAKING A STAND FOR LIFE

We all know of groups who have

dared to shine a light on the wanton destruction of our environment and ecosystems. These groups have protested against the greed and carelessness of governments, companies and businesses that have carried out these damaging activities. And they have challenged our apathy in allowing destruction to continue in our communities for generations.

Some of us will cringe at the mention of some of these eco-warriors, and say they are put off because of something the person had done or said. But when any aspect of creation is threatened and we are aware of it, surely our response is demanded?

We have to ask ourselves how committed are we as Christians to the words we pray regularly: “your Kingdom come on Earth”?

FACING THE REALITY

Some years ago I chaired my hapū Rūnanga and because we were concerned about the diminishing fishing stock, we tried to educate people on the importance of mātaihai/marine reserves as Māori understand them.

Many people within the hapū travelled up and down the Tai Poutini/West Coast sharing our concerns regarding diminishing fish stocks and the impact that huge pleasure boats coming in from other areas under the guise of recreational fishing were having on fish sustainability in our area.

The catch limit at that time was ridiculously high — six hāpuka per person per day per boat. For example, over a three-day weekend one vessel with six to 10 fishers aboard could take on a huge haul of fish — far beyond what an individual, or even a family, could reasonably consume. The hapū suspected that the fish were destined for the black market.

PRICE OF DENIAL IS TOO HIGH

When we explained this situation publicly we received horrendous anger and abuse, even from people we had known and lived alongside for generations. Somehow the fact that we were Māori made these people deaf to the information being shared

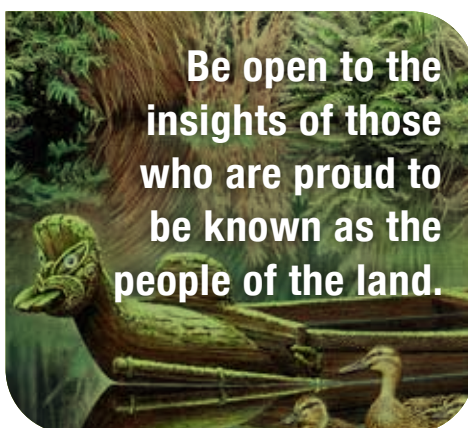
and blind to the reality they, too, were experiencing.

If this denial continues, future generations will continue to be affected. Racism and ignorance stymie society and as climate change bites deeper we need to act together with urgency to correct the reckless choices that are diminishing the environment on which our lives depend.

TAKE ACTION TO PRESERVE LIFE NOW

We know we cannot control nature, so we must prepare for the weather conditions of the changing climate. We hear so much about the global village and how important it is to think globally and act locally.

I wonder if we understand what that asks of us? Our choices as consumers, as travellers and within our businesses have an impact



beyond our shores. The impact is global — it is making demands that Earth cannot sustain. Our response is critical for the future of the planet and our survival.

I watched the disappearance of species of animals and vegetation across the planet documented by David Attenborough in *Our Planet* with alarm. Like most of those who saw it, I felt concerned for Earth and her peoples.

I realise that some people can focus only on where they will find food for the next meal for themselves and their families. But for most of us across Aotearoa we need

to ask and respond: Which do we contribute to most — enhancement or diminishment, life or death?

Some people look for life on other planets — that's a waste of effort and money. Both would be better spent healing this planet which is our home.

GROWING IN WHAKAWHANAUNGATANGA

As we age mortality is a constant companion and we experience the loss of many of those we have known and loved.

Recently I was moved by the tribute a Dominican Sister gave to one of her religious sisters at her funeral Eucharist. I was moved to hear how this gentle educator, a compassionate, humble and intellectually-gifted woman of God, touched so many lives here and in other countries.

She was committed to those who had little or nothing; and she had reached out to them and made a difference. Her life was about whakawhanaungatanga, making right relationships happen, and she had the ability and the opportunity through her ministry to do it.

We are all called to do similar, making the most of the resources we have at our disposal. In Scripture, in karakia/prayer and hīmene/hymns the words “I come that they may have life in abundance” (Jn 10:10) offer an invitation and hope of fullness of life.

LEARN FROM TANGATA WHENUA

Tangata whenua have the longest experience of living in Aotearoa. We should look to them for ways of relating to this whenua/taiao (land/Earth). By all means listen to science but be open, too, to the insights of those who are proud to be known as the people of the land.

Noho ora mai, stay safe. 💎

Artwork: *Duck Creek* by Alvin Pankhurst ©
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www.pankhurst.co.nz

Paintings available at the Alvin Pankhurst Gallery,
Parnell, Auckland

Tui Cadigan RSM affiliates to te hapū o Kāti Māhaki ki Makaawhio and is Poutini Ngāi Tahu descent. She lives in Ōtautahi Christchurch.





LOVE Life and SUPPORT Life

Mary Thorne suggests that our love and support for life must include the whole community of our country and of Earth.

I BELIEVE THAT an authentic pro-life stance in this place at this time, demands a radical rethink of how we live in Aotearoa. In order to have a future in which all life flourishes, a consistent ethic of life is also a consistent ethic of solidarity. No one can be excluded from full participation in the benefits of belonging to this community. It's about justice. Our future as a peaceful, independent nation depends on our ability to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi — to honour a relationship which calls us to recognise, acknowledge and respect others for who they are so that we can be who we are, partners in the

ongoing abundant life of Aotearoa.

Recognising Challenges of Ethic of Care

In our Christian tradition, the doctrine of the dignity, the sacredness and the mystery of life, is sound. Life is a complex affair, characterised by triumph and tragedy, tenacity and fragility, exquisite beauty and indescribable bleakness. It encompasses timeframes and diversity beyond our comprehension and always, its nature is evolutionary. Change is integral to life. To be alive is to grow, to develop, to unfold.

This relentless forward momentum towards new possibility is discernible

in the tangible and intangible aspects of reality. To truly love and care for life, we have to understand deeply that the ethic of care cannot be expressed in precise formulas: laws, strictly enforced codes of conduct, guidelines that do not change from one generation to the next, or from one situation to the next.

Evolution at Work

Contemporary theologians like Ilia Delio suggest that God is the life-force, the power of forward momentum at the heart of life. God is the invitation and allure to relinquish what is static and fixed and to participate in the process that leads us beyond present limits of thinking and being. Ilia Delio refers to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin who states that evolution is fundamental to all aspects of life and every system must conform itself to evolution to survive.

Evolution is inconsistent with the worldview that confidently prioritises the pursuit of all that is bigger, brighter and better for the sake of profit and power. Evolution involves an increasing awareness of interconnection and interdependence. It is a preparedness and a nimbleness to respond. Ilia Delio says: "To live in openness to the future is to live with a sense of creativity and participation, to use our gifts for the sake of the whole by sharing them with others."

Develop a Consistent Ethic of Life

In Aotearoa in 2023, to be committed supporters of life we have to develop that consistent ethic of life which requires us to work for the good of the whole. A new moral vision is emerging to guide us on our journey to become a transformed community. We are restructuring our fundamental vision of the world.

Recipients of Earth's Care

The challenge to critique contemporary culture is not new and there's certainly a reversal of the status quo indicated in the Gospels. We're familiar with this topsy-turvy utopia: the first being last and the rejected stone becoming the cornerstone. But we can be blind to what's happening around us, and

often our mantra sound great until we interrogate them. I think of the exhortation – everywhere, nowadays – to "Care for Earth". Do we care for Earth? Or, for millennia, has the planet nurtured our evolving existence? Earth cares for us.

This is our vital, urgent learning. Earth is the generative love of God made visible. We are made of the same stuff as our planet and, with abundant diversity, Earth has provided for our needs. The spiritual traditions of Indigenous people across every continent have recognised this relationship and celebrated it with awe and respectful gratitude. Western culture has come to view humans as masters of Earth, entitled to use her resources to enrich the exploiters. Human induced global warming and ecological devastation are the results. We have laid waste to our planet and we have trashed our home.

If we humans, as recent participants in Earth's evolutionary story, have so devastated life's well-being, we also have the ability and responsibility to participate in intentional evolution towards life's flourishing.

Reality of Common Home

The vision of Planet Earth as a common home, in which the flourishing of all life is the primary goal of human aspiration and effort, can be difficult to see in the plethora of contemporary images. "Church" has become a widely discredited concept, but it is a context in which the struggle to speak out about social and ecological justice does go on.

In 2015 Pope Francis told a gathering in Bolivia that our first task is to put the economy at the service of peoples. Human beings and Nature must not be at the service of money. He urged the world to say NO to an economy of exclusion and inequality where money rules rather than serves. He warned that such an economy kills, excludes and destroys

Mother Earth.

Aotearoa is into recovery mode after the destruction brought about by Cyclone Gabrielle. Lives have been lost, homes wrecked, livelihoods turned upside-down. Our whenua is sodden, slipping and flooded. We are experiencing the effects of climate change. We hear Green Party co-leader and Minister for Climate Change James Shaw expressing sadness that we have wasted so many years resisting the changes needed to reduce emissions and minimise harm to the planet.

Discerning a Way Forward

As in the Covid crisis, voices are calling for innovative, sustainable measures to be implemented in the rebuild and restoration. The former "normal" is no longer adequate. As in the Church's synodal endeavour, we need a new emphasis on listening to the voices of all the people in order to discern the way forward. It is abundantly clear that the contribution of Māori has been disproportionately beneficial. Marae have thrown open their doors to care for local communities. All these factors prompt conversations as Aotearoa faces a general election this year.

If any place in the planet can achieve social and ecological justice it might be Aotearoa. We're competitive people who want to be leaders among the communities of Earth. We can demonstrate the ongoing promise of Waitangi to the world – the success of a nation based on a relationship in which diverse partners respect and listen to different voices in the decision-making of governance.

To love life and to be powerful supporters of life's flourishing, we will need to be alert to every situation that diminishes life – be that human life or any other life in Earth. 💎

Painting: *Waikato River* (for Waikato River Art Award 2014) by Timon Maxey ©
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Mary Thorne lives on the Manukau Harbour, is a former prison chaplain and is enjoying time with family and her granddaughter



Should We Be Afraid of Co-governance?

Susan Healy discusses the significance of co-governance for the future of Aotearoa.

Fears Can Be Learned

When we were growing up, our neighbours across the road had a couple of bulldogs. The dogs had a roaming area in front of the house but were well fenced in. We older kids in our family liked to go over and talk with the dogs and reach across and stroke their heads. We would take my two-year-old sister with us, and she loved the dogs as much as we did.

We were astonished when, at age four, my sister suddenly developed a real fear of the dogs and wouldn't go near them. Where did this come from? We soon realised that she was now spending time with friends her own age; they would cringe with fear whenever they saw the dogs, even at a distance. My sister had quickly absorbed their reactions.

It is concerning how, in ways subtle and unsubtle, fear is being engendered around the issue of co-governance.

Fear for Political Gain

Fear is a powerful motivator in elections. "If there were an actual political playbook, fear tactics would occupy prime real estate. Simply put: fear works," a commentator has said.

This year at Rātana pā National Party leader Christopher Luxon chose to focus on co-governance, distancing himself and his party from any form of it in the delivery of public services. In justifying an attack on the Māori Health Authority, Luxon tapped into the "one rule for all/one service for all" theme — an approach that has dismally failed

Māori. If anything is to be learned from dealing with Covid, it was the greatly improved outcomes for Māori and Pasifika once the advice of their own health experts was heeded: that their communities knew best how to engage with and deliver to their people.

When Prime Minister Chris Hipkins met with the National Iwi Leaders Forum at Waitangi this year, he was told of their concerns at the way racism is being stirred in the country, especially over the issue of co-governance. "There is a level of frustration among iwi that again iwi and Māori are being used as a political platform," said Jamie Tuuta. Waikato-Tainui chairperson Tukoroirangi Morgan put it bluntly: "Will he [Hipkins] succumb to the attack dogs of the National Party and ACT as they fan the flames of racism and anti-Māori sentiments?"

Because the concept of "co-governance" is new for many of us, it is not unreasonable to have doubts and questions about its implications. However, when the Indigenous leaders of our country are clearly advocating for something, it behoves us who are not Māori to take note and consider their reasons for it.

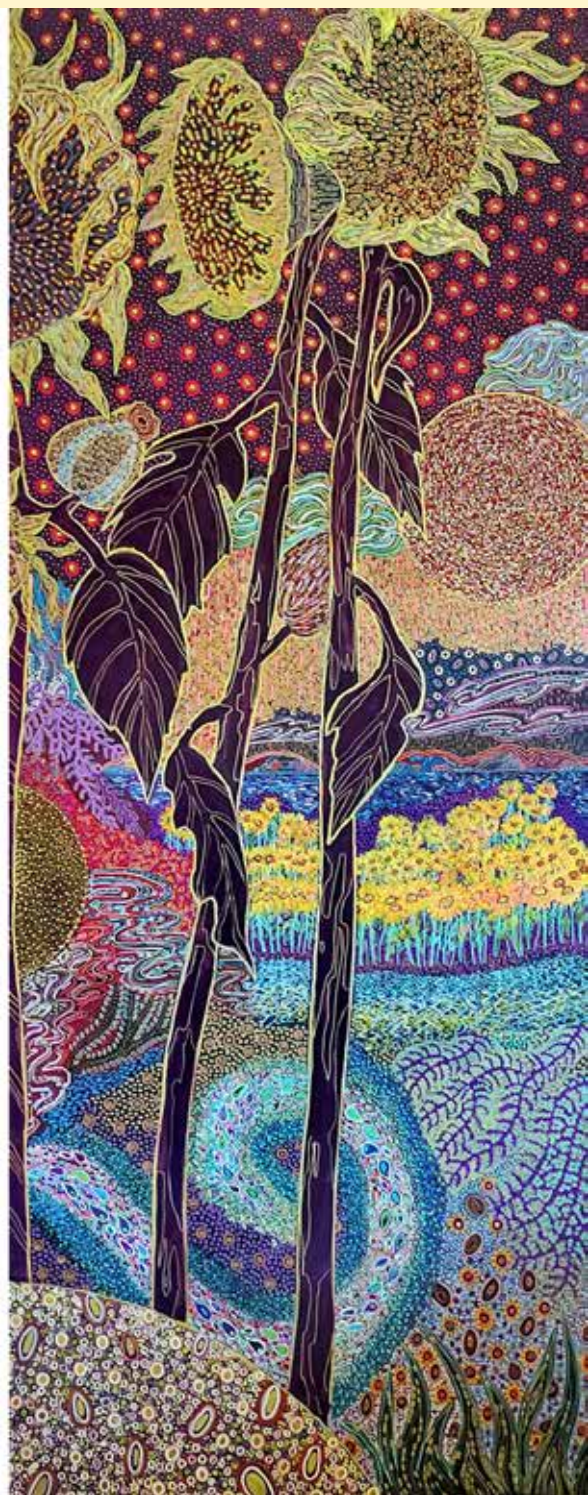
Mutuality and Cooperation Fundamental to Treaty Agreement

It is easy to forget that in the 1840 Treaty covenant it was Māori who chose to grant a place in their lands for the Queen's people and those

who were to come in the future. They fully expected the authority of their hapū and iwi to continue and be reinforced; the Crown pledged that it would uphold the tino rangatiratanga (full authority) of the different Māori nations (tribes).

Māori then and now are a people of peoples, within a polity where the independence and interdependence of each nation is acknowledged. In their world, coming together to





negotiate agreements and reconcile differences is basic to advancing common goals. The Queen's iwi was embraced as a people to live within this arrangement.

Ngāpuhi Speaks (the independent report on the Ngāpuhi Nui Tonu claim to the Waitangi Tribunal) concludes: [In Te Tiriti o Waitangi] "the rangatira were allowing the governor to stand alongside them as rangatira of the Queen's people ... The relationship

was to be one of co-operation, mutual support and reciprocity. In matters of common concern, the rangatira and the governor were to come together to address problems, advance common interests, decide on any needed new law, and generally work for the good of the country and its diverse communities."

Today, it is still the desire of Māori leaders and their communities that the relationship with government authorities is one where their mana is recognised and respected, and working together is based on real co-operation, mutual support and reciprocity – not just token consultation.

Learning from What Is Happening Already

Chris Finlayson, among others, stresses that there are already a good number of co-governance arrangements in place and they are working well. The former Minister of Treaty Negotiations explained: "Since the late 1990s, governments have agreed in some major Treaty of Waitangi settlements to create boards formed of local government and iwi representatives to manage significant environmental features" (*Listener*, February 18-24, 2023).

Interestingly, the iwi and government representatives are generally expected to reach decisions by consensus. This is in line with traditional Māori decision-making, and allows for a cooperative way of working. Tukoroirangi Morgan said that in the years he and John Luxton were co-chairs of the Waikato River Authority all decisions were made by consensus. This is an Authority that has been very effective in its work of returning the Waikato River to health.

A similar positivity has been expressed by those involved in collaborative arrangements in the

South (Grant Miller, *Otago Daily Times*, 6 August 2022). Andrew Noone, Otago Regional Council chairman, and others spoke to Miller about excellent working partnerships with Ngāi Tahu. Heading the Ōtākou Rūnanga, Edward Ellison sees the partnerships as a benefit for everyone: "The Ngāi Tahu view is that we can help provide the cleaner water and environment that all New Zealanders want."

Ellison points out that many arrangements with regional and local councils guarantee iwi a voice in decision-making but are not negotiated co-governance as in the Treaty settlement cases. Politicians often fail to make this distinction. This is the situation with the Maori Health Authority (MHA). The MHA is not co-governing the whole health system; its role is to "ensure accountable Māori voices are heard at the decision-making level" (Tipa Mahuta, co-chair of the MHA board).

The concept of co-governance can be used to play on people's fears, or it can be seen as signalling a wider movement towards restoring and realising the intentions of the Treaty covenant. There is a choice between staying in fear and ignorance – or listening, learning and wanting a future based on reconciliation and the restoration of mana.

"Listening is much more than hearing – listening means paying attention, having the desire to understand, to give value, to respect, to treasure the word of others" (Pope Francis, 2016).✧

FURTHER RESOURCES

Glenn McConnell, "How co-governance is already working," *Stuff*, 1 April 2022 www.tinyurl.com/38cktr8m

Grant Miller, "Co-governance has become a contentious concept. Is it a threat or an opportunity?" www.tinyurl.com/425f9mxc

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Instagram: [tallulahnunez_art_nz](https://www.instagram.com/tallulahnunez_art_nz)
www.artbythesea.co.nz/Tallulahnunezexhibition2023

Susan Healy from Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland is a Pakeha Dominican lay woman and a member of Pax Christi Aotearoa NZ.



A COMMON GOOD THAT IS GOOD FOR ALL

Glynn Cardy suggests that subsidiarity is a way of increasing democracy.



SELF-DETERMINATION IS a spiritual issue. It is about realising that, apart from and including any other relationship we have, we are each a “child of God”.

“Child of God” is religious language for the inherent sacredness and potency of every human life. It means that each of us has a mandate and the potential to create love and justice, and with these the autonomy to heal.

Too often Christians interpret “child of God” as an injunction to remain dependent and never grow into their authority and responsibility.

To be a “child of God” means that our autonomy, self-determination and authority are not bounded by others. We don’t need permission to make love, make justice, and heal hurts. Those things are our birth-right, our responsibility and our vocation. We need encouragement even more than words to “become who you are”.

Poverty, prejudice, and the absence of opportunity can derail our journey towards self-determination. These can deprive us of the “foods” of health, education, and confidence.

For those of us who haven’t needed such strength, for we haven’t suffered much deprivation, then part of our making love, justice and healing is to share, and to advocate resource sharing, in order to promote the autonomy and self-determination of all. And so, we together build a common good. There has been some scaremongering around the concept of “co-governance” with the scare seeming to be that the

elected representatives of the Pākehā majority might not have the final say. “Final say” points to a limited way of understanding building the common good.

Co-governance is about representatives of Māori and specific authorities agreeing to work together for the protection of people, land and taonga. It’s about implementing policies and practices that will build an inclusive society directed to a common good that is good for all — people, land and environment.

Apart from anything else, apart from any desire to right wrongs or help others, such sharing to build a common good that is good for all, is in our best interests.

To create a society with the goal of maximum autonomy for all is to aid locals (whether they are an interest group, a small town, or an iwi) to have as much control as possible over their individual and corporate lives, in order to make those individual and corporate lives as good and as productive as possible.

And all sorts of good can flow from such autonomy: like ownership of problems and solutions, confidence (māia), communal work (mahi), and well-being (ora). This is what some Māori leaders describe as rangatiratanga: resourcing and enabling local communities to find and control local solutions for local betterment.

Of course, not all things can be dealt with locally. Regionalised or centralised policies and governance are needed to create and maintain vision, infrastructure and services that can benefit all — like policies around trade, finance and foreign affairs, and the addressing of injustices and disparities. But here, too, policies and practices that endure are best created by working together (mahi tahi), building a consensus across differences, and acknowledging past failings and redressing them.

We need to encourage the skills of listening, giving respect, honouring those who have gone before, righting injustices, addressing racism, and encouraging and celebrating self-determination (rangatiratanga) and autonomy (mana motuhake). Te Tiriti o Waitangi (signed 183 years ago) points to this path of partnership and cooperation, where every voice is valued rather than weighed on the scales of power and privilege.

This path of nation building, of building community, of building a common good that is good for all, is to my mind grounded in a spirituality that recognises the inherent sacredness and potential of every person, class and culture to make love, to make justice, and to heal and be healed.

If any structures, laws, or ways of governance can aid such a vision they have my support.

Painting: *Sharing Gifts* by Susan Cohen Thompson ©
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Glynn Cardy is the minister of the Community of St Luke, Auckland. With Stephanie, his wife, their household includes four adult children and two cats.



If the Sun Won't Shine We Must

Christine Crowe writes from
Gisborne in the aftermath of
Cyclone Gabrielle.



EVERYONE IS TIRED now. We've had enough but the rain just keeps coming. I went and stood in the sun for a few moments — and now it's gone! But for that brief time, the sun made me feel good. A bit of blue sky and a bright outlook.

I'm in Gisborne and I can only imagine how the people in Hawke Bay, Tokomaru Bay and Wairoa are feeling now — as well as people further north. Totally exhausted, probably. Physically, mentally and spiritually. A step forward in the cleanup of Cyclone Gabrielle followed by two steps back. The constant (or so it feels) onslaught of rain and showers reminds me of the aftershocks of the Christchurch earthquakes. Ending any time soon?

When a huge disaster occurs adrenaline kicks in and we run on that for as long as we can. Somehow we manage to put fear aside and try to be calm and to figure out how best to deal with the situation. There is a process we go through when faced with circumstances we can't control. The emotions — fear, anger, helplessness and hopelessness emerge and can take over. Sometimes we can be all over the place, mentally. There doesn't seem to be any particular order for getting through these feelings. But during this phase it is important to be kind to ourselves — and to others especially.

If we're OK physically, we can check on others. First we make sure they're all in one piece, then we can evacuate to relative safety if need be.

I've witnessed many acts of kindness and love during the times of physical danger. It really touches my heart and, along with everything else, I find tears of relief and gratitude welling in me. And many people turn to God in these moments. Asking for help and giving thanks for that assistance.

But when the situation seems endless it is easy to become despondent and fearful — edgy. Stress can keep us awake at night and make living pretty tough, for us and our near ones. I've found keeping contact with others is important and community support is crucial.

Whenever we hear stories of how people have suffered during the disaster, in the same breath we hear of the wonderful aroha they have received — even from people they hadn't known beforehand. I think it is that aroha which settles in us and helps us to have hope. Comforting words and actions, shared stories and relief from worry lift us up. They slow down our panic and even as we know that everything will take time to get better (some things faster than others), we can dare to hope for the basics again — safety, homes, school, work.

When we see how recovery is progressing — communications with loved ones is restored, electricity is

connected, a road is usable again, the sludge is moved, food gets to the supermarket — we all share in the feeling of relief and well-being. Something good is happening.

I have been blessed with a good amount of hope. Our property wasn't badly affected by Cyclone Gabrielle. Friends' houses have been flooded or had a near miss from rising flood water. I feel some guilt when I see the damage close by. Loss is in the little things too, in photos and precious family treasures that have been totally destroyed in the floods. My heart goes out to those families for their loss.

We help where we can — and prayer is a significant help. Many people are feeling overwhelmed with hopelessness and need to feel the warmth of a community and a nation that cares about them.

I'm encouraged by the aroha and energy of locals organising fundraising events: "So let's fill that theatre to the brim, people, and do what you need to do to get there." And from a community web editor: "There's something about shit getting real that brings out the optimist in me. I believe that it's when we humans really shine. If the sun isn't going to, surely it's the least we can do." And we do!

Photo by Charlotte Clinton/Shutterstock.com

Chris Crowe is semi-retired, volunteers for St Vincent de Paul Society, the local museum and as proofreader for *Tui Motu* and loves being in a garden.





FOOTWASHING: ENACTING CHURCH

Thomas O'Loughlin explains how footwashing demonstrates a community that serves its people and the world.

TWO SCENES

Imagine two scenes. The first is at a World Council of Churches' meeting in 1998. There were men and women in clerical dress and others, mainly men, in exotic robes. Some claimed authority from the apostles and others from their empowerment by the Spirit. Some had centuries of arguments creating barriers between them, others could barely enter such a thought world. Tracking who considered whom a "real" minister and who would receive sacraments from whom, would require a computer. Yet, all could be united in one ritual — footwashing. This is because all of them heard the challenge of the Lord Jesus as announced in John's Gospel

and so they walked in procession to wash-up basins on the floor of the hall and washed each other's feet. It was amazing to see the male Orthodox bishop in his flowing robes kneel to wash the feet of a female American Baptist minister. This gesture made a deeper and more lasting impression on those present than the thousands of learned and wise words they'd listened to that day. Indeed, it is the best remembered part of the meeting.

The second scene is a dinner at a Greco-Roman merchant's house two millennia ago. Guests arrive on foot tired and dusty. Part of the hospitality is for the guests to have their feet washed before they relaxed for the meal — and this task falls to the lowliest

household slave, invariably a woman. As well as being an act of welcome and valuing, footwashing shows the guest respect. Yet simultaneously this footwashing is an act of exploitation and human debasement: the slave is not acting from respect for her owner's guest, she has no choice but to perform this demeaning task. Her own human dignity is denied and she is reduced to a function.

These realities were well understood across the Greco-Roman world and many texts — such as the Greek translation of Genesis 18:1-4 — show they were understood within Judaism in Jesus's time. It is only if we understand this item of cultural knowledge — that having your feet washed signals honour but washing

another's feet indicates servitude — can we understand the account of the footwashing incident in John's story of the Last Supper (Jn 13:1-15).

THE ACTIONS OF JESUS

Over the past two centuries a vast effort has been put into a quest to see what words in the Gospels can be attributed directly to Jesus. The result is — despite protests — that we cannot get back to the “very words of Jesus” but to what his followers remembered: it is this memory that constitutes what was distinctive about their Way.

One of the effects of this concentration on the “words of Jesus” is to overlook some of the actions of the early communities which are so at odds with their cultures that they must have their origins in Jesus's actions. The idea that Jesus would take the role of a female slave and wash people's feet is so disruptive within the overall memory of him, that it must have a basis in his actions.

In the sole recollection of Jesus washing feet we can uncover several levels of discomfiture among his followers. First, Peter's objection that it is inappropriate to have his feet washed (Jn 13:8) — and the reply that anyone who does not have their feet washed cannot share in the Christ.

Second, the objection of proper order: servants, not masters, wash feet (Jn 13:13). For Jesus this was where his group's values are to be upside-down. Here, the masters should wash the servants' feet because they are part of the kingdom. This is found in the Synoptics' statement: “The kings of the gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority are called ‘Benefactors’. But not so among you: rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves” (Mk 10:42-5; Mt 20:25-8).

But words are one thing, getting down on the floor and washing feet is far more demanding! Indeed, we have one of the very few commands addressed to the Church: “So if I,

your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. I indeed have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you” (Jn 13:14-5).

How easily we recall the command to baptise (Mt 28:19) and to remember Jesus at eucharistic meal (Lk 22:19), but forget the command to wash one another's feet.

THE EARLY FOLLOWERS' PRACTICE

Jesus washing feet recalled in John, remembered within a context of opposition from the disciples, along with other references to footwashing (eg, Lk 7:38), shows that the early Churches practised washing each other's feet as a way of imitating Jesus and demonstrating that their communities had different values from society around them.

DISTORTING JESUS' FOOTWASHING ACTION

Moreover, 1 Timothy gives one piece of direct evidence of the practice from the early second century. 1 Timothy is a document on community organisation and in it we find: “She must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet ...” (1 Tim 5:10).

Clearly, footwashing has become far less socially disruptive. It has been turned into a woman's task — one of “the widows” (those dependent on the Church's charity). The community kept the action but preserved social hierarchy: it is a menial task proving a poor woman is a “deserving case”. The community has forgotten that the leaders should be doing it to the least — such as poor or old women. It was nice to imagine the Last Supper scene — but a slave-owner washing his slave's feet was just too threatening to social order.

Some communities took footwashing seriously — in

monasteries it helped monks understand how to relate to one another and how to welcome guests — but, for most, footwashing was marginalised. The fact of having to wash another's feet touches something deep within us: it neither appeals nor attracts. But there is that awkward fact: what Jesus did.

RECOVERING THE MEANING

Footwashing which takes place on Holy Thursday can be a token mime or a demonstration of clerical humility. John's Gospel calls us to confront our deeper attitudes of preferring to be served rather than

What John's Gospel calls us to confront is our deeper attitudes of preferring to be served rather than to serve.

to serve. This is something that every church member needs to address. Hence the Gospel assumes that each person both washes feet and has their feet washed.

Footwashing is a part of rediscovering discipleship and needs to take place on Holy Thursday as well as at other times.

Washing feet is messy but it can be done. It is not just theatre but a collective response to Jesus's shocking example becoming real in us.

We don't expect mutual footwashing in liturgy. It challenges our imaginations now just as it did in the churches where John preached. It may leave behind a damp floor, but for those who of us who take part it will communicate a renewed vision of Church.

Painting: *Foot Washing* by Bob Gilroy SJ ©
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Thomas O'Loughlin is Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology. *In Christ Now We Meet Both East and West: On Catholic Eucharistic Action* (2023) is his latest book.



Loaves and Fishes

This is not
the age of information.

This is *not*
the age of information.

Forget the news,
and the radio,
and the blurred screen.

This is the time
of loaves
and fishes.

People are hungry,
and one good word is bread
for a thousand.

By David Whyte, from *River Flow: New & Selected Poems* © 2012 David Whyte
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BE ALERT TO LIES

Peter Healy explains how the crucifixion of poor people continues in ecological sacrifice zones in their countries and our call to ecological conversion.

CENTRAL OTAGO POET

Brian Turner wrote a little poem "Sky". It is more poignant reading it now after the destructive impact of Cyclone Gabrielle.

**If the sky knew half
of what we're doing
down here**

**it would be stricken,
inconsolable,
and we would have**

nothing but rain.

The poem points to what American ecologist Eileen Crist calls "the human supremacy complex". Within this "complex" industrial processes take over our planet home in almost every sphere. Extreme and all too common examples of human supremacy show up in what are called "sacrifice zones". Almost every nation has sacrifice zones in various states of degradation. Lake Rotoitipaku is a sacrifice zone in Aotearoa because it was made toxic by industrial waste from the Tasman pulp and paper mill at Kawerau. Many coastal communities of Te Tai Rāwhiti look and feel like sacrifice zones after the inundation of slash that has descended upon them from hinterland forestry.

Making Sacrifice Zones in Earth

In the creation of a sacrifice zone, economic expansion is championed as human progress. It is considered normal human behaviour in pursuit of capital gains. The thinking behind economic expansion goes something like this: "Earth belongs to us. It is a resource base and we, the industrialists, are of greater importance than any persons or elements living within it. If people and creatures are harmed in this process, that is just an external cost."

Such thinking privileges human industry above any ecological

worldview. Few decisive steps are taken to address this entitlement and all that it assumes to itself. Privileged portions of our human community have always exercised powers of this kind and by and large they are the captains of corporate extractive industries.

Making Sense of Death-Resurrection Now

A friend recently asked me what our ecological crisis has to do with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The question started me thinking. Reflecting on Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* I was arrested by his phrase "the crucified poor" (LS

**Sacrifice zones are
the hidden and dark
side of our industrial
growth world —
collateral damage
that stricken people
and places endure for
the conveniences of
the rest of us.**

par 241). Francis is addressing the desperate state of certain people around our world who are ignored and considered disposable. Many of these people live in sacrifice zones — places where high levels of pollution cause cancer, heart disease and respiratory illness.

Communities living in these degraded areas are systematically excluded from decision-making and their dignity and human rights are continuously trampled on. People are "crucified" in the industrial-extractive processes of these places as are the soils, vegetation, animal life and airways. The infirmity of physical sites and people are the interconnected consequence of sacrifice zones.

The Body of Christ is put to death over and again in these desperate

places. When the human community exercises power and control over people and places, the Body of Christ suffers condemnation and death. A short answer to the question about ecology and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ might be: "Jesus has never stopped being condemned and put to death in the poor of Earth and in Earth herself".

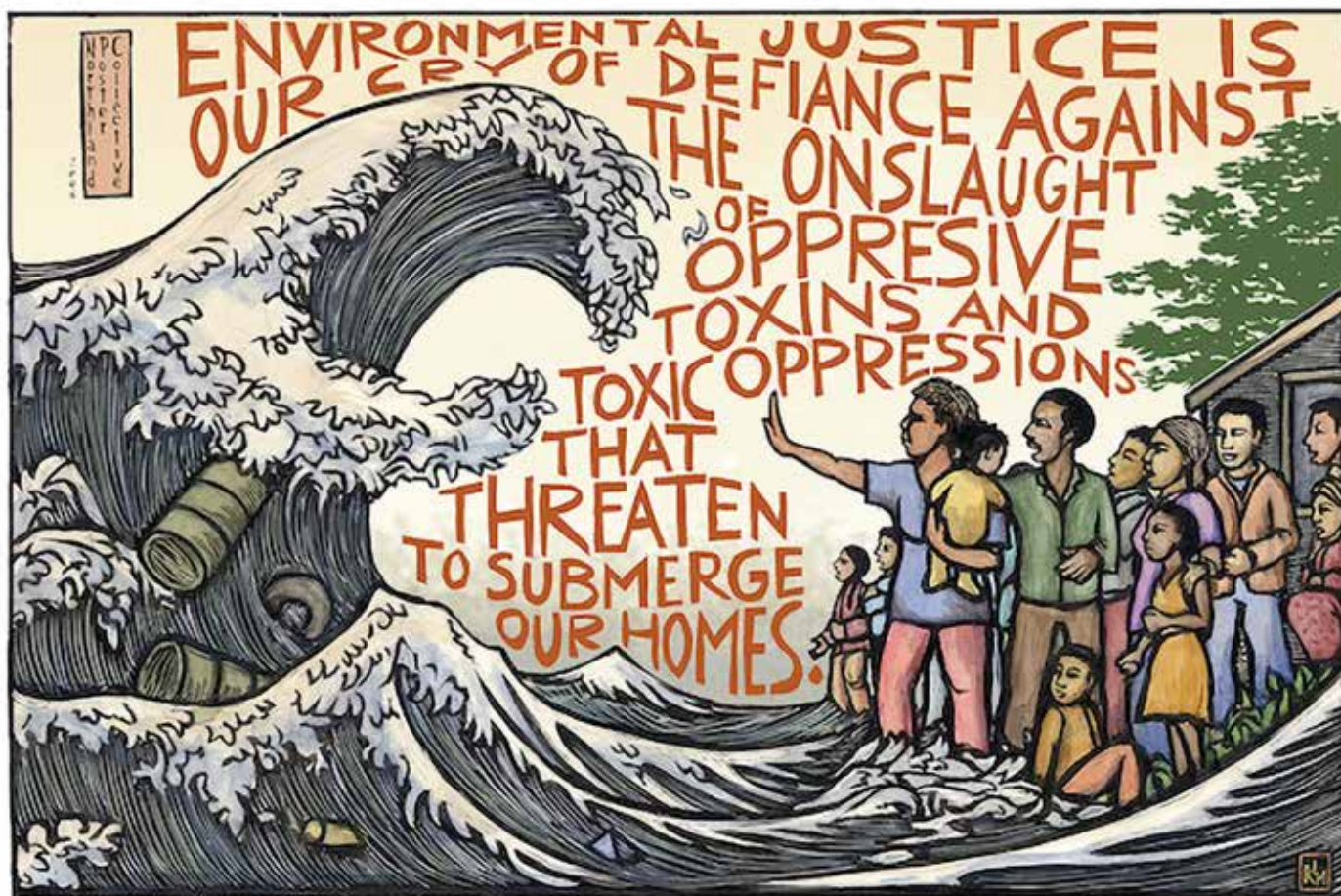
The new life of resurrection much longed for in sacrifice zones, rarely appears. One way it could appear is in the form of the circular economy. In this more natural economy the take-make-waste process is transformed into something life-sustaining, by a process of take-make-repair-regenerate.

David R Boyd, UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and environment, in collaboration with Marcos Orellana, Special Rapporteur on the management and disposal of hazardous substances and waste, named the 50 most polluted places in Earth in a 2022 report to the Human Rights Council. It is a sad litany of people and places that continue to be sacrificed in the name of industrial growth and progress.

Sacrifice zones are the hidden and dark side of our industrial growth world — collateral damage that stricken people and places endure for the conveniences of the rest of us.

Need to Be Alert to Lies and Cover-Ups

In our privileged world where we're accustomed to air travel, cell phones, flat screen televisions, refrigerators, air conditioners and the like, we're told we are in a clean energy transition. Electric vehicles will replace combustion engines; our homes will be powered by solar and wind energy; industry will reinvent itself with biofuels and hydrogen fuel cells. We're told we will transition into a new world where sustainable energy will drive our industrial growth society



and our consumer lifestyle will remain unaffected. We will seamlessly enter a life sustaining society — all we need to do is replace our destructive modes of energy with clean, safe ones. In more and better technology we place our trust!

Not true! This thinking is called “bright green lies” because much of the environmental movement has been taken over by the green technology sector. The lie that underpins this takeover is that we can transition to a green energy future by simply harnessing nature’s energy sources. It seems we are being duped — “greenwashed” — by the makers and brokers of wind farms, electric vehicles, solar panels and all the gadgets we enjoy.

Clean energy technologies require significant amounts of steel, copper, lithium, silicon, cobalt and other precious metals. But these precious earth metals are extracted using oil and coal powered industries — something conveniently overlooked by most green technology advocates.

The recent book *Bright Green Lies* is a comprehensive analysis of the

energy footprint of all our current green technology so-called solutions.

Transforming into Kith and Kin Relationships

When we forget that life is a system of kith and kin relationships, we are left with entitlement, sacrifice zones and bright green lies. Ecological conversion calls us into kinship connections with our common home. All living beings breathe and move in an interdependent, relational world. This signals a new kind of literacy for us all.

We need an earth literacy that moves us away from entitlement into relationships of mutual enhancement. This new way of being will be characterised by pulling back and scaling down, by restraint and responsibility.

These practices imply a much simpler way of life and significant

changes to what we have grown accustomed to. They are the only practices that can regenerate the web of creation in the beauty and wonder of its evolution.

**May the sky
be unaffected
by our presence**

**And may everything
be restored
in an agreeable balance
of sunshine and rain**

**And may the Creating Divine
guide us
on our regenerative journey.**

For further information :
www.tinyurl.com/2p972wpd

Painting: *Environmental Justice* by
Ricardo Levins Morales ©
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Peter Healy SM is part of Te Whānau Pukekarakā Ōtaki and is involved in art, ecology and spirituality projects.



POST PANDEMIC, THE VIRUS INFECTING THE MIND

*Ann Hassan interviewed
Sanjana Hattotuwa about the
misinformation and disinformation
that is taking a hold in our society.*

Sanjana Hattotuwa is a Research Fellow at The Disinformation Project (TDP) — an independent research group studying misinformation and disinformation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Since February 2020, TDP has used mixed methods approaches to analyse and review the seed and spread of information disorders — and their impact on the lives of New Zealanders.

Online hate and harm first entered our public discourse four years ago, after the 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks, when we learned that New Zealanders were engaging with violence online which had fed mass murder offline.

After the attacks, then-Prime

Minister Jacinda Ardern initiated the Christchurch Call — a community of over 120 governments, online service providers and civil society organisations acting together to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online. But Sanjana says the scale of the problem is now vastly increased, and little is being done to meaningfully address it.

A Situation without Precedent

Every day, Sanjana studies the content published, produced or propagated by New Zealand's disinformation networks. What he finds is beyond disturbing — “a tsunami of hate and harm”. He explains how the situation is different from just four years

ago. “Disinformation has grown exponentially and shows an almost inexorable rise in hate, hurt and harm; in the speed of production, the rate of engagement, the violent rhetoric and dangerous speech frames that we now study daily, particularly exacerbated on account of the pandemic.”

TDP has gathered data every day from 1 October 2021 to the present. “In that unbroken gaze, which I believe is both unique to New Zealand, and done for the first time, we have gathered evidence on how people who are producing disinformation and those engaging with this content, are both increasing significantly and that has been in a



choreography directly related to the growth of anti-vax and anti-mandate communities after the Level 4 Lockdown of 2021.”

Role of the Pandemic

It was the pandemic, says Sanjana, which was the step change, the catalyst for the increase in hate and harm. “That’s what made this country change. The change is measurable, because on Facebook you can actually study the prevalence of the angry emoji and its use at specific times and around specific announcements, like public health mandates and vaccinations for children. They’re measurably higher than reactions studied on the same, or similar communities on Facebook at the early stages of the pandemic.

“The mandates created this frothing anger — and I cannot stress enough the rabid nature of it — against specific individuals. This is especially the case in the targeting of former prime minister Ardern. It has now led to the distrust of government being a normative foundation for post-pandemic disinformation narratives around climate change, global warming, immigration, gender, education, Māori, and race-relations issues like co-governance and against all vaccinations for children, not just the mRNZ for Covid-19.

“I’ll give you an example from February this year. Disturbingly, the distrust of government as a consequence of the belief that the vaccinations killed people in New Zealand — perceived as and believed to be a genocidal project — has resulted in violent rhetoric against the NZ Red Cross and even entities like NIWA [National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research] and the MetService.

“Anything that they put out is now going to be distrusted by hundreds of thousands of people in this country.

“Imagine the ramifications of that: any kind of early warning, any kind of humanitarian response, request by the police or Civil Defence, anything that the government says, is now distrusted by a segment of the population who are also very angry.”

Why? What Appeals?

Sanjana explains that people have found authority and new trust anchors in leading disinformation producers and their online networks. “It’s linked to gaps in the country’s democratic fabric, where everything is not hunky-dory as is often presented. The housing crisis, state childcare issues, awful homelessness, cost of living crisis and a whole range of issues post-pandemic are contributing to more people being anxious about the future, income and work.

“There’s a loss of belonging, and meaning, which disinformation narratives are quick to latch on to, through forward-presenting care, love and concern, in addition to performative allyship.

“People are anxious, they’re dealing with existential concerns; and are vulnerable segments of the population. Those who spread disinformation have compelling stories which build a sense of community creating this networked identity connecting individuals from all over the country around shared conspiracies. It’s no small wonder that people are attracted to narratives which give them some sort of direction. Not everybody who falls into the trap is from, or part of, the far-right or Neo-Nazi. There are decent, good people falling prey to this content, which is very worrying.”

Multiple Platforms Used

It’s not just how much harm can be found online, but also how many places it can be found. “There’s a significant increase in the number of online locations where harms are produced, and the complete ease with which one can access them. The worst content used to be associated with the ‘dark web’ — which no decent person would or could visit, given the technical know-how required. But now, much more disturbingly, content that’s as harmful as what was in the past associated with the Dark Web is now readily, seamlessly, without policing or oversight or regulatory framework, available on a platform like Telegram.

“This is a significant change from what was studied four years ago at

the time of the Mosque attacks. Even though Twitter or Facebook, YouTube, or some of the other platforms associated with the Christchurch Call have made significant improvements on their platforms in stymieing the production and spread of material linked to terrorism, what we now study is the explosion of violative material on platforms which aren’t governed by any trust and safety frameworks, which are now safe harbours for violent content.”

And there are the modes of communication that the TDP doesn’t have access to, or can’t quantify. “Somebody who actively engages with this content could be a mother, or a grandparent, who will communicate what they consume through email or via, say, WhatsApp, which we don’t have a handle on. The actual dissemination of harms is likely much greater than the number of subscribers to any one or all social media platforms. That’s an important phenomenon to get our heads around.”

To What End?

Sanjana says the goal is disruption and fracture. “What we are seeing is that disinformation’s aimed at accelerating end-states where social cohesion is significantly eroded, and difference is violently negotiated or rejected. It leads to a sustained volatility that may give rise to stochastic terrorism, but is also just the normalisation of incivility in person-to-person engagement: a violent othering, and the entrenchment of Islamophobia, xenophobia, violent anti-LGBTIQ+ views and racism.

“That is what disinformation designs aim to do — it’s a constant, unrelenting, highly sophisticated, reshaping and reengineering of society away from a rules-based order and democracy.

“This is why we now see disinformation narratives pivoting to all vaccinations, to climate change denial, to [pest control poison] 1080, gender identity, race relations, co-governance, education, pedagogy, trans- and homophobia and significant violence against the rainbow community.

“In just the last fortnight I’ve been burnt out from the content just

targeting the census — and not just the 2023 Census but the census as an exercise. That's really frightening: it is the eroding and undermining fundamentals of a high-trust, liberal democratic society."

Disinformation ... is a constant, unrelenting, highly sophisticated, reshaping and reengineering of society away from a rules-based order and democracy.

Is the Content Coming from Abroad?

"That's what we'd like to think, isn't it!", says Sanjana. "There's a belief that it's all from the US and a lot of it is, especially the content against the rainbow communities. But the reality is that the super-spreaders are mostly those in and from New Zealand, and they look like your Nana, like the person you find at New World. They are part of this country's fabric. Disinformation is now being produced at an industrial-scale from within the country — and that's the hard part to both comprehend and also study."

What Is Being Done to Stop It?

Sanjana says that despite disinformation becoming a political talking point, little of consequence is being done. "PM Ardern's enduringly meaningful contribution to the domestic and global policy debate around fighting disinformation can be found in her Harvard Commencement speech, her address at NATO, and clearly articulated in her speech at the United Nations General Assembly, all in 2022.

"However, what I haven't seen is any meaningful translation of what Ardern said into policy debates, fit-for-purpose regulatory frameworks or a broader all-of-government discussion about what should be done to address disinformation's endemicity in the country, which

will asymmetrically harm Māori and minorities.

"I don't know whether it's even a priority in this election year. I haven't seen the Christchurch Call of 2019 — now four years old — grasping the nettle of what today is a fundamentally different and far more complicated problem set, from what it was established to address with leading social media platforms four years ago."

Can We Do Anything as Individuals?

Yes and no, Sanjana says. "I look at a tsunami of harm every day — there's nothing really that the individual can do to stop it. These are structural problems which require an all-of-society and all-of-government approach. And it's going to be a very long term, drawn-out affair because it's by nature complicated.

"Now, we can also focus on what the individual can do in so far as teaching our children and our whānau a history beyond one defined by colonialism's framing of it, which this country is only starting to do in a meaningful way from 2022 onwards.

"We can start talking about the necessity to look at what is going on and what is going wrong. We can start more robustly interrogating and acknowledging that there is a problem, and that all politicians are facing hate and harm to a degree that has no historical precedent.

"So in that sense, this is isn't about which party you vote for. It is a core challenge to democracy. We need to acknowledge that the ground has really shifted.

"Disinformation has changed the way you look at organising events, speaking gigs, setting up a Zoom call — there are real consequences in the lives of people. We could start talking about those issues. There is scope for doing that on an individual level, cognisant that this is a structural problem."

Who Is Being Targeted?

Asked if there is genuine physical danger associated with being a public figure in New Zealand, Sanjana is emphatic: "YES. Unequivocally, YES. It's with profound sadness that I have to say this, but this is a grounded, data-based, evidence-based affirmative.

"Simply put, the worst violence is directed at anybody who is non cisgender [a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex registered for them at birth] Pākehā male. And if you are cisgender Pākehā male, you have to be an 'alpha male'. Wāhine Māori, Māori in general, te reo Māori as a language — any minority identity, including Muslims or the rainbow community, recent or older immigrants, people of colour — they are all subject to what's often a frothing bile.

"And there is really violent misogyny against women elected to public office and also women in the public view, including those working on climate change research or in education. They are all targeted with a misogyny that is simply absent from even the hate directed against Prime Minister Chris Hipkins or [Leader of the Opposition] Christopher Luxon."

The Future

Sanjana says the scale and severity of the problem is significant, from the perspective of research focussing on disinformation going back to 2010. "It's astonishing. Families are torn asunder by disinformation. This is something that we will have to deal with. It's not going to go away — it will inform the democratic framework of Aotearoa. And it is already an intergenerational harm.

"We can't ignore it — the shadow of the pandemic is going to outlast the biological presence of the virus."

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<https://thedisinfoproject.org/resources/>
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Art (p20): *Poisoning the Dialogue* by Paul Lachine ©
Used with permission www.paullachine.com

Ann Hassan is the Administrator and Assistant Editor of *Tui Motu* magazine. She has a PhD in English and lives with her sons in Ōtepoti/Dunedin.



Every Step Is Agony

HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS in Nepal families live in extreme poverty. They are the poorest of the poor. People with disabilities in these communities face a double disadvantage of poverty and disability.

Children with a disability such as clubfoot (*Talipes equinovarus*), a condition from birth where the ankles are bent downwards and twisted, cannot walk like other children. This lessens their participation in many childhood activities particularly those that require walking. For example, their attendance at school can often be irregular because they can't negotiate the distance over stony paths and are reliant on when their parents are able to carry them. Consequently the children tend to fall behind their peers and, when they do get to school, they are put into classes with much younger children. Their siblings can be their only friends.

In Nepal civil war, lack of rural medical services and the devastating

2015 earthquake have added to the number of children and adults living with disabilities. Over a third of the population with a disability has a physical impairment. Yet many communities do not know about rehabilitation services for disabled people or have access to them. In the absence of these services, people with disabilities often find themselves facing a life of dependency isolated in their homes and because they are unable to take part in community life they suffer social exclusion and stigma.

Research indicates that more than 50 per cent of physical disabilities could be restored with surgery and medical intervention. But these services are limited in Nepal, and poverty further prevents people in rural areas from travelling to a hospital or clinic for surgery.

To help deliver vital support for people with disabilities, cbm-funded field workers trek the mountains, identifying adults and children with

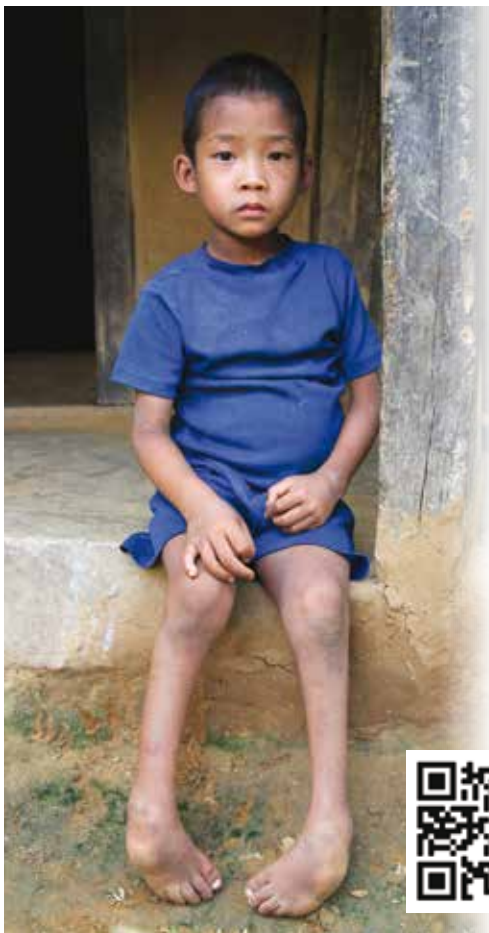
physical disabilities living in remote areas, and connecting them to relevant services. These cbm-funded services provide vital life-changing corrective surgery, physiotherapy and locally-made assistive devices.

Through the generosity of cbm supporters, adults are able to better support themselves and their families and children are able to run and play with their friends, go to school and plan for a brighter future.

The Christian Blind Mission (cbm) is an international Christian development organisation, whose mission includes delivering life-changing medication, support and surgeries to people disadvantaged by poverty and disability.

cbm aspires to follow the gospel teachings: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

Murray Sheard
PhD is the Chief
Executive Officer of
cbm New Zealand.



Clubfoot – a devastating and isolating health condition, where every step is agony.

High up in the steep, perilous ravines that rise towards the highest mountains in Nepal, families live in extreme poverty. The poorest of the poor. People with disabilities are faced with the double disadvantage of poverty and disability.

Disabilities like clubfoot, where the ankles are bent and twisted, mean children are unable to go to school as they cannot walk like other children and the journey is too far. Children, like 5-year-old Ramsaran, need life-changing corrective surgery, physiotherapy and locally made assistive devices. Please help them to run and play, go to school, and have a far brighter future.



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www.cbmnz.org.nz/ramsaran3



We're an Easter People

Kathleen Rushton reflects on how John 20:1-31 speaks of the death-resurrection of Jesus in God's evolving and unfinished universe.

WE SHALL HEAR JOHN 20 proclaimed in the Easter season liturgies. This chapter focuses our attention on the Risen Jesus who empowers the people of God every day of the year. Augustine described the Christian community: "We are an Easter people and alleluia is our song."

I shall first discuss the death-resurrection of Jesus within God's purpose in creation by exploring how "In the beginning ..." (Jn 1:1) evokes biblical meanings. And how Greek speaking people of that time understood the expression. The two understandings help us to consider the death-resurrection in the light of science and evolution today.

Creation and the Death-Resurrection of Jesus

Cosmology is the study of the universe — our effort to use all we know from the natural sciences to understand the whole universe, including how it came into being. In the Scriptures, the cosmology of creation is presented as the Garden of God. We read in Genesis 2 that God "planted a garden in Eden, in the East" (Gen 2:8). Like a gardener, God cultivated it (Gen 2:9) and walked in it (Gen 3:8). Elsewhere, God is described explicitly as a gardener (Numbers 24:6; 4 Maccabees 1:29).

John begins with a Prologue (Jn 1:1-18) which sets the tone, introduces concepts, characters and contains clues to what will unfold in the story.

The Gospel begins by recalling the

garden of Genesis: “In the beginning (*En archē*)” (Jn 1:1) and it ends with a garden: “Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden, there was a new tomb ...” (Jn 19:41). This is the only Gospel that places the death-resurrection of Jesus in a garden. There are references to the Genesis creation story. Jesus rose on the first day of the week (Jn 20:1) and also appears to his disciples on the first day of the week (Jn 20:19). This links the incarnation and death-resurrection with the Genesis creation story, suggesting God’s unfinished, evolving creation.

John 1:1-5 has other creation motifs — light, life and darkness — which flow throughout the Gospel. As God is central to biblical creation, so is Jesus who is inserted into the story of God’s ongoing creation.

John’s prologue portrays Jesus as Wisdom-Sophia who was with God at the beginning of the work of creation (Proverbs 8:22-36). Through his life and death-resurrection Jesus works to complete the unfinished work of God.

Creation and Greek Cosmology

“In the beginning (*En archē*)” (Jn 1:1) recalls the cosmology of Genesis and the Wisdom books.

In the first-century Hellenistic society, this same expression conveyed many philosophical and cosmological notions.

En archē is a “beginning” that does not itself have a beginning and which has continuous existence.

Professor of Classics Rosemary Wright explains that for early philosophers *en archē* referred to “what there was before there was anything else; it has a role as providing a causal explanation for the world and its phenomena but does not have to be explained itself.”

The evangelist John uses a cosmology informed by both the Genesis and Wisdom cosmology and Hellenistic cosmology to insert Jesus into God’s evolving, unfinished story of creation.

This raises questions for our own understanding of the death-resurrection of Jesus in the light of our understanding of cosmology.

Death-Resurrection of Jesus and Evolution

From an evolutionary perspective death is a biological necessity and a fact of evolutionary life.

In the Jewish and Christian accounts of “the Fall” death is seen as a penalty.

Traditional Christianity taught that through procreation everyone inherited Adam’s original sin. And even though original sin is forgiven through the sacrament of the baptism, sinful desires persist in us leading us into sin.

Within God’s purpose for creation, Jesus’s death-resurrection saved humanity from the evolutionary destiny of individual death, rather than from sin.

"Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope."

British theologian Jack Mahoney calls this “the evolutionary achievement of Jesus.”

He explains that Jesus accepted his death “as a human being and in his rising from the dead, he achieved a new phase of evolutionary existence, into which he could now usher his fellow human beings.”

The Gospel Prologue and the death-resurrection of Jesus, and our reading of the Gospel with an evolutionary understanding can integrate the biblical themes of

promise and liberation.

We can embrace prophetic justice and the covenantal promises that Scripture associates with a creative and renewing God. We can be affirmed and challenged to participate with a wisdom which inspires a transforming spirituality and ethical action in our complex, evolving, beautiful, suffering and global world in which the works of God are unfinished.

John’s Gospel repeatedly calls us to participate with Jesus in completing the works of God in the unfinished universe — there are 28 references to God or Jesus or disciples working to complete the works of God.

We can participate in God’s universe which recognises creation as a process rather than an event.

This includes the resurrection of Jesus, which Benedict XVI spoke of as being like: “a qualitative leap in the history of ‘evolution’ and of life in general towards a new future life, towards a new world which, starting from Christ, already continuously permeates this world of ours, transforms it and draws it to itself.” (*Easter Vigil Homily*, 2006).

John 20 concludes by referring to the believers of all times (Jn 20:30-31), in other words, the Church.

Pope Francis calls us to enter into God’s creative process for in “the Christian understanding of the world the destiny of all creation is bound up with the mystery of Christ” (*Laudato Si’* par 99).

With Augustine we can say we are an Easter people and we can follow Francis’s advice: “Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope” (*LS* par 244).

.....
Lectionary Reading for 9 and 16 April
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Photography: Hamish Dowson on Unsplash

Kathleen Rushton RSM is a Scripture scholar and author of *The Cry of the Earth* and *The Cry of the Poor: Hearing Justice in John’s Gospel* (2020).





VALUE IN REPAIRING



HOT AUTUMN SUN DRAPES over my back. I try to shuffle further into the shade, but to do so I have to move the bike, gawkily poised on its bike stand. I lift it up and wonder if I'm finally getting biceps; notice, too, the grease lodged under my fingernails and the printed impression of a chain ring on my arm. But there's no need to dwell on my physical appearance: I have a bike to fix.

For the last year, I've been spending my Sunday afternoons volunteering at my local community bike fixing workshop. The concept is simple: we have lots of tools and some expertise and we help people fix their bikes. We get some funding from our local board, and some through selling donated bikes that we've repaired and checked for safety.

I'm better than I used to be, but I'm still not very good at fixing bikes. I'm too terrified of bottom brackets to do any work on them myself, and I've mastered puncture repair (easy) but still get confused between brake cables and gear cables. But that doesn't matter: partially because some of the other volunteers, now my friends, are always happy to help with the gnarly stuff, and partially because it turns out that I don't have to be good at fixing bikes to really enjoy it.

I've been thinking about the idea of integrity. It links to words like integration: there are the parts of my life where what I believe is important is being expressed clearly in how I'm actually spending my time. I believe that there should be community spaces which don't

require spending money to get in. In a culture where throwing broken stuff away is the norm, I believe choosing to repair things instead is a little bit revolutionary. I believe that cycling is a beautiful and excellent way to move around cities, and more people should be doing it. I believe that it's good to not always do things you feel confident in. Repairing bikes ticks all of these boxes, and then some.

Last week, a local family came in, wanting to repair their youngest daughter's pink Barbie bike. The chain was old, and the tyres were worn out. Everyone wanted to be involved: the dad helped brace the bike so I could pull the wheel off. The daughter helped me rotate the inner tube through a bucket of water to find the leak. The mum followed

my instructions to repair the tyre, pressing the new patch over the hole. The son ran around in circles asking if someone would play with him (we were too busy playing with the bike!). Then they wheeled it away, ready for the rest of their week.

It was a simple, small thing — but simple, small things can build a life. Or at least build a sense of integrity: a trust that, yes, I am becoming the person I think I am. I am repairing bikes. I'm watching this corner of the Kingdom unfold. I'm part of something that goes far beyond myself. 💜

Shanti Mathias is a journalist living in Tāmaki Makaurau who loves Jesus and is usually enthusiastic.



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Reviews

Enacting Catholic Social Tradition: The Deep Practice of Human Dignity

By Clemens Sedmak

Published by Orbis Books, 2022. (USD 33.70)

Reviewed by Gerard Aynsley

Clemens Sedmak's work on the Catholic Social Tradition is replete with examples from real life that require intelligent, faith-filled discernment.

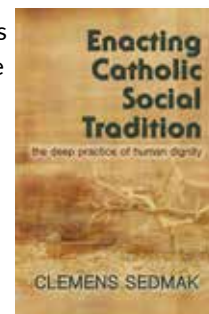
With these numerous and varied examples Sedmak challenges the reader to consider what concrete response is required, which emphasises "enacting" and "deep practice" in the title. He notes: "Unless dignity is practised, it runs the risk of remaining a lofty concept."

I found the section on "raw thinking" particularly engaging. Catholic Social Teaching is our faith tradition, but

that doesn't mean ready-made answers to life's complex challenges. A principle like "human dignity" may be a good start, but Sedmak insists that there is still much to do and he helps us do this work.

He argues that "behind well-ordered thoughts ... there is ... often ... a messy reality of surprises, disruptions, ambiguities and confusion." The sheer uniqueness of cases requires "raw thinking" — "an experimental process, a way of raw deliberation" that accepts that sometimes only tentative claims can be made.

I enjoyed this book. I found myself engaging with Sedmak's examples but also rethinking situations that I have been familiar with. This is a good, creative reflection on a critical aspect of our Catholic faith. ★



To Love and Be Loved: A Personal Portrait of Mother Teresa

By Jim Towey

Published by Simon & Schuster, 2022. (USD 27)

Reviewed by Julie Randall

Jim Towey writes from the heart about the Mother Teresa whom he came to know in the last 12 years of her life. From his first encounter with this "living saint" Jim became an ardent worker and trusted ally of the Missionary Sisters of Charity and a loving friend to Mother Teresa.

To Love and Be Loved is primarily Jim's personal memoir. He overlays historical, well-known and lesser-known details of this globally recognised woman, with descriptions of his own encounters with Mother Teresa and the connections he made through her.

Because of his close association with the Missionaries of Charity Jim was able to interview some of Mother Teresa's closest confidants. And he had access to correspondence and documents which enabled him to "flesh out" her story — the story of a woman who even before her death many perceived to be a saint. He discusses her experience of "the dark night of the soul" and the persistent criticism of her detractors.

This book is an easy read, and though a bit sentimental, it focuses the life and work of Mother Teresa who believed we are "created by God for great things, to love and be loved." ★



Priestly Ministry and the People of God: Hopes and Horizons

Edited by Richard R Gaillardetz, Thomas H Groome and Richard Lennan

Published by Orbis Books, 2022. (USD 30)

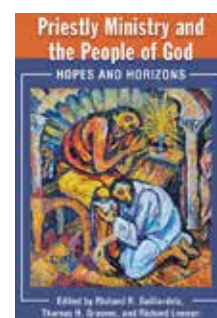
Reviewed by Kevin Gallagher

Priestly Ministry and the People of God offers scholarly contributions on the future of Catholic priesthood. The 19 contributors, eminently qualified in theological and seminary formation, reference Vatican II documents, relevant encyclicals and Pope Francis's desire to breathe fresh air into the theology and practice of diocesan priesthood, in their articles. Each writer reviews the document "To Serve the People of God: Renewing the Conversation on Priestly Ministry", the fruit of a seminar on Priesthood and Ministry for the Contemporary Church.

This collection invites conversation toward a new model of diocesan priestly formation and ministry at this time of crisis.

It warmed my heart that the writers highlight the importance of relationships and collaboration in ministry for seminarians throughout their formation, especially with their own faith communities. Several authors warn of isolation leading to clerical exceptionalism among ordinands.

I hope all involved with the formation of priests and others in ministry in Aotearoa New Zealand will read this book. It calls us to listen in a synodal way to the teaching of Vatican II with its focus on the ministry of all the baptised, to develop together our own new model of priestly formation among and with all the people of God. ★



Reviews

Inside Man

Netflix, 2022

Written by Stephen Moffat

Directed by Paul McGuigan

Reviewed by Paul Tankard

This four-part British streaming series pulled me in from the start with an entirely contemporary urban anecdote set on a London suburban train, which depicts a sense of powerlessness, threat, lack of conviction and tackiness just beneath its surface of public and everyday life. That story over, this minor moral chaos is refreshingly dispelled, as the heroine climbs into a car with an English vicar (played by the omnipresent David Tennant).

That opening also introduces a number of themes: IT as a weapon, #MeToo, appalling human behaviour and the bogus ways in which people justify it to themselves.

Because depictions of clergy are almost the only way in which the people of faith are visible in TV and film, there is always something for us to ponder when a vicar appears on screen. Frequently we are propelled into silly-nostalgic *Midsomer Murders* territory. Rev Harry Watling is well-meaning, friendly, genuine, but ever-so slightly ludicrous and after he's been onscreen about three minutes, he's out of his depth.

But before this, an entirely different but equally quirky scenario is introduced. Jefferson Grief (played by Stanley Tucci) is a former criminal lawyer and now convicted wife-murderer on death row in an Arizona prison. His best buddy inside is a witty and genial serial killer, who assists him with his work on legal cases on which he is allowed to be consulted. The vicar's dilemma is intended to show how even the nicest people can be forced to make appalling choices. He's confronted with a genuine pastoral problem, but one which could have been de-escalated with a modicum of



care and honesty.

Stitching together the English suburban vicar who ends up imprisoning a woman in his basement, with the equally complex plot surrounding the American murderer whose dead wife's head is missing, is a young woman journalist who is the least interesting character of all — making the stitching together unconvincing to the point of being forgettable.

Both stories are interesting, but it seems like two ideas jammed into the one package. That was actually how I remembered it some weeks later: as

an American series starring Stanley Tucci, and a British series starring David Tennant. It was as if the studio wanted one and the writer the other, so they decided to compromise by doing both.

Inside Man — I couldn't recall the title a week later — is engaging and well-crafted, with a smart script and it looks good on the screen. But you wouldn't want to think about it too much. It hints at some postmodern moral agenda about good people and evil acts, but is compromised by its implausibility. It's only four episodes and that isn't too short. ★

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Cross Currents

by Jane Higgins

WHEN I RETURNED TO Ōtautahi Christchurch in 1989 after living in Dunedin during the 1980s, I was glad to connect once more with Sr Elizabeth Mackie OP, whom I had met in the Dunedin Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace. Elizabeth died on 18 February this year. She will be remembered by *Tui Motu* readers as one of the founders and directors of the magazine as well as an assistant editor.

I'd like to celebrate some of the cross currents of Elizabeth's work, woven together during her more than 20 years in Ōtautahi. In this work she had an impact both nationally and across the globe.

When we reconnected in 1989, Elizabeth was working part-time for the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand (the successor to the National Council of Churches) and for Christian World Service (CWS) — an ecumenical aid and development agency. She invited me to join the International Programmes Working Group of CWS and I accepted, excited by the chance to work with her.

Elizabeth was grounded in the spirituality of the Incarnation and committed to promoting human dignity, social justice, and the

transformation of structures that oppress, dehumanise and marginalise. She was also ecumenical to her core.

These commitments were then, and continue to be, countercultural in many ways. The Conference of Churches folded in 2005 as the mainstream Christian Churches turned inward to their own concerns. From 2008, a new National government revisited its funding to the NGO aid and development sector. It became more focused on "Brand NZ" and how our international aid funds could be spent to our own economic advantage rather than to support those struggling to change unjust economic and social structures.

Elizabeth did not waver in the face of these challenges. She brought her faith in the dignity of every person, and her formidable intellect, to her work for CWS. Through that work, the aid and development relationships in CWS became partnerships rather than the more traditional transactional donor-recipient exchanges.

Her approach to development was strongly aligned with the principle voiced by the Latin American Catholic Bishops at Puebla in 1979 (and also stated in the Catholic Catechism): "The demands of justice should first be met, lest the giving of what is

due in justice be represented as the offering of a charitable gift. Not only the effects but also the causes of various ills must be removed."

Through the relationships that Elizabeth helped to build, CWS partnered with both conventional and less conventional development projects. There was funding, for example, for rainwater tanks in drought-stricken areas of Africa and livelihood projects for families in the Pacific and South Asia. But the agency also partnered with movement-building organisations: these included those working with fisherfolk in India to pursue environmental justice, and those forming trade unions to support garment workers in the Free Trade Zones in Sri Lanka.

Always, Elizabeth respected partners' analyses of what was happening on the ground where they worked, and she ensured that her work was with them, not for them: solidarity not charity.

When Elizabeth died, even though it had been 17 years since she worked at CWS, tributes poured in from partners overseas, testimonies to the thousands of lives profoundly touched by this remarkable woman. *Moe mai ra, e hoa/ Rest in peace.*



TUI MOTU InterIslands
The Independent Catholic Magazine Limited

Tui Motu magazine provides Catholic as well as ecumenical and inter-faith perspectives and discussion on current issues in church and society. It focuses particularly on issues affecting Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific. Its intent is to promote the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, engaging faith and the world through informed, thoughtful comment and discussion for a general readership. The magazine publishes 11 issues per year in print and regular digital postings on social media.

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The magazine invites contributions from writers of Catholic and other Christian traditions or faith backgrounds, who can offer our readers insights which resonate with the Gospel as it affects us today. We value diversity and seek contributions which are representative of our church and our society: Māori, Pākehā, Pasifika, other cultures, a range of ages and genders, lay and ordained. We offer feature articles, interviews, reviews, poetry, comment and opinion on theology, spirituality and history, as well as on social justice and ecology.

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Letters to the Editor

We welcome letters of comment, discussion, response, affirmation or argument of up to 200 words.

The editor reserves the right to abridge longer letters while keeping the meaning.

Opinions in letters are not necessarily those of the Magazine.

MISQUOTE IN ARTICLE

In an otherwise excellent article titled "Flavours of Church", (TM March) I am reported as saying that I had "a question mark over whether the Church will survive given its role in child abuse." This is not an accurate record of my comments. My question mark was over whether the Church would survive in its current form with the sexual abuse scandal being a catalyst for significant change in how the institution of the Church conducts itself, especially in regard to clericalism and the role of women. I have no doubt at all that the Church itself, described in its essence in the

Vatican II documents as the "Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers", will survive and flourish.

**Michael Fitzsimons,
Te Whanganui-a-Tara/Wellington**

EDITOR APOLOGISES

The error is mine. I published an earlier draft of "Flavours of Church" not the one agreed to by those profiled in it. I think the author and those profiled are wonderful flavours of Church.

The painting *The Watching* published in the March issue was by Jayne Thomas not Thompson. My apologies for these errors.

Reviews

Beyond the Pandemic: Spiritual and Ecological Challenges

By Diarmuid O'Murchu

Published by Orbis Books, 2022. (USD 25)

Reviewed by Ruth Mather

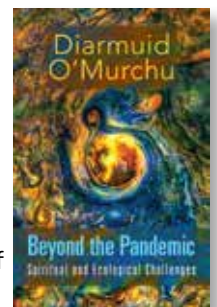
IN 2020 THE WORLD Economic Forum announced the need for a "Great Reset" — a shift in consciousness socially, politically and economically. In this book Diarmuid O'Murchu offers a means of resetting, grounded in an empowering spirituality. His basic premise is that Covid- 19 was caused by humanity disrespecting the natural boundaries between humans and animals — yet another expression of the human-caused global environmental crisis.

O'Murchu suggests a post-Covid spirituality needs us to recognise God as Great Spirit, an amplifying creative

energy active through the 13.7 billion years of evolutionary story and now. It requires us to become mystics — to know ourselves as immersed within creation, not above it, enlarging God's unconditional love. To be relational beings who say: "I belong, therefore I am."

O'Murchu draws on a wide range of sources, and employs an eclectic mix of references which will entice the reader to explore further. I have read many of his books yet he continues to challenge, offering fresh and exciting perspectives to deepen and embody one faith. For example, he suggests prayer is not about addressing God, but expressing God.

I recommend *Beyond the Pandemic* to those who seek to deepen their spirituality for the 21st-century world. ★



Downfall: The Destruction of Charles Mackay

By Paul Diamond

Published by Massey University Press, 2022. (NZD 45)

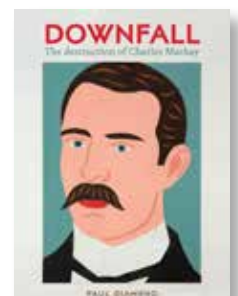
Reviewed by Shane Coleman

Blackmail, sex, attempted murder, politics, journalism, prison, fascism, subcultures and Whanganui — *Downfall* has it all. Paul Diamond tells the story of the extraordinary life of Charles Mackay. The book starts in Whanganui where Mackay is a young lawyer and then becomes the mayor before he is entangled in blackmail because of his sexual orientation. This leads to him shooting a man and spending time in Mt Eden Prison.

After his release Mackay set sail for Europe where he

spent time in London and Berlin. There he became part of the subculture of homosexual men — a culture hidden from popular view. Mackay lived in the early 1900s when the law and society sought to control, suppress and punish gay men.

I enjoyed reading Mackay's story set in the context of the political and social movements of the early 20th century. It is true that the recognition and protection of gay people has been hard won in law and the struggle continues against prejudice. *Downfall* is a page-turner — a great read. I think that anyone who is interested in social, queer, New Zealand and 20th-century histories would find it a compelling read. ★





For What It's Worth

MY DAD USED to say my mum could worry about more things than you could shake a stick at. Now my dad was a clever man, but the obtuseness of that saying would leave me confused as a child. Now, of course, I get it. And it's still true for my mother. Worry and sticks seem to go hand in hand for many people. Being anxious, or fearful of what might happen is quite natural. But to live like that? To worry about potential problems, to turn them over in the mind, tossing and turning at 3am is not healthy. To be "worried sick" is real. The state of worry can make us ill.

My son Matthew lives in Panama City with his wife and three-year-old son Matteo. For some time, Matthew has been plagued by pain in his hip, eventually diagnosed as advanced avascular necrosis. Last week he had a hip replacement. He's only 45 and you can imagine how a mother worries from such a distance.

I found myself turning over all the possibilities in my mind. Something would go wrong with the surgery. He's an asthmatic, maybe he won't wake up. I worked myself into a lather at the prospect of losing one of my two surviving children. Death has been a somewhat regular visitor to our family in the past four years, so I feel justified with my worry. I hugged it to myself, lost sleep over it and played and replayed various scenarios. Getting on a plane. Being a grieving mother again. You get the picture.

Matthew is fine. And all that worry now seems so pointless, so masochistic. Instead of being on the merry-go-round of brooding anxiety, I could have turned each of those thoughts to prayer. I could have handed them over to a loving God and rested in the knowledge that my son and I would be fine, that all would be well.

But I have known the late night police visit to inform me our daughter had died. I've woken one morning to

discover my husband dead beside me. So a blanket belief that everything will be okay just doesn't cut it for me.

Where is faith then? Is worry justified after all? Some days I have answers. I can hand over to God all the questions and leave them there. I can see the futility of worrying about things that may never happen, or at least not the way I envisage. Then, for a moment I experience that perfect peace of resting in God.

In my garden I have a little chapel, complete with bell tower. Inside, there's a small organ, a low table with candles and a chair to sit and reflect in. I never leave the chapel without feeling better than I went in. It's there that worries dissolve and peace visits me. Ah, if I could only live there all the time. Worry wouldn't get a look in. 💎

Rosemary Riddell lives in Oturehua, Otago. She is the author of *To Be Fair: Confessions of a District Court Judge* (2022).



Our last word

*Arise in us
as love and courage
Risen Christ
that we may foster
truth and community
in our world*

From the *Tui Motu* Team

