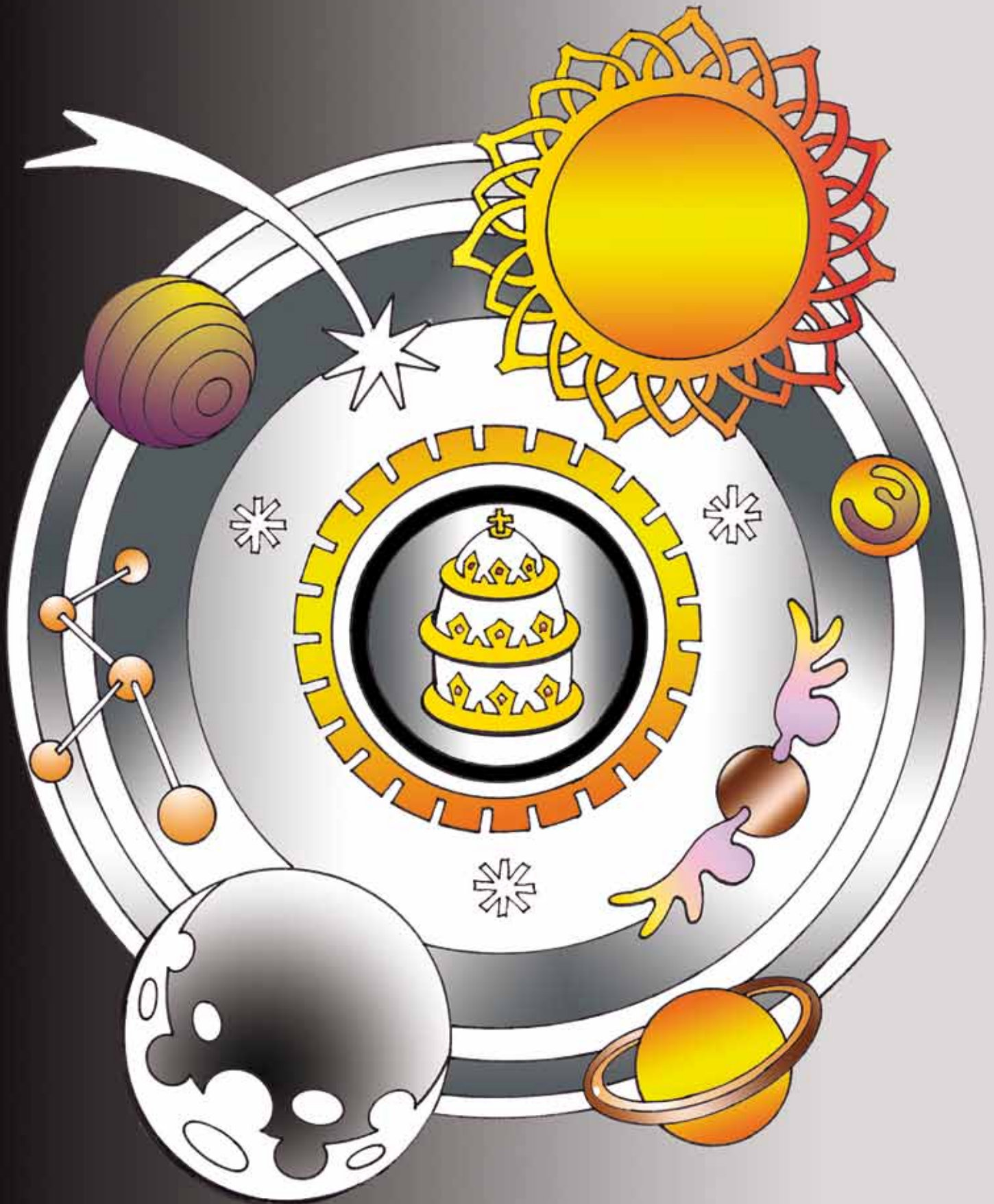


Tui Motu

InterIslands

July 2010 Price \$6



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what use credit cards?

Upon return from being overseas during May, two things stood out in the NZ political scene: the parliamentarians' credit card misuse and the passing into law of the three strikes legislation.

The parade of politicians coming before the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to confess their sins of the misuse of State funds, and then do public penance in the media and on TV before receiving forgiveness, remind me of the oldest form of church penitential practice. Then sinners were banished from the community, only to be readmitted and pardoned after a long period of public penance, perhaps life-long. We are mercifully used to a sacramental practice of reconciliation far different from that.

The three strikes legislation, on the other hand, will end hope for some offenders, and is not worthy of a society that bases itself on a claim to dignity and reverence for humanity, however sinful.

There is a serious mismatch between the way parliamentarians are treated by their leaders and the way in which the government is handling the justice questions of the day. Why one gentler standard for parliamentarians and another harsher one for those who deserve to receive a justice based on compassion and humanity as much as any politician? We are all human.

Kim Workman's comments are an eye-opener, too, on the way in which

the government processes are being used. And this is only one example of many similar situations that need to be studied with care.

In this light, it is refreshing to read Janet Sim Elder and Claire Brown's interview. Here are two women quietly inculcating the highest standards of biblical reconciliation within our own society. It is good to applaud their work and those of others who seek a less vindictive, more positive and hopeful way of turning around the difficult justice questions which intersect with the seemingly imponderable questions facing our society – poverty, depression, a binge-drinking and drug culture, and violence in all forms – to name a few. We can take heart from the setting up of the rethinking crime and punishment trust.

Marg Schrader's insights into the inter-faith development of L'Arche and its continued care of those with severe intellectual disabilities are a delight to read.

Finally, we have highlighted Bishop Peter Cullinane's clear statement of church teaching and of the obligations of bishops concerning Waihopai. It stands alongside Father Peter Murnane's article looking back at what happened at Waihopai and his apologia for his actions. These two articles need to be read together, and their ways of approaching the underlying questions pondered.

And there is much more good food for winter nourishment! KT



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Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed. The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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three strikes and you're out

Kim Workman

The passing into law of the *Sentencing and Parole Reform Bill* (the three strikes legislation) was a milestone of a kind – it marked the passing into law of arguably the worst piece of criminal justice legislation in New Zealand history. While the legislation is a shocker, the way in which it was managed through the legislation process is a case study in political manipulation of the democratic process, lending weight to Lord Acton's famous words, "All power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely."

In a pre-election deal between the ACT party leader Rodney Hide and the *Sensible Sentencing Trust's* spokesperson Garth McVicar, SST's legal adviser, David Garrett, was offered a list position, on the understanding that if successful, Garrett would promote three strikes legislation through the legislative process. Garrett was successful, and in the subsequent coalition deal with National, the government agreed to support the Bill to the Select Committee stage. At that time, no one took the legislation seriously.

dirty tricks begin

National changed its mind, and thus began a manipulation of the legislative process which was more than cheeky – it stunk of arrogance. Once the original Bill was found to be seriously wanting, it was drastically revised. However, only those who had made submissions on the first Bill were permitted to make submissions on the second, and none of them were permitted to appear personally before the Select Committee. Citizens who decided not to make a submission on the original Bill in the belief that it would not succeed, were denied the opportunity to present a view, once the amended Bill acquired some teeth.

Next dirty trick – the Chairperson of the Select Committee denied dissenting Select Committee members, the

opportunity to submit a minority report – a long-standing parliamentary convention.

Dirty trick number three – given the resistance of the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General to the Bill (it breached the Bill of Rights), the Bill was transferred from the Justice and Electoral Select Committee to the Law and Order Select Committee, coming under the patronage of the Minister of Corrections and Police, the Hon Judith Collins.

One of the reasons government politicians gave for supporting the Bill, was that the public had lost confidence in the justice system. Well, if the judicial system includes the process for passing legislation, one can understand why. The Bill passed. A Research NZ survey showed that while 81 per cent of those surveyed supported the legislation, only 66 per cent had heard of it! Sixty one per cent believed it would not have any deterrent effect.

To know how the three strikes legislation came into effect is important. But it is more important that we are not foxed into litigating such legislation repeatedly, thereby diverting attention from the issues that are creating crime in the community.

where are our real priorities?

Here are some facts from which we can begin to ponder:

- We have a record 8,200 people imprisoned
- Only about three percent of those will be savaged by a third strike
- Of the other 97 percent who are languishing in prison:
 1. 80 percent are illiterate;
 2. four percent have diagnosable mental illness;
 3. 80 percent have drug and alcohol dependency issues.

Of the additional \$700 million allocated from the budget to Prisons

and Probation over the next four years, \$11 million (about 1.5 per cent) will be spent on rehabilitation in the form of drug treatment.

That will mean that 1000 of the 6000 prisoners requiring drug treatment will receive it by 2014. The rest of the money will go to keeping more people locked up. While all that is going on, a recent Nielson survey showed that 86 percent of New Zealanders identified family violence as the Number One issue, up from 74 percent six months ago. Just think what the \$700m could have done in the areas of family violence, child abuse, early childhood support, alcohol abuse and the management of low-level offending. All those issues are part of the 'Drivers of Crime' strategy which government, in a December press release, said it supported, but not to the extent of providing additional funding.

changing public attitudes

How many people know these facts? Effective public education is one of the keys to changing public attitudes to crime and criminals, and to making both the media and government address crime and justice issues again. Recent criminal justice legislation and policy changes have been highly punitive, unjust, often breach human rights legislation and most clearly don't reduce offending. They simply serve to fuel the manicured-by-media public vengeance for punishment, following the lead of the *Sensible Sentencing Trust*. Driving such legislation through the Parliament will ultimately mean a dead end in the road.

I suggest you look at two websites: *Sensible Sentencing Trust* www.safe-nz.org.nz and the *Rethinking Crime and Punishment Trust* www.rethinking.org.nz The differences are clear. It is important to start getting our priorities right. ■

Kim Workman is the director of the *Rethinking Crime and Punishment Trust*

kairos moment?

As always, I read *Tui Motu* with interest. Three items in the May edition struck me. A letter on the 'new translation', Michael Hill's affirmation for the need for Vatican III, and the advert for the book on Sin edited by Neil Darragh, who is one of the most pastorally, theologically and liturgically aware New Zealand Catholics.

Fr Neil, many years ago, wrote a book *When Christians Gather*, outlining and calling forth a way of celebrating Eucharist that was faith-filled, inclusive and used the gifts of the Spirit of God's priestly people through shared eucharistic leadership. The book was prophetic. We are now at a prophetic, kairos and 'advent' moment of liturgical renewal.

Let us reform our Church structures, beginning with the way we minister to each other as a eucharistic community. Let us reject as an imposition the 'new translation', retaining the biblically based translation of the Lord's supper.

Michael Hill IC, Bishop Pat Power of Canberra and others are calling for renewal, regeneration and reformation.

I pray other Church leaders in Aotearoa and beyond will make similar calls, stating publicly what they privately think and know to be fundamentally needed so as to be faithful to the Gospel and the simple Aramaic Seder meal that Jesus asked his disciples, and therefore us, to do in his memory.

Phillip Hadley, Pukekohe

kudos for Donald

I've never managed to write to *Tui Motu* before – I've often thought about writing – mainly because where would I start? The magazine's so good and continues to get better. But finally I must. Over the years I've been delighted, provoked, soothed, challenged, irritated and stimulated by the variety of offerings and the breadth of writers. Catching

letters to the editor

We welcome comment,
discussion, argument, debate.
But please keep letters
under 200 words.

The editor reserves the right
to abridge, while not changing
the meaning.

Response articles (up to a page)
are welcome –
but please, by negotiation.

up at last with accumulated back numbers is the story of my life. I'm up to October 2009 tonight.

I'm feeling neglectful that I've never said how much Don Moorhead's illustrations add to my enjoyment of the magazine, with his reflective thoughtful way and angles on things: his illustration of Sr Pauline O'Regan's charming disarming words on taking a long time to grow younger being a case in point. I'm somewhat behind her great age but if the years continue to speed along as they do now, I'll be up with her in no time. (She doesn't know it but I've been a fan since first I knew of her, and that when I was Presbyterian.)

So far in this issue everything's been a 'must-read', and I'm only up to page 14 – which means many of my favourite contributors are still to come. Congratulations to all who bring us such a quality magazine. It is one of the things that make it possible for me to be a Catholic, and I hope, catholic, in this present culture.

Sally Dunford, Lyttelton.

reflections on a parish in crisis

Fr Hunt in his reflections on the book, *Peter Kennedy: The Man who Threatened Rome*, apparently did not notice that the author was a journalist who in his chapter, 'Portrait of a Rebel Priest', says, "Although the Catholic Church is integral to his story, I told Kennedy before we met that I was more interested in knowing about him

than his dispute with the church." So this is why there is no clear account of the dispute.

I was disappointed in Neil Ormerod's careful theological reflection. A theologian who can write, "These central Trinitarian and Christological beliefs have been the common stance not just of the Catholic Church but of Christianity in general and any departure from them must meet a heavy burden of proof" must surely be able to give us all a heavy burden of proof that the common stance is in fact the correct stance.

I have been looking for such proof for many years. Might I suggest that rather than serious reflection on the faith being a crucial task of the church, that the crucial task is to reflect on the nature of Truth. I have faith that a painted yellow line on the road will keep cars from crashing into me, but in truth it won't.

Bill Orange, Masterton

women in the church

After reading the various letters published in *Tui Motu* on "Women in the Church" I felt moved to make a mild protest in the light of my experience.

I have known Bishop Campbell and Bishop Boyle for many years. I can say quite confidently that neither man is in any way prejudiced concerning the role of women in the Diocese of Dunedin.

As regards my own parish in North Invercargill, women participate in these ways:

- as readers at all Masses
- as altar servers (very young women, of course!)
- conducting Eucharistic services in the absence of a priest
- bringing Holy Communion to the house-bound
- as members of the parish council

Perhaps our parish is unique!

Ted Maloney, Invercargill

an open letter to father michael hill ic

Dear Michael,

At our recent *Tui Motu* board meeting on 1 May, we resolved to put in writing what many people, in various ways, have expressed to you verbally: that we are so immensely grateful for your sustained contribution over the last 13 years.

For some of us, your editorship predates our membership of the Board or even familiarity with the magazine! In short, you have embodied *Tui Motu* and it is hard to imagine the magazine attaining its teenaged status without your wise, firm and nurturing hand on the rudder. Together with Francie, you have brought to life, cared for, crafted relentlessly what is regarded as a *taonga* by thinking and reflective Catholics in our land. For this we will always be grateful.

Your tenure 'at the helm' has allowed you to take a longer view in terms of decisions regarding management and editorial content. The words 'fearless' and 'priestly' were mentioned at your farewell gathering.

These words, for us, lie at the heart of your contribution. For you, along with Francie, have always been willing to 'grasp the nettle' on issues. But that quest for raising hard questions has never diminished your pastoral disposition that has seen contributors personally thanked, visitors to Union St HQ welcomed and the commitment of a wide community of supporters affirmed.

We are also very grateful to the Rosminian Order for gifting us with you as founding editor. We recognise that there could have been many niches for a man of your diverse talents over the last 13 years and your Order's generosity in this regard is a matter we have conveyed to your superiors in a separate letter.

Tui Motu's founding vision was that it be catholic in the broadest sense and would be open to all Christian communities and all faiths, honour the bicultural foundations of our nation, keep alive among its readership the vision and possibilities of Vatican II and nurture a questioning faith and a rich spirituality. Month after month readers have been informed, challenged, encouraged and nurtured. You have created space for writers in this country to express their faith, their hope, and their doubts.

You leave as a legacy an extensive network of good and willing contributors – whether they work as writers, office volunteers or promoters. In short, you have been more than an editor; you have built a community that stretches the length of this land. We know that you will now enjoy an immensely deserved break from the tyranny of deadlines. But we know also, and appreciate deeply, that you will be remain a close friend – *kaumatua* even – of *Tui Motu*. Again deep thanks and rich blessings upon the unfolding of life's next chapter.

With aroha from us all

*Katie O'Connor (chair)
for the Tui Motu Board*

kia manawa nui: take heart

*Consider time's faithful flow, orbits
of moons and planets, galaxies charting
the geometry and physics of the heart
as one steeped in meditation silently
enters the sacredness of being.
The tide ebbs, Matariki rises,
earth curves back toward the sun;
it is time to begin planting,
the undulations of our lives*

*echoing time's beginning, surprising
harmonies, patterns drawn out
of tattered and broken threads
forming our stories, whakapapa
before tribe or race mattered
and long after they're forgotten,
intoned in rhythmic cadences,
each breath expanding the lungs
then passing on; birth and death
swelling the heart beat by beat
by beat until heart is all in all.
Kia manawa nui.*

David Griffin

matariki is the maori name for the pleiades

galileo, science and the church

*Father Edmund Little revisits and explodes some of the myths
that surround the medieval intellectual traditions
concerning science*

There is a form of misinformation that masquerades as 'general knowledge'. Many, for instance, still take it for granted that Christianity, especially the Catholic Church, has always been hostile to science. Contrary to enduring fictions, the medieval church did not teach that the world was flat, or forbid the dissection of corpses for medical research, or oppose the use of anaesthetics in surgery.

The example usually cited to 'prove' the church's hostility to science is Galileo (1564-1642) who was condemned at Rome in 1633 for upholding Copernicus' (1473-1543) theory that the earth revolves around the sun. Galileo and Copernicus form part of the 'scientific revolution' of the 17th century which is often hailed as the triumph of reason over blind religious faith.

A seriously inconvenient fact spoiling this fantasy is that Galileo and Copernicus professed deep religious faith, as did other scientific 'greats' of the century, such as Kepler (1571-1630), Boyle (1627-91), Descartes (1596-1650), Gassendi (1592-1655) and Newton (1642-1727). They pursued their science as an essential part of their faith, believing that in studying creation they were honouring and learning about the Creator.

Another piece of wrongheaded 'general knowledge' is the routine disparagement of the Middle Ages. 'Medieval' is casually used to signify ignorance and barbarism. Certainly the medieval period had its brutal side, although an 'enlightened' modern

age that has produced the H-Bomb, napalm, poison gas, concentration camps, germ warfare and Abu Ghraib is hardly in a position to claim the moral high ground. The medieval period produced the cathedrals, requiring expertise in engineering, architecture, mathematics and aesthetics.

Even more remarkably, it produced the universities, institutions unique in educational history, of which there were about 70 in Europe by the end of the medieval period. Although mostly sponsored and founded by the church, they enjoyed an independence of church and state which modern universities might well envy. Not so much 'controlled' they were consulted by popes and bishops. In their courses they placed emphasis on logic, mathematics, astronomy, optics, the problems of generation and reproduction and 'natural philosophy', their term for physics.

When modern speakers casually refer to this intensely creative and intellectual period as the Dark Ages, they exhibit in fact the dark gaps in their own knowledge.

Galileo and Copernicus were results of this medieval intellectual tradition. The universities had earlier accepted the views of Aristotle (384BC – 322BC) and Ptolemy (c.AD 90 – c. 168) that the sun and planets circled around an immovable earth. However, several 14th century scientists at the universities of Oxford and Paris queried these classical views. Jean Buridan (1300-58), a French priest, and Nicole Oresme (1323-1382),

later bishop of Lisieux, argued that the rotation of the earth was a plausible hypothesis, thus preparing the way for Copernicus.

During the 15th century Renaissance the church was a vigorous patron of the arts and science. By the 17th century it was spending more on astronomy in particular and science in general than any other institution.

Leonardo da Vinci conducted experiments on solar heating in the Vatican under the patronage of Pope Leo X from 1514-16. (It's another myth peddled in popular histories that until Galileo nobody was interested in experimental evidence.)

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own knowledge*

Pope Clement VII listened with interest to lectures on Copernicus' theory in 1533. In 1536 the cardinal-archbishop of Capua wrote to Copernicus from Rome expressing rapturous admiration both for Copernicus and for his sun-centred theory. Copernicus published his theory in 1543 in a book dedicated to Pope Paul III who was impressed.

It provoked admiration and criticism, but no scandal. In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII reformed the defective Julian calendar prompted by the Jesuit astronomer Christopher Clavius. The Gregorian calendar is now almost universally used.

So, what went wrong when Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644) condemned Galileo and the Copernican theory?

It is difficult for us to grasp now that there were strong scientific arguments against the view that the earth revolved around the sun. Copernicus gave no observational or mathematical proof that could be tested. There were serious flaws in his arguments. Copernicus and Galileo insisted that the planets revolved in perfect circles.

This caused mathematical and observational problems deplored by Tycho Brahe (1546-1601). When Kepler correctly theorised that the planets moved in elliptical, not circular, orbits Galileo was dismissive. When Galileo asserted that tidal movements proved that the earth rotated, Kepler rightly replied that tides were caused by the moon, not by the earth's rotation. Galileo retorted that Kepler was writing 'useless fiction'.

Galileo's rudeness prompts the question whether his woes arose primarily from the church or from his fellow scientists with whom he often quarrelled. Pope Urban was intemperate but well-educated, cultured and no blinkered dogmatist. A long-time admirer of Galileo he had lavished favours upon him, including a pension to Galileo's son.

In 1632 Urban invited Galileo to compose a dialogue comparing Copernicus' theory with Ptolemy's traditional scheme. The pope asked Galileo to present the Copernican alternative as a hypothesis, not as an established fact. Galileo complied, but in such a way as to be gratuitously offensive to the pope. As some have observed, it was ironic that the pope

wanted scientific proof while Galileo demanded uncritical faith in his own genius. There ensued a clash of egos to the credit of neither man. Galileo was not tortured or imprisoned. He was confined to his comfortable house in Florence, still supported by many church dignitaries.

*in reality, science has
shown a remarkable
ability to crush its own
revolutionaries*

To put this episode into perspective, we should examine the popular misconception, that science fearlessly pursues truth, unhampered by prejudice or dogma. In reality, science has shown a remarkable ability to crush its own revolutionaries. At the end of the 18th century, the French Academy of Sciences mocked people who said they had observed rocks falling from the sky. This smacked of religious credulity! Museums throughout Europe sheepishly threw out their meteorite specimens, not wishing to be thought superstitious or medieval.

Geologists were hostile to Alfred Wegener (1880-1930) who, in the 1920s, presented his theory of continental drift. Only after his death in relative and despised obscurity was his theory accepted.

Even Einstein (1879-1955) had his difficulties. A substantial number of physicists were unconvinced by arguments in his early papers that atoms existed.

Ignaz Semmelweis (1818-65), who worked in the General Hospital at Vienna, observed that when doctors washed their hands before examining patients, a higher percentage of patients survived. He was derided, dismissed from his post, and consigned finally to a lunatic asylum. These observations were vindicated only by

Louis Pasteur's (1822-95) later work on germ theory.

In the early 1980s, Australians Drs Barry Marshall and Robin Warren defied medical orthodoxy by asserting correctly that peptic ulcers were not caused by stomach acid but by the bacterium *H pylori*. For years, the medical establishment questioned Dr Marshall's sanity and honesty.

If these modern blunders were presented as proof that the scientific and medical establishments always opposed science and healing, critics would protest that isolated cases should not be reckoned typical of the whole history. Yet many still try to make Galileo's particular case an example of the church's general opposition to science.

Apologists for the treatment of Barry Marshall justify it by talk of 'a proper degree of scepticism' until the *H pylori* hypothesis could be 'proved'. This, of course, was the attitude of Pope Urban towards Galileo. Secularists tend to accuse the church of superstition, dogma blind faith or obscurantism. Science, however, is deemed to 'make mistakes', cling too readily to a theory or paradigm, display proper scepticism and to be cautious. This is a distinction without a difference. Specialists in any intellectual discipline are apt to become partisan and defensive in the face of new ideas. Scientific innovators have suffered far harsher treatment from their peers than from the church. ■

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

the sycamore tree project

Tui Motu interviewed Claire Brown, a semi-retired Anglican priest, and Janet Sim Elder, former moderator of the Otago Presbyterian Church. They work with the Sycamore Tree Project, a movement for community restorative justice.

Superlatives like “a profoundly spiritual experience”, “really Holy Spirit things happening”, “brilliant and wonderfully supportive” were words Claire and Janet used to describe their facilitation work with the Sycamore Tree project (STP). After the Minister of Justice, Simon Power, was present at a STP graduation ceremony, he is reported to have said, “Was that genuine? You just didn’t make that up for me.” Truth-giving touched the Minister.

a national network

Claire and Janet have worked together at the Otago Correctional Facility for three years. They are part of a national network of people in 13 New Zealand prisons, using a faith-based programme. Being trained facilitators for the *Restorative Justice* programme, crossing to this new project was a natural step.

how it works

What is STP? It brings together 12 people, six affected by criminal offences directly or indirectly – and six prisoners. These 12 people deal with 12 crimes and use groupwork, and offender and victim interaction in pairs. It’s an 18-day process, in eight three-hour sessions. The last is a graduation ceremony where local notables, mayors or MPs, with friends and relatives of the participants, come and listen to what the participants have accomplished.

the name

The name Sycamore Tree signifies how it works. In session one, the participants read the story of the

rapacious tax collector Zacchaeus from Luke 19:1-10 [see box]. Zacchaeus, a ‘shorty’ curious about Jesus, climbs a sycamore tree to see over the crowd. Jesus issues him a ringing challenge: “Come down, because today I must stay at your house.” Zacchaeus, spurned in his own society because he defrauds his fellow Jews, finds his real humanity. He reacts joyfully to this good news by choosing to restore his ill gotten wealth to his victims.

telling the story

Gospel story meets personal story. Reflecting on Zacchaeus and interweaving their lives with his, each participant begins to tell their story. This is ‘hugely scary’ for both prisoners and those offended against. For most it is the first time to tell their story, reflecting on its implications for others. Most offenders have never listened like that, or put themselves in the victim’s shoes.

Janet remembered one tearful man saying, “I can’t do this anymore – I can’t listen to any more. These stories are too hard”. But with help he was able to tell his own story, and gained so much he was able to ring his estranged brother. Damaged family relationships were restored.

Another older man formed a friendship with a ‘lifer’. Though unusual to keep contact after the STP, he agreed to that. This gave the lifer strength to face problems in a way not otherwise possible. Likewise, Claire remembers one woman so affected by a burglary she had to leave her

house. She couldn’t stand living there, and was very bitter. Telling her story changed her completely.

counter culture gospel

The Gospel is counter cultural: from the start, community and trust develop quickly. Listening to 11 other powerful stories gives courage to reveal one’s own. People often feel utterly released and rejuvenated, beginning to see ‘criminals’ and ‘victims’ as real people, who are not going to judge them, and of whom they are not frightened.

biblical patterns

The process follows the biblical pattern of looking at what harm has happened and who will take responsibility for that. It is not about punishing the individual, but about broken, dislocated community. Though these words are never used, people actually discover they are human beings made in God’s image, and that the words ‘victim’ and ‘criminal’ are simply labels for particular, practical purposes. They are human beings first – not defined by their crimes.

This discovery has amazing effects. One woman affected by her son’s drug involvement was paired up with a man in prison for drugs, also worried about the effect his drug-taking was having on his mother. Such seemingly pre-planned pairing is pure coincidence, but happens often. The outside volunteers come into the room, sit in the circle, leaving a space between them. The prisoners come and fill those spaces sitting randomly. These pairings are often so neat that

people say, "Did you plan this?" No is the answer, but the effect can be transformative.

consequences and choices

Prisoners learn there are consequences to their actions, and that they have choices. Most importantly, people do not have to be determined by their past. Prisoners see people who have struggled like them. But their new companions have not made bad choices, but good, constructive and life-giving choices. It gives them confidence to be able to do the same.

values

STP's value system aims at transformation – to challenge deeply-rooted patterns of thought, prejudices and preconceived ideas. Janet and Claire say this journey is a privilege. There is pain always, but joy in new-found ideas. Many hardened young men experience a life change.

a new future

Both women think NZ society is terribly ungracious, and punitive, e.g., the recent three strikes legislation. It has no grace about it. It wants to make an end of the offender, giving no hope. It deters by imposing quantitatively more punishment, not a deterrent, let alone a restorative measure. Janet and Claire think our society encourages crime victims to be caught up in a cycle of fear, on which politicians feed.

We need a different diet, through the setting up of all-party multi-lateral justice legislation, as in Finland. Delete the serve of offender-victim stories in every news bulletin, deal positively with root causes of crime:

- face our binge-drinking culture,
 - help family relationships flourish,
 - deal with domestic violence,
 - set up more anger management courses,
 - give drug treatment therapy to all affected prison addicts
- just a few tasty morsels in a new national diet. ■

Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the town when suddenly a man whose name was Zacchaeus made his appearance; he was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man. He kept trying to see which Jesus was, but he was too short and could not see him for the crowd; so he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus who was to pass that way.

When Jesus reached the spot he looked up and spoke to him, "Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I am to stay at your house today." And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully. They all complained when they saw what was happening. "He has gone to stay at a sinner's house," they said.

But Zacchaeus stood his ground and said to the Lord, "Look, sir, I am going to give half my property to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody I will pay him back four times the amount.

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man has come to seek out and save what was lost."

(Lk 19:1-10 NJB)



How can you help?

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email: restorative_justice@pfnz.org.nz

Dunedin contacts: Janet: janetse@actrix.co.nz
and Claire: claire@earthlight.co.nz

a dog... a belt... and cyberville

In May the Editor co-lead a Dominican Family pilgrimage to St Dominic country in Spain, southern France, and Italy. Here he reflects on the unexpected gifts of this journey. Travelling along mimics the grace of the spiritual journey – always surprising, always new.

a dog

Tallaght is the provincial house of the Irish Dominican friars on the outskirts of Dublin. The priory is surrounded by a magnificent high walled garden whose focus is an old sprawling walnut tree, still the object of pilgrimage because of St Maelruan, an eighth century monk, who founded his monastery here.

The garden also contains the friars' cemetery. I've been there once before. Now I want to visit the grave of fr. Damian Bryne, a much loved Master of the Order, who died in 1993. The porter, a happy young man called Joe, buzzes me into the priory, and shows me the way to the garden. "Do ye know the way to the cemetery now?" he said. "Yes, I've been there before," and let myself into this ancient walled enclosure.

As I take my bearings, there appears from nowhere a collie-cross dog who sits patiently in front of me, and smiles. There are introductions of tail wagging and licking. (Next day I find out her name: Sally). I took off to where I thought the cemetery was, with my canine companion bouncing along beside me. There was never a bark, never a whine - just galumphing along - until she deposited a branch of a tree before me. I threw, and she fetched. And in this way we traversed the whole garden in 15 minutes without my finding the cemetery. Its entrance eluded me. But Sally didn't. She just kept coming back, smiling and playing and enjoying herself - and in the process making enjoyment for me.

Finally I admitted to myself I was lost, needed to get



directions, and headed back to the garden door. Sally reached there before me, sitting, down at mouth sad, knowing that I was leaving her. Her whole being said, "You are now my friend for life. I've only known you fifteen minutes but, hey, we're mates! Why are you leaving me all alone?"

Next afternoon fr. Donagh brought me to the cemetery. Sally was waiting again, this time saying, "Hey, old mate, where's my branch? Come on, let's play. Don't say you've forgotten that we're mates for life."

This was a pilgrimage way-point: not just humans, but canine friends, seek and enjoy the god-given relationship of friendship.

a belt

Taking our pilgrims through drizzle to the Duomo, that vast and beautiful cathedral church in Florence, we passed the old leather market. I remembered I need a good leather belt to replace the aging wrinkly one I use as a cincture for my religious habit.

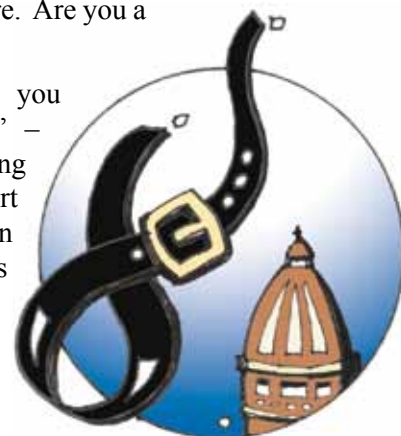
I stopped in front of one of many belt carts - a dazzling array. Soon the owner, clearly Eastern European, was cajoling me: "What kind of belt do you want, signore?"

"Black, good quality, 90 cm around the waist", I said.

"OK, I find you one, signore. Are you a priest or something?"

"Si, signore. How did you know?" "Oh, I can tell" - with a laugh. (I am wearing a black hooded sweat shirt with a white Dominican Cross embroidered into its front).

"I'm Greek Orthodox, and our priests are married. Are you married, padre?"



"No, I am not married. Priests in the Catholic Church don't marry."

"That's your problem. Your Church wouldn't be having its present troubles if your priests were married. Our priests marry and we have no trouble with them."

"Are you married?"

"No, it's difficult to find a woman of your own faith here in Italy."

"OK, but don't you go home for holidays each year?"

"Yes, but where do you think I am from?"

"Romania or Albania?"

"Very good, Romania. And I am going home next year to be married. I'm 42 you know."

"Good age for marriage. My father was 42 when he was married."

We found a good belt, at a reasonable price. "Padre, I give you the best price in Florence!" ... Yeah...

In five minutes, we had broken through the ecumenical barrier, solved the sexual abuse problem in the Catholic Church – no matter that the answer was too simplistic to cover the present complex set of circumstances – and got a belt. A strange conversation, but an Orthodox friend sympathetic and wanting to help solve Catholic problems. Another blessed part of the pilgrimage relationship.

cyberville

We arrive in Leuven and pass into the old market on our way to Leuven's famous beguinage. Here Dominican friars had helped lay women sustain community life for centuries. It's a beautiful day, clear blue skies, and warm.

In our path stand two very hip young men brandishing pamphlets, and cajoling passing strollers. A third twangs an electric guitar and sings tunelessly in the background. Always curious, I stop.

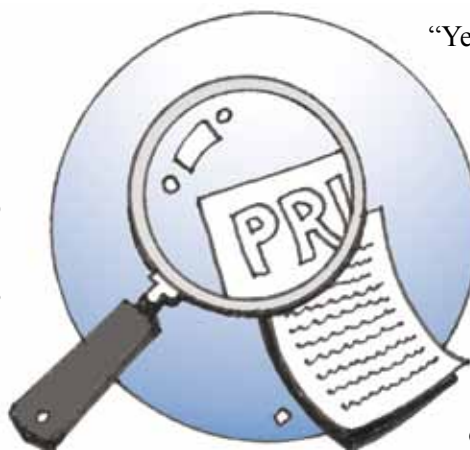
"Do you speak English?" he says in immediate recognition – whow! In immaculate English, Karl tells me that he and his friends are pointing out to Belgians and anyone interested the way in which people's privacy is being invaded all over Europe. How interesting. "What's your part in all this?" I ask.

"I am doing a doctorate at the University of Antwerp on the human rights of people whose privacy has been invaded, especially Muslim women. Yes, you know you can't walk anywhere in Leuven without CCTV capturing your every move. Who knows what this material is being used for?"

"Oh, are you fearful that tapes will be misused?"

"Yes, and we also know that the Echelon satellite system is being used to seek information which is being misused." (Heavens, I think, shades of the Waihopai Three on the other side of the world!)

"Is that the one kept by the CIA to gather information worldwide?"



"Yes."

"How do you know that such information is being misused?"

"We have friends who have been in Afghanistan and Pakistan for study of local architecture

and culture. They have been 'profiled' by our police: from information taken from chat rooms, credit card payments, plane ticket information, and uploaded photos taken overseas: all from Echelon. These and other pieces of information have been seen by lawyers helping people who have been held on 'profile' suspicion alone. These lawyers know the sources and how the police or immigration authorities get them. Innocent info can make a 'suspect' guilty by association before anything is proven."

"Here, please take this booklet in English, which gives you some further information. And remember this issue is particularly distressing for Muslim women who guard their privacy jealously."

I read the booklet later. It's in cartoon form for the young 20's audience, entitled "Under Surveillance." The cartoons tell of Daniel, accused of cyber terrorism from a range of his easily identifiable IT sources monitored for three years until a cyber profile is put together. His friends are devastated when he is held for interrogation. They worry that their own cell phones, computers and Facebook expose them to similar investigations.

A thought! Why are Muslim women being profiled, as the future Doctor Karl suggested? That evoked in me memories of George Orwell's stark novel "1984", where Big Brother [the totalitarian State] has everyone under surveillance. Are our lives now part of our governments' all-seeing eye, totalitarian or not? Are we, all unknown to ourselves, being surveyed and profiled? I find this thought somewhat chilling. Will this be a dominant part of our future pilgrimage of life? ■

grace given - unity shared

*This reflection shows the remarkable development over time
of a community's ability to live peacefully with people of different faith traditions*

Marg Schrader

Recently I visited Trosly, the birthplace in France of *L'Arche*. It was founded in the 1960's by Jean Vanier. Now there are 135 *L'Arche* communities worldwide. When they began, the communities had a largely Catholic flavour. But soon they developed into strong ecumenical, and most recently, interfaith environments, with a deep conviction of the unique value and gift of those who live with intellectual disabilities. Assistants share the life of core members of *L'Arche* communities. For both core members and assistants, it is a challenging and rewarding life.

Nadia, a young Muslim woman from a local teacher's college, came on placement to a community near Trosly. The day she arrived, the community gave her this greeting:

"We know you are a Muslim. We are mainly Roman Catholic here, so we want to know how we can support you in being the very best Muslim you can be. Please tell us how we can do that."

These must have seemed very welcoming but also unusual words to Nadia – in a time when government and media play up conflict between Christians and Muslims.

Later, when Ramadan – it's a stricter Muslim form of Lent – came around, the other assistants asked Nadia, "How can we support you as you keep the Ramadan fast? Would you like one of us to fast with you each day?"

I attended a retreat for retreat-givers

at Trosly. The theme was how do we support and encourage people to grow spiritually in an interfaith community, many of whom have no religious background at all.

On one afternoon we had three speakers: our Muslim assistant, Nadia; David, a Jewish man; and Noel, a humanist. They all told their stories of how they had become involved with *L'Arche*, often for a short time and often as a part of university placements. But they found life there, and subsequently chose to stay on, some for 10 years.

Nadia told the group it was as though the other assistants had held a mirror up to her and showed her Muslim faith. Until then it had not meant much to her. But in that supportive context she delved deeper and grew to love and respect her faith tradition.

"It is interesting though", she said, "I go to Mass with the core members and discover sometimes that God is speaking to me through the priest. There really is only one God. I call God *Allah*."

David, the young Jewish man, reminded us of our common heritage and asked that we do not water down our faith. "I need you to be fully Christian so that I can be fully Jewish."

Noel, the humanist, spoke of how delighted he is when the community asks him to do a reflection for the group, honouring his stance and learning from it.

The attitude of each of these young

people to life and faith moved me deeply.

The *L'Arche* charter of 1993 says,

L'Arche consists of "... communities of faith rooted in prayer and trust in God. They seek to be guided by God and by their weakest members, through whom God's presence is revealed. Each community member is encouraged to deepen his or her spiritual life and live it according to his or her particular faith and tradition. Those who have no religious affiliation are also welcomed and respected in their freedom of conscience. Unity is founded on the covenant of love to which God calls all the community."

I find this a wonderful vision, which we uphold in our community at Kapiti, near Wellington. At the moment we are eight core members and assistants. Sometimes it seems like we are small and very vulnerable, though our heart is strong. However, the spirit of God encourages us all to grow in faith, regardless of our nationality and faith background. It is a magnificent community of which to be part. ■

Marg Schrader is a retired moderator of the Presbyterian Church of NZ, who is presently pastoral minister of the *L'Arche* community at Kapiti. If you want to learn more, or become part of *L'Arche*'s life and work, you may contact Marg at: margschrader@clear.net.nz

The Inner History of a Day

No one knew the name of this day;
Born quietly from deepest night,
It hid its face in light,
Demanded nothing for itself,
Opened out to offer each of us
A field of brightness that travelled ahead,
Providing in time, ground to hold our footsteps
And the light of thought to show the way.

The mind of the day draws no attention;
It dwells within the silence with elegance
To create a space for all our words,
Drawing us to listen inward and outward.

We seldom notice how each day is a holy place
Where the eucharist of the ordinary happens,
Transforming our broken fragments
Into an eternal continuity that keeps us.

Somewhere in us a dignity presides
That is more gracious than the smallness
That fuels us with fear and force,
A dignity that trusts the form a day takes.

So at the end of this day, we give thanks
For being betrothed to the unknown
And for the secret work
Through which the mind of the day
And wisdom of the soul become one.

John O'Donohue



cyril hally ssc: a memory

Cyril Thomas Hally was a Columban missionary priest, born in Temuka in 1920. He died peacefully in Melbourne on 18 May 2010. Cyril was a legend to generations of lay people and religious from all over the world including many New Zealanders who passed through the Columban Pacific Mission Institute at Turramurra, North Sydney. May he rest in peace.

The principal interest of Cyril Hally was in bold new ways of locating the church in the modern world. A sense of mission stretched his talents and energies across many disciplines. He could stand at a podium and engage with confidence any number of issues. He would speak as a cultural anthropologist, a sociologist, a missiologist, an ecologist, as a prophet, and even as a loyal dissident. The scope of his reading and reflection was extensive, steeping him in a broad anthropological, cultural, social and religious framework.

a kingdom person

In this context Cyril carried a fascination with the prophetic character of religion and church. He was gifted with an imagination to speak about vital aspects of spirituality. His basic vision was of a Kingdom bigger than a Church. People of faith, he believed, were servants of God's reign. Their major task was to identify and articulate the signs of the times. This meant delving into history and current events with a view to interpreting signs of God's presence in the world. Good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ, will always stand in contrast to sinful situations.

with mission focus

Cyril was best on his feet, confidently helping others towards a new way of

looking at the church and the world. Mission was much more than a function of the church. His focus was not always on the day to day life of the church, but on what was happening to people across the world. Religion for him was at its best when raising a prophetic healing voice against what is sinful and what denies life. He placed exploitative and oppressive economic, political and military systems on notice. He paid special attention to the worldly realities of culture, religious pluralism and the cry of the poor. He set out to explain the realities of inculturation, dialogue, liberation, and reconciliation. These have become integral dimensions of mission today.

to transform our planet

Mission for Cyril happens best when people of faith play a role in the transformation of society and in the promotion and defense of common human and spiritual values. Ongoing mission depends on how we understand the needs of people and are ready to care for the planet. He associated with many organizations that worked to provide a vision of an alternative society. In the terms of social justice he had a commitment to human rights, indigenous heritage, peace and environment. He questioned materialistic attitudes, racism, inequality, consumerism, and

the violence that results in drugs, war and ecological damage. Exploitation of the poor and devastation of the planet will only erode human and spiritual values and lead to alienation.

through faith and culture

Cyril was given to challenging declarations, such as: 'The world sets the agenda! The church's role is to be relevant, responding to needs!' Awareness of global challenges and church responsibility was crucial for him. By way of example, few church people have made the effort like Cyril to unravel the mystery of God's presence in China. He knew that no good would come out of an atheistic regime which persecuted Christians and expelled missionaries. He spoke of the Chinese Christian community as a mustard seed germinating. In his opinion, a genuine encounter of faith and culture is beginning in Asia. He saw the student standing in front of an advancing tank in Tiananmen Square as a reminder that the meek shall possess the land. ■

Michael Gormley is the mission coordinator of the Columban Mission, Lower Hutt

where is humanity?



Lois Griffiths

Gaza has been in the news recently because of the bloody commando takeover of a humanitarian aid flotilla hoping to break the siege. Media reports have focused on the actions at sea and on the list of items the Israelis 'allow' or don't 'allow' to enter the Gaza Strip. But the media have not provided us with a human face, with someone who actually lives in Gaza and can tell the outside world something of what life is like in the world's most crowded prison.

Fr Manuel Musallam retired recently at the age of 71 after serving as the parish priest of the Holy Family Church in Gaza for 14 years. For most of that time the Israelis would not allow him to visit his family and friends in the West Bank.

This Easter he was concerned, as always, about the Occupation and how it robs those in the Holy Land, of Easter's message of hope and joy. "We Christians of Palestine have been under Occupation for many long years. We've been suffering with bitterness being kept away from the Holy Sites. We've been denied our right to worship in Jerusalem. Many Christian generations have never been able to reach Jerusalem to visit its holy places." He holds little hope. "We do not foresee any political settlement, or an end to occupation, or hope for the return of Palestinian refugees, or the forming of our state with Jerusalem as its capital, or the right to self-determination, or the liberation of thousands of prisoners, free access and movement, an end to Gaza siege, and the dismantling of the Apartheid Wall around Jerusalem."

"We are appalled by the continuous threats of more war. And we are distressed by the daily humiliation, hunger, thirst, unemployment and the absence of sustainable development in our country."

"Jerusalem was the city of God, peace, and prayer but has been converted into a city of man, war and hatred. Instead of becoming the key to the doors of heaven, it has become a key to war and blood."

"Occupation is a sin and a form of terrorism, crime against humanity. All perpetrators should be judged by the International Criminal Court before being judged by the just court of God."

During the December 2008 war on Gaza, Father Manuel wrote, "Our people in Gaza are treated like animals in a zoo. They eat but remain hungry, they cry, but no one wipes their tears. There is no water, no electricity, no food, only fear, terror and blockade... Our children are living in a state of trauma and fear. They are sick from it and for other reasons such as malnutrition, poverty and the cold... The hospitals did not have basic first aid before the war and now thousands of wounded and sick are pouring in and they are performing operations in the corridors. The situation is frightening and sad."

It has become clear to concerned citizens in many countries that their governments have no intention to break the siege on Gaza. That task will have to be done by civil society. And it will. Viva Palestina will send more convoys of trucks. More Gaza Freedom ships will set sail.

The people of Gaza, and indeed all Palestinians challenge the world with the question, "Where is humanity?" ■

Lois Griffiths writes from Christchurch. She and her husband, Martin, were recently in Israel on an educational tour

*Bishop Peter Cullinane delves
into the moral
tradition of the Catholic Church
to answer the question*

Your correspondent Loreto Meahan OP asks why the bishops have not publicly supported the three men who were charged with damaging public property at Waihopai. I think there are several reasons, and I am speaking only for myself.

First let me focus the question even more cogently: why wouldn't anyone who accepts that these men believed they were acting lawfully, who respects their passion for justice, who accepts the need for all of us to be challenged to think about what is happening, and who shares their contempt for the abuse of power by a super power whose violations of human and democratic rights are a matter of historical record even while it teaches its own children that its values are good for the rest of the world, – why wouldn't such a person want to support the actions taken at Waihopai?

The issues are wider than just the single legal question the jury had to decide. The jury's job was to decide whether the accused believed they were acting lawfully – not whether their actions were lawful, nor whether their reasons were well-founded: just whether they thought they were! Yet judging by the euphoric claims of victory and righteousness that followed the verdict, one could have got the impression that these wider questions were what the jury had resolved. Some still speak as if the jury had vindicated their actions. That is not what the jury did.

So even though people in need of folk-heroes are always going to back David against Goliath, we still need to see if Goliath was actually there, i.e. whether the action taken at Waihopai was going to make any difference to what happens in Afghanistan. Because if that is uncertain, then the moral justification for the damage done at Waihopai becomes tenuous to say the least.

The defendants were simply sure that even the temporary shut-down of the Waihopai facility saved lives. To believe that, you have to believe that the US Military would allow its operations to depend on the



full-time functioning of an individual satellite station. I imagine that anyone who believes that would have less difficulty than most of us in being sure of themselves.

Perhaps, too, I missed something in the reasoning of those who don't seem to address the claim that maybe lives are being saved as a result of intelligence gained through satellite stations.

It is precisely in the face of such uncertainties that the Catholic moral tradition becomes so relevant. We cannot talk intelligibly about carrying out a lesser evil to avoid a greater one unless we know both the harm that will be done by our actions and the degree of likelihood that the hoped-for greater good will actually happen.

The Catholic moral tradition has realism on its side

a response

*...s deeply into the theological
...urch to give an answer to a
...n asked*



when it requires a proportionately certain, direct and proximate connection between actions that will cause harm and the good being intended.

In calculating the harm done by the action at Waihopai it is necessary to include the moral harm of reinforcing the already widespread and destructive assumption that the end justifies the means – because this is how it will be perceived by those who do not understand the narrow legal question the jury had to decide.

The bishops also have an obligation to support those parents who are trying to teach their children that destroying other people's property is not okay, to say nothing of trying to explain why it is not okay to destroy clinics where thousands of innocent lives are being taken – far more than in Afghanistan.

The potential for harm resulting from the actions done at Waihopai, taken together with a defence based on condoning those actions, is a big price to pay if the intended good is really only a hope and a gamble.

Given what has to be included in calculating the harm and potential harm from the actions at Waihopai, and given the difficulties of knowing how likely it was that a greater good would in fact be achieved, I was not impressed by the simplistic comparison made between “protecting lives and protecting plastic”. And even less impressed by a seemingly cavalier attitude to who should pay the bill. Should that be determined by the subjective factors that enabled the perpetrators to elude criminal liability, or should it be determined by whether the actions themselves were lawful?

We also have to respect the fact that our government has defence responsibilities throughout the South Pacific and that in the real world this necessarily involves gathering intelligence and collaborating with allies, and that having such a base does not necessitate the surrender of its operations and control to any other nation. What the base is used for is within the power of our own government to decide.

So the issue comes down to what is the morally responsible way of influencing our government's thinking within this democracy. Is it responsible to condone physical attacks (euphemistically described as “non-violence”) on government agencies?

I do not think so. This is my answer to the question asked of the bishops. But there are bigger questions. The same principles I have applied to what was done at Waihopai apply to what is being done in Afghanistan. We have to ask whether, on an even larger scale, there is disproportion between the harm being done and any hoped-for good to be achieved. In the Catholic tradition there is a morality of the means as well as a morality of the ends. ■

Bishop Peter Cullinane is the Roman Catholic Bishop of Palmerston North, and a well known theologian and teacher ▷▷

waihopai - an apologia

*Peter Murnane OP writes his apologia
for the actions of the Waihopai Three*

▷▷ Activities of the United States in other countries depend upon gathering information: on spying. When the Waihopai spy base was set up near Blenheim in 1989 at the request of the the US government, it gained a South Pacific base to complete the ECHELON network of satellite receivers that listens to the emails, faxes, and phone calls flowing through satellites. Waihopai base sends back to Washington enormous volumes of “signals intelligence” (sigint) to the National Security Agency (NSA). This information may be used for any purpose, good or bad.

gcsb denial

After the jury found us not guilty, the director of the Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) denied our accusations that the base was involved in war, torture or “unspeakable evil.” Of course, these activities are not done at the base itself, but GCSB could not deny that the ECHELON network gathers the information that Washington needs to carry out its policies. Despite their denials, this base does have many evils to answer for.

our motivation

We are driven by our understanding that every person who has suffered in war or has been tortured on the questionable pretence of “national security” is our sister or brother. At the heart of the gospel by which we try to live is the command to “do to others as you would like them to do to you” (*Matthew 7:12*) We shared our opposition to the damage caused by all militarism, but particularly by this local spy base. We had been impressed by the tradition of PLOUGHSHARES actions, by which ordinary people non-violently confront some aspect of militarism and symbolically disarm it by praying or by pouring blood or physically damaging it. We knew of four women in England who had disabled a warplane destined for Indonesia when that country was committing genocide in East Timor. When they claimed that they had destroyed it “to prevent mass murder” the jury acquitted them, understanding that human lives are more important than military action.

following prophetic tradition

Ploughshares actions follow the tradition of the prophets Isaiah and Micah. They dreamed that one day the human family will come to its senses and will “turn their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles.” (*Is 2:4; Mi 4:3*)

what we did

We planned our action carefully, and against all odds were able to enter the Waihopai base by cutting the electrified

fence that surrounds it, and the inner circular fence around the dome, and with sickles slashed the dome that loomed over us like a white cliff. We felt a deep joy, knowing we had struck a blow against an important instrument of US militarism. Looking back from the police van, as we were driven away, we saw a rainbow above the still-deflating dome. We took this as an affirmation of what we had just done.

jury trial

Our jury trial, transferred from Blenheim to the Wellington District Court, began on 8 March 2010, almost two years after the action. The jury’s verdict of “not guilty” puzzled and annoyed many people. How could they acquit us, if we admitted we had cut fences and deflated the dome, which the spy Bureau now claimed had cost \$1.27 million to replace?

admissions

From the beginning we had said that we damaged property to point out and prevent the greater harm, that the base was causing. The judge did not accept that each of us acted out of necessity – doing lesser evil to prevent much greater harm. He did not accept that we could prove that the base was complicit in the evils we had named.

There remained the defence known as “claim of right”, which meant that in action as we did, we believed we were right to do this, in order to stop the evil we believed the base was involved in. On the last day of the trial, before sending the jury out to decide our fate, the judge carefully pointed out that the only question they had to decide was: “were these three men sincere in their belief that the base was doing harm? If so, you can only find them not guilty”. The jury did this within two hours.

reactions to verdict

Some people were outraged at the verdict. Was their rage caused because we had begun to expose the injustice and militarism on which “international order” and our own countries’ economies are built? The government began a review of the defence of claim of right whose findings may be finalised and released by June this year.

learnings

What might be learned from our unusual action at Waihopai? Perhaps that ordinary individuals have the power to question the violent, militaristic path that our society is following. Even though the status quo is irrational and destructive most people unthinkingly accept it because it brings us our

daily bread and seem to keep us safe and comfortable. So we defend ourselves by denying that these evils are happening. This denial may explain much of the anger and name-calling that columnists and bloggers threw at us for daring to point out that our partner, the USA, continues to commit great injustice and to harm many people.

what can we do?

When we begin to admit these evils, we tend to feel helpless and say: "What can we do?" Each individual can do something, no matter how small, to question and oppose the many ways in which governments, corporations and other institutions mismanage the world. The power we each have may seem small, but each person who questions institutional evil shows that it can be questioned. People standing in solidarity have – without violence – withstood tyrannies that seemed unshakeable.

other important examples

Many great persons before us have shown this. The movement to outlaw slavery won against power and wealthy opposition. Gandhi succeeded against the British Empire. He had learned from the gospel, from the writer Thoreau and from the prophets Te Whiti and Tohu who in

the 1880s at Parihaka had non-violently resisted the crimes of our colonial government. The same non-violent methods inspired those who won civil rights for African Americans in the 1960s and those who overthrew the Berlin Wall and Soviet empire in the 1980s.

a different future?

Our power to question lets us distinguish and separate what is present here and now from what is possible in the future. We can also distinguish the person who is doing evil from their harmful actions, seeing that the person is not their wrong action or crime. Nor am I my failures, mistakes or sins. As we discover the "true self" that is a mystery, an "image of God", we will treat each other differently – even "enemies". By questioning, taking a stand and acting together, we find hope that we can improve our world, despite the mess it is in. By learning compassion and love we can replace angry violence with non-violence, and turn from the irrational belief that violence and militarism can ever help people. ■

Peter Murnane is a Dominican priest, spiritual director, social justice activist and preacher

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Daniel O'Leary

On a dangerous stretch of coast where shipwrecks often occurred, there was once a small lifeboat station. It consisted of just one hut, one boat, a makeshift lighthouse and a few devoted members who kept a constant watch over the sea. Many lives were saved.

The turning point came when the original vision was gradually lost by new and less inspired members. They were unhappy with the poorly equipped hut and the informal atmosphere of the place. They appointed and trained new crew members, and a manual of instruction was drawn up for them, together with a code of dress and behaviour.

Now the lifeboat station became a popular gathering place for its members. They furnished it expensively and began to use it as a sort of club. A huge flagpole replaced the small lighthouse. Fewer members were now interested in risking their lives in times of danger, and the focus of attention became the running of the new club.

About this time, a straying ship was wrecked off the coast and the still-faithful members brought in a boatload of half-drowned people. They were sick and dirty and some of



them had black skin, others yellow. These were seen as an unpleasant threat to the spotless new image of the station. An element of fear, exclusion and control crept in.

At the next meeting, there was a severe split among the members. Most of them wanted to stop the club's lifesaving activities as being a hindrance to the normal life of what had now become a privileged institution.

When the Church, like the lifeboat station, forgets the original vision, it quickly loses its way. The Church exists to reveal the light that protects us when we struggle in the dark. It is there to point the way towards the true shores of our heart, to light our way home. It is there to remind us of who we are and of who we can be.

The Church, like Jesus, is meant to measure us at our tallest, to celebrate our divinity from the moment of our birth, to keep our focus on the beckoning horizons of possibility. It traces for us the hidden shape of God in all Creation, the smile of God in all religions, the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in a world called the body of God. The Church is there to reveal to us another courageous way of living, a way of believing in the light while it is still dark.

People are waiting to be reassured of this salvation, to be comforted and reconciled within their endless complexities, wounds and restlessness. We are congenitally unfaithful, we are forever tempted, we sin seven times a day. People ache to belong in the inclusive company of those who believe that forgiveness is a non-negotiable way of life.

This is the real universal priesthood. All our hearts are anointed by virtue of the sacrament of birth and baptism. Theologian John O'Donohue sees ordained priesthood as the precious sacrament of the natural and graced priesthood of every human heart. Without this sacramental vision of human holiness at the centre, all around becomes paralysed, disconnected, and falls away. It is happening now.

The Pentecost Spirit is stifled, the Gospel is domesticated, the prophet is silenced. There is no wonder any more, or silence, or gentleness. A hardness has set in. Damaged beauty needs a new design – a design that is already traced in the deepest spiritual centre of each member's innermost soul, of each community's commitment to inclusive acceptance and respect.

As a mother holds her child closely while teaching about the hard lessons of life, the Church of Jesus is called to be present to us in the same way. We are all failed human beings. Too often we have spoiled what love is, broken our holy vows and damaged precious lives in the process. The Church is there to gather us close in our sinfulness, to tell us that it is possible to start all over again, to show us how our pain can be the saving of us. If we are not carefully shown by Mother Church how to make our wounds into sacred wounds, we invariably become bitter.

*the Church, like Jesus,
is meant to measure
us at our tallest, to
celebrate our divinity*

If we are not sensitively drawn to find grace at the heart of our pain, that very heart will go out of us. We long for the tenderness of the fully human Jesus holding and healing us in our

hurting, liberating us from the ever-present temptation to despair. There is nothing so like God as being free from fear.

In his poem *Escape*, D.H. Lawrence describes what it is like when we get out of the cages and 'glass bottles' of our own lives, and escape into the forests of freedom:

*Cool, unlying life will rush in,
and passion will make our bodies
taut with power,
we shall stamp our feet
with new power,
and old things will fall down,
we shall laugh,
and institutions will curl up
like burnt paper.*

Our image of the God we have preached is too small. So is our understanding of Church and of sacraments. The promises of our Saviour were never meant for entitlement for the privileged, or for those who belong to any given institution. They are there as lighthouses for the lost, lifeboat stations for all who are desperate, beacons of pure love for those who are truly poor in their deepest being.

This is the bright message that our people want to hear every Sunday as they prepare for another daunting Monday morning. Loved back into their blessed essence by the community of Jesus, they remake their broken promises.

It is high time for another Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is too surprising, elusive and totally unpredictable to be contained in any institution. Like the wind, she is utterly free – free to sing of a God who has no favourites, who is passionate about our humanity, who forgets our sins and carries to a safe haven every single one of her children.

"So it belongs to us as Christians", Timothy Radcliffe OP said recently in a talk to priests, "that we rejoice in the very existence of people, with all their fumbling attempts to live and love,

whether they are married or divorced or single, whether they are straight or gay, whether their lives are lived in accordance with church teaching or not... The church should be a community in which people discover God's delight in them."

We are already saved. We do not have to beg for such graces any more. We are all forgiven already for everything. The time and task now is to believe those amazing graces, to thank God for them, and then to heal and empower others by reminding them of their own fragile beauty, yet their immense power.

This is the emerging Church we are called to nourish anew. It is starting to blossom from within our hearts and our homes. Its seeds have always been within us. ■

*Daniel O'Leary, a priest of the Leeds
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Courtesy The Tablet*

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failure and faith

The story of Abraham in Genesis contains several anomalies regarding patriarchy, family relationships and human justice.

Glynn Cardy sifts through these and offers some helpful applications

The entire ancestral narrative from *Genesis 12-25* is dominated by the question of an heir. Anxiety and doubt are frequently part of Abraham's conversation with his God. Doubt and faith are not mutually exclusive but woven together. So too are failure and faith.

To summarise briefly the succession saga: Abraham's wife Sarah is past childbearing age. She therefore suggests, as was common in the Near East, Abraham have intercourse with her maid, the Egyptian slave-girl, Hagar. Hagar conceives and bears a son, Ishmael. Abraham is delighted. Sarah however is envious. "Hagar", she moans to Abraham, "is treating me with contempt." Abraham tries to dodge the conflict: "She's your slave!"

A number of years go by and then, according to the story, God decided to favour Sarah and she too conceived and bore a son. His name was Isaac. Sarah however was not content. She petitioned Abraham to cast out Hagar and his teenage son Ishmael into the desert, where they would surely perish. Abraham, though in grief at this situation, consults his God who seems to agree with Sarah – the child of the promise would be Isaac, not Ishmael. So Hagar and Ishmael are cast out, though later they are divinely rescued.

There are four interpretative keys we need to be aware of when reading this narrative. The first is ancient biology, the second patriarchal power, the third 'texts of terror', and the fourth are the fragments of God we find in *Genesis*.

In ancient times male sperm was considered to be 'seed' – namely what we would call a fertilised egg. The woman's womb was merely a garden or incubator for the seed. All the chromosomes were thought to come from the male. So any child a man fathered, regardless of the status of the mother, was 100 percent genuine offspring.

Abraham's first-born son and heir therefore was Ishmael, not Isaac. To follow the directions of his God and his wife Sarah and to cast Ishmael out was to visit upon his rightful heir a huge injustice. No theological gloss by later editors can disguise this fact. Further, this injustice around inheritance would be perpetuated in generations to come causing huge distress and enmity.

The second thing to understand is patriarchal power. Abraham and Sarah did not have a 21st century relationship of mutuality and equality. The patriarch ruled the clan. All slaves ultimately belonged to him. He had the power and responsibility.

So when Sarah moaned to him about Hagar's behaviour Abraham had the authority to mediate a just solution, which he fails to do. Hagar is punished and Sarah's envy is not bridled. Similarly after Isaac is born, when Sarah outrageously requests him not only to elevate her son to be heir but to cast out Ishmael into the desert, Abraham needs to use his patriarchal authority to mediate what is best and uphold what is right. Again

Abraham fails. He seems to freeze up emotionally and become incapable of exercising leadership.

In a patriarchal world it is not fair to blame Sarah for what happened to Ishmael and Hagar. It was not Sarah's decision. Her power, compared with the patriarch, was minimal. It was Abraham who failed. In casting out Ishmael he grievously wounded his heart, and his heart never recovered.

The phrase 'texts of terror' was coined by Phyllis Trible to describe the stories in the Bible that were thoroughly bad news for women. Not only were the women in these stories – and she uses four examples – victims of cruelty, but the text portrays God as either silent, absent, or assenting to the cruelty. In a similar way

Philip Culbertson has written about texts of terror for men, including this example of Abraham, in response to the petitions of Sarah and apparent will of God, abandoning his firstborn son to a desert death. Abraham has argued with God before, arguing for compassion rather than punishment, yet here, when it is his son's life at stake Abraham loses his steely backbone and succumbs to the pressures upon him.

Not everything in the Bible is written for the purpose of emulating. Not everything is of the mode: 'Abraham did that and we should also', or 'God said that and we should obey it'. Some parts of the Bible are written as history, some as poetry, some as fables, some as salutary stories, some

as visions... And some parts of the Bible are written for us to recognise injustice, its origins, the connivance of the powerful, and the culpability of the God involved. These stories invite our participation in making sure they are never emulated. To mistake a text of terror for a 'go and do likewise' narrative is not only to misread the Bible it is to repeat again the injustices of old.

So what is God in *Genesis*? Divinity can be friendly and benevolent, but also terrifying and cruel. The attributes of divinity seem unable to be held with integrity within the concept of one God. Simply, God cannot be both loving and cruel, for the love would undermine the cruelty and the cruelty would undermine the love. Hence some authors talk about Gods in *Genesis*, including those named Yhwh, Elohim, and Al Shaddah.

Karen Armstrong talks about *Genesis* offering us "glimpses of the divine which can only be fragmentary, imperfect, and coloured by the cultures' experience of life's inherent tragedy."

I think God is, and yet more than, a cultural construct. Each culture and historical period tries to name and describe its individual and collective experiences with God. Each tries to name and describe their transcendent yet immanent experiences of divinity.

Early Hebrew culture was no different. Although primogeniture [the first born male inheriting the power of the patriarch] was the norm, time and again it didn't happen. Stories evolved to explain why it didn't, and why God didn't intervene to prevent what was unjust and destructive of patriarchal normality. Stories evolved to explain why the eventual heir, the winner if you like, became the winner. In God's mouth was put the rationale of the winner.

Yet also in these stories are hints that winning isn't everything. Isaac, though

heir, would be a big loser for he never gained his father's unconditional love and never learnt how to show and teach his own children such love. In the next generation Jacob, who tricked his first born brother Esau out of his inheritance, lives a conflicted life in a conflicted family, and then bequeaths it.

What is so likeable about Abraham is that time and again he questions the reasoning and integrity of God. This is how the Bible understands faith – not parroting some credal formulas – but courageously risking to question and probe, and to engage with the expanse of God. Abraham pushes at the boundaries of his culture's experiences of God, and often crosses them.

Philip Culbertson points out the contemporary relevance of the Abraham and Ishmael story. There are many men and women who have, due mostly to divorce, two families with two sets of children. Their current spouse or former spouse tries to influence the relationships with their children – like Sarah did. They feel pressured, caught between the demands of these spouses and their feelings for their children. To give one set of children all their attention, for example, is to cause grievance to the other set.

As for wills, legacies, etc there is the potential for much bitterness. The man or woman in this predicament is conflicted by a desire to express their love for all their children, to express their love for their current spouse, to do what is right and just, and to feel loved and rewarded in turn. There is significant potential for getting it wrong.

What I like about the Abraham saga is that the authors do not shy away from revealing not only their hero's faith but also his failures. Abraham, in abdicating his patriarchal power to Sarah, in listening to his God instead of his heart, in doing what was expedient rather than what was right, grievously wronged his first born son Ishmael and seeded

an enmity between the descendants of Ishmael and Isaac that continues today. Abraham screwed up. He failed as a family man. He failed as a patriarch. He didn't question the motives of the God he was listening to. His faith froze and he became a servant of circumstance.

Yet there is something wonderful about the biblical editors leaving all this for us to learn from. There is a message here that the faithful do fail, often with irrevocable consequences. The faithful do screw up, and usually the screw ups can't be put right. Spiritual growth is all about stepping out, risking uncertainty, putting a foot wrong in the attempt to put a foot forward. As Joy Cowley says "People who don't make mistakes don't make anything."

If Abraham had stayed safe at home in Ur, with the Gods he knew, none of this would probably have happened. But he didn't. He took a risk. A series of risks, compelled by his understanding of God – fragmentary though that was. He risked being wounded, and he was wounded... in the heart.

A life of faith and a wounded heart often companion each other on the spiritual quest. ■

Since writing this piece, Glynn Cardy has suffered a major illness. We offer our sympathy to him and his family and ask readers to pray for a successful convalescence

an original

Fr Eddie Condra preached this reflection on priesthood during the Eucharist to celebrate the 40th anniversary of his priestly ordination

I belong to a long line of searchers
Living always with that holy dissatisfaction
Finding on arrival that my bags
have already been packed.

The search goes on
Happily dissatisfied – at times that is
At other times the pain is great
It overflows
And others leave you,
They walk away.

I don't blame them
Let me make it clear
I don't blame them one bit.
In fact that is what I did
Walk away!!
Or should I say, *tried to walk away*.
You see it didn't work.
It never worked for me
The more I walked
The more the search pursued,
It was as though it kept picking on me.
You see I – like the rest of humanity –
Value peace and tranquillity...
I want a sense of well being for one and all
But my moments of peace are short lived
As I said
I arrive only to find my bags
have already been packed.

If only I could write a book
I thought to myself
If only I could write a book I'd call it
"Would the real me sit down and shut up".

The book never happened.
The walking became running
And the running became hiding...
But there was no escape!!

Many saw my plight
They came with advice in abundance;
*"Cheer up,
Look on the bright side,
Be positive,
Don't think so much,*

Remember God loves you."
These were good people,
Kind people,
Holy people,
So I tried their advice.
I began to look on the bright side
I tried to be positive
But I felt such a sham
you know what I mean... unreal!!
As for the God loving me bit
I could not help but hear them say
If you knew God loved you none of this would be happening.

Anyway none of that matters now
For try as I may, none of it worked...
The search kept pursuing
And I for my part kept running and hiding.

In the end it all became too much
I simply ran out of steam
That was when the *Prophets* came
No, not Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and friends
But their prophets
The eternal prophets
The shadows that haunted their lives
Compelling them to swim upstream
Against the current of social acceptance.
The spirits that pushed them and drove them
to rattle cages
To call attention to the silent, tolerated darkness
In which we all half exist.

These are the spirits that distress all men and women
Calling attention to the illusions we create and recreate
Until we give them substance and shape
And they become our Gods and we their slaves.

Prophets had always been
unwelcome visitors in my life
And prophets' spirits doubly so,
But as I said I had run out of steam
I was too tired to dispel them:
Now I had to sit in their presence
And this was not a nice experience
Let me assure you this was not a nice experience.
They exude a kind of primeval smell
The eyes and ears of your heart are forced open

misconception

And you begin to see
You begin to see in a way you've
never seen before
You see injustice, anger, hatred,
uncertainty...
A kind of primal chaos
It was frightening
And as if that were not
enough – it moved
From out there into me
What was outside me
was now inside me.
It was terrifying
I was terrified.

About what happened next I
have no certainty
But this I know in the most
knowingest of ways
The search and I were one.
I needed now to know, to know who
afflicted me with such liberation.

That was when I met Adam and Eve...
You know who I mean
The ancient apple eaters.
It was good to meet them face to face;
I had heard a lot about them
About the garden, the snake, Original sin
Being banished
and all that stuff.
I wanted to hear the story from their point of view.

Adam spoke;
*"There were just the two us
Lying round in the Sun
Eating all sorts of fruits
And the water, oh, the water
So clear...
But there was something missing
We couldn't quite put our finger on it...
It wasn't as though we were ungrateful
We were grateful alright,
we loved it there in fact.
We loved the tranquillity
The peaceful certainty
But, but it was all a bit bland
A bit boring in fact.
Maybe it was just that it was too perfect...*



*or something... I don't know!!
That was when we first realised
the search within us
It was a kind of yearning
A hunger.
Yes, a hunger – so we ate the
apple.
And then our eyes were
opened
We began to see
In a way we had never seen
before
we began to see.
What we saw scared us no
end
And when I say scared I mean
scared.
We closed our eyes immediately
Hoping that what we'd seen would
go away
But it wouldn't, it was too late
it was inside us now.*

*So we tried to pretend...
We tried so very hard to pretend
But we just kept running out of energy.
We soon realised nothing would work
**We were condemned to see
for rest of our lives.***

*It was as though now we both had to grow up
And neither of us wanted
that kind of responsibility.
We tried very hard to get back into Eden".*

"But I thought you were punished", I said.

"Oh, so did we" replied Adam
"We thought we were driven out
Banished
Vale of tears,
Sweat of your brow... and all that stuff.
But as I said,
It was bland in Eden,
Half living, childishy irresponsible
Safe, oh, so safe..."

Then looking at me
Adam said:

**"No, no, no my friend
You and I were created to eat apples".**

where to now, good samaritan?

Kathleen Rushton

No parable has become so much part of every day speech as the parable of the Good Samaritan (15th Sunday of Ordinary Time Year C gospel). It rules unchallenged as the model of compassionate care. The history of its interpretation, however, gives three faces which attract different titles.

the parable of the man who fell among bandits

The interpretation of commentators of the first thousand years of the church is captured in sixth-seventh century *Rossano* gospel illumination. The priest and the Levite are absent as are the bandits. The den of thieves associated with the Jewish temple in the gospels links the bandits and these two religious officials.

The inn keeper is St Peter. Jesus is the Samaritan assisted by an angel with an alabaster jar and a chalice. The man on the donkey, naked as he was on the roadside, is Adam. The parable becomes a story of salvation. Jesus offers the oil of forgiveness and the wine of salvation to humanity fallen from paradise.



Nowhere in this period is the story called the parable of the Good Samaritan or is the Samaritan 'good'. This undermines any claim to a gospel

command to be Good Samaritans. *Luke* gives a no-value description of the Samaritan.

the parable of the good samaritan

An etching in a 19th century bible captures a shift in interpretation when confidence, influence and wealth marked the European Church and society. The Samaritan's animal is now a horse. Signs of wealth are evident. All were brothers and sisters with a common Father. This is shown in the intimacy of touching cheeks but difference in status indicated by the relative height and position is preserved. The Samaritan from the margins is in the central position of authority. Strangers and the poor are the dependent 'others'.

The Good Samaritan rather than the inn and inn-keeper became a sign of the church in the exercise of charity.

This interpretation lingers but today it is strained by the marginalisation of church and its influence in society. The church is increasingly a wounded



church. No longer is it the parable of the *Good Samaritan*, but rather...

the parable of the wounded man

Vincent van Gogh's title of his 1890 *The Good Samaritan (After Delacroix)* is at tension with its content which centres on the wounded man who is the pinnacle of the triangle-shaped composition of Samaritan, traveller and the now-restored donkey. The interdependence of the Samaritan and the wounded man is accented by blue trousers, the exposure of calf and foot, and the balance of turban roll and bandage. Both are in this together yet the wounded man is in the higher place. His woundedness is shared by the Samaritan, a person from the margins.

Luke's story begins and ends with the wounded man (10:30, 35). He is the focus of the story for the priest (v.31), the Levite (v.32) and the Samaritan (vv.33-35). Without the wounded man the story itself would lose its structure.

When the parable is restored to its setting of the exchange between Jesus and the lawyer, its launching pad is a critical question from the lawyer: "Who is my neighbour?" Later Jesus questions: "who of these three seem to you to have been neighbour...?" A connection is forged between the lawyer and the wounded man. The lawyer asks who is his (own) neighbour and Jesus asks effectively who is his (the wounded man's) neighbour.



The question is really about "By whom should I like to be helped?" rather than "Whom should I assist?" The parable subverts the lawyer's pretensions and undercuts divisions between acceptable and unacceptable races. The lawyer becomes as the wounded man is: half dead, defiling and abhorrent.

The scandal of this story may be rejected or it may awaken awareness of shared woundedness. It is the very model of the Crucified One embracing the woundedness of humanity. Such a reading identifies the church today – broken, increasingly marginalised, beset with shocking scandals of sexual abuse and the abuse of power. The acknowledgement of woundedness and ministry from that position continues to struggle for acceptance within a Church striving to preserve its own position of righteous and certitude, even moral uprightness – a quality never ascribed to Samaritans in the time of Jesus! Ministry to the poor, however defined, is still preferred to ministry with, from and by the poor.

These three interpretations belong to certain periods of history. However, they remain individually and collectively in the church. Parables invite us to imagine God and the reign of God in a radically different fashion than before. So could the Samaritan

be 'Good' for the first hearers of Jesus' parables?

Inns were anything but places of good reputation. Inn-keepers came from a despised profession. The Samaritan was travelling, had an ass, wine and oil. These are cultural clues that he was trader or merchant, an occupation despised by those higher up in the social scale as well as the labouring and peasant classes because their wealth was gained by complicity with imperial overlords. The sympathies of Jewish labouring and peasant classes, who formed the early Jesus movement, would be with the bandits, those petty rebels chipping at the power of imperial control and local complicity.

To take the wounded man to the inn would compound injuries. In no way could the Samaritan be called 'Good'. Most likely, he was regarded as foolish. In this parable of the reign of God, God comes astonishingly as an enemy and as disreputable both in the connections God makes and in the unexpected twist concerning the wounded one's wounded neighbour. ■

(Adapted from a lecture by Dr Allan Cadwallender)

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

Book of Rells

One approaches the display
through a stillness so thick
it almost sings to you and
the glass case barely contains
the word lest it leap
into the library of silence.

And once it may
have seemed
that it hardly escaped
the bonfires of barbarians
night landings
berserker's axe
the eager sword.

Yet it is they
who have sunk into
the dark night
while the illuminated letters
glowing like good fires
like the swords of archangels
leap through the soul's
doorway.

And if
ten to the x black marks
trek across cheap papers
and LCDs
this consolation remains:
The four beasts of
the evangelists
range freely and cannot be
caged.

Peter Rawnsley

sin renewed

A thinker's guide to Sin: Talking about wrongdoing today

Editor: Neil Darragh

Accent Publications, Auckland, 2010

Review: Damian Wynn-Williams

The topic of sin has fallen under suspicion both in church and society in recent decades. For many it seems unduly negative and associated with unhealthy guilt. In this fine collection of essays, however, 24 New Zealand writers demonstrate that discussion about wrongdoing can be constructive and positive. As the editor, Neil Darragh writes, talking about sin is "about overcoming the obstacles to a more gracious future that transforms the limitations of the present."

This is an eminently readable book, each essay being of very manageable length (generally 6-8 pages) and they

can be read in any order. However Darragh's introductory essay which sets the framework for the ensuing discussion is worth careful reading before embarking on the contributions from the other writers who come from a diverse range of church and professional backgrounds.

Within the constraints of a short review such as this it is impossible to detail the rich variety of this collection. Suffice to say that the discussion, far from being negative, is stimulating and wide-ranging.

Jenny McLaughlin, for example, observes that today's teenagers are far more exposed to other faiths and values than were teenagers in previous generations. Drawing on her many years' experience teaching adolescent girls in a Catholic school, she illustrates how they are unlikely to accept that an

action is categorically right or wrong simply because of divine or church decree. They need to see the relevance of Catholic teachings in their lives and only then, delve into the nature and relevance of sin.

Glynn Cardy, an Anglican priest familiar to readers of *Tui Motu*, lists some of the difficulties posed by traditional notions of sin. While the church speaks of God's unconditional love and acceptance, its liturgy suggests a picture of God as a stern disciplinarian. The sin-language of the Church can also appear to function as a form of control whereby God is co-opted by a male-elite to keep in place minorities such as women, gays, and divorcees among others. Here traditional sin-talk has a political dimension that runs counter to the liberating message of the gospel. Moreover, insofar as it is associated

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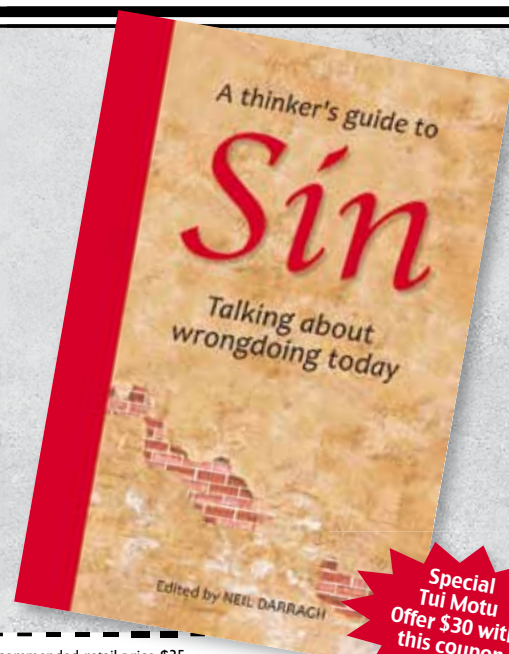
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greedy abusive unsustainable pollutant unhealthy unfair
irresponsible unacceptable unfulfilling

Are these the new words for sin?

The many Christians who find older models of sin no longer useful or believable will find this book refreshing and encouraging. 24 women and men from across the Christian churches answer the challenge. "How can we talk about sin and wrongdoing today?"

Each answer comes from a different context – youth & adolescents, the environment, ill health, economics, the mystery of being human, scripture, civil disobedience, injustice in the churches, women and many more.

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with the schema of redemption whereby Jesus' death is seen as a sacrifice of atonement, traditional sin-talk is seen to inculcate an unduly negative view of human potential.

Elizabeth Julian's examination of the way in which the figure of Mary Magdalene has been portrayed in Western tradition (identifying her, for example, with the 'sinner' who anointed Jesus' feet in Luke 7) illustrates the long association of women and sin in church tradition. Diane Atkinson shows how this has been detrimental to women's self-esteem and offers a forceful challenge to the church to confront the

sinfulness of its institutional sexism, arguing that there continues to be a general reluctance by the Catholic hierarchy to deal with the issue of this injustice within the church.

To talk of sin raises the issue of guilt. Indeed, as Darragh observes, this may be said to be its intention. An important distinction must be made between enabling and disabling guilt, and Trish McBride's provocative essay on forgiveness may be singled out for its advice to preachers and pastoral workers. Undoubtedly Jesus taught us to forgive. Yet, as McBride demonstrates, there are times when to exhort those who have been

sinned against to forgive their abuser immediately can actually be harmful.

Several of the authors explore the root or underlying basis of personal wrongdoing. Chris Marshall for example, considers sin as ultimately a betrayal of trust and provides a fine reflection on the story of the Prodigal Son. For Stuart Sellar the story of the Rich Young Man shows sin to be a hardening of one's heart, a refusal to listen.

This book is a timely and apposite addition to a series by this publisher on New Zealand spirituality. It is recommended reading. ■

not utu but forgiveness – for children

Tarore and Her Book

Joy Cowley

Illustrator: Mary Glover Bibby

One Nineteen Books, 2009

Review: Anne Kennedy

Tarore and Her Book is a beautiful story gifted to the children of Aotearoa by Joy Cowley in collaboration with the Bible Society of New Zealand. This book is published in English and Maori and through the generosity of the author and the Bible Society a child-size copy has been made available free of charge through schools to all children in New Zealand.

This is a true story all New Zealand children should know as it tells how the message of the gospel was spread by Tarore, a young Maori girl, who lived near Matamata in 1835. Tarore attended a missionary school and was given a copy of the gospel of *Luke* in Maori. This shaped her life until her untimely death. The story recounts what happened as the message of forgiveness and peace that Tarore had spread changed the responses of her family and friends to her death. Rather than the expected utu, revenge, there was forgiveness and reconciliation.

The illustrations in the book are mostly from original paintings by Mary Glover Bibby, a Waipawa artist who illustrated the story to retell it to children in Sunday School in the 1920s. The paintings are complemented with present day photographs of places mentioned in the story including a beautiful shot of Tarore's grave.

The story is told simply, with the inclusion of some Maori words which are explained in a Glossary on the last page.

This book is an excellent example of a story that has a message for all children

to heed, regardless of their religious or cultural background. It is useful as a history story and an example of the influence a young girl can have over many people.

Attention to detail such as the colours and patterns on the pages make this a great publication for children and it is good to think of it sitting in children's book shelves all over the country. Teachers I spoke with recently said it had been well used in schools and children were delighted to have their own copy of the story. Thanks to Joy and all who have made this possible. ■

New!

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synthetic life

Scientists have recently constructed a new life form by infusing a living cell with a synthetic chromosome that totally controls it. The chromosome dictates the DNA which in turn generates the proteins, effectively reprogramming the cell to create new cells as determined by the synthetic DNA.

Although life wasn't created from scratch, and the cells are unable to survive outside the laboratory, fears of some deranged Dr Frankenstein wreaking havoc on humanity in the future are understandable.

The explanation of George Coyne SJ, former head of the Vatican Observatory, concerning evolution seems relevant. In 2005 he wrote that in the universe, as known by science, there are essentially three processes at work: chance, necessity (the laws of nature) and the fertility of the universe. By 'fertility' he means "that the universe is so prolific in offering the opportunity for the success of both chance and necessary processes that such a character of the universe must be included in the discussion."

He continues: "When we combine the three elements at work, we see clearly that evolution is not simply a random blind process. It has direction and an intrinsic destiny. By intrinsic, I mean that science need not, and in fact cannot, methodologically invoke a designer as those arguing for intelligent design attempt to do. Judaic-Christian faith is radically creationist, but in a totally different sense. It is rooted in a belief that everything depends upon God. The universe is not God and it cannot exist independently of God. Neither pantheism nor naturalism is true. God is working with the universe. The universe has a certain vitality of its own like a child does." (The 'Intelligent Design' theory requires direct Divine intervention at many stages of the process.)

It seems to follow that scientists may eventually replicate an aspect of evolutionary fecundity in the laboratory. From our perspective scientists have taken an enormous step; from the perspective of the evolutionary process it is but a blip.

Crosscurrents

Jim Elliston

some good emerges

Conservative US Christians have not generally embraced 'creation care' with the same enthusiasm as other denominations. But in the wake of the Gulf oil catastrophe Russell Moore, dean of the School of Theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has written: "For too long, we evangelical Christians have maintained an uneasy ecological conscience. We've had an inadequate view of human sin. Because we believe in free markets, we've acted as though this means we should trust corporations to protect the natural resources and habitats. But a laissez-faire view of government regulation of corporations is akin to the youth minister who lets the teenage girl and boy sleep in the same sleeping bag at church camp because he 'believes in young people.'"

suing the pope

In an effort to sue the Vatican over the sexual abuse crisis lawyers want the US courts to declare that Bishops are employees of the Pope.

There are two sets of issues. First, as Vatican II puts it, "bishops are not vicars of the pope." They have direct authority in their own right. As a rough secular analogy, bishops have a franchise; as long as they keep to agreed rules laid down in canon law they are virtually untouchable. Moreover,

with over four and a half thousand world-wide, it would be impossible to exercise normally accepted managerial oversight.

Secondly, international law gives legal protection to small countries against the might of the large. Respect for sovereign immunity is a bulwark against strong states imposing their will on weaker ones. The Obama administration has endorsed the Vatican's view that a similar US law shields it from liability in this case.

A serious question remains. Civil actions have imposed huge monetary sanctions on dioceses. The Vatican has issued directives for bishops in an effort to guard against future transgressions. The grey area is the ecclesiastical accountability of bishops who should have acted differently; some have died or retired and a few have submitted their resignation, but a number have not. The outcome of the current 'visitation' in Ireland will, one hopes, point the way for more action.

a question of values

In studying the people who use its hardware, Nokia has uncovered three reasons why people adopt new technology: for survival, social connections and entertainment. Nokia aims to become the world's biggest communications' network. In order to understand the cultures in which it operates it has research laboratories in many different areas discerning local people's needs so it can tailor hardware accordingly. An example: a compass showing Muslim users the direction of Mecca.

"For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also" – we accept planning for secular goals as normal. How about planning for spreading gospel values?

I wonder...

I read recently that DNA evidence indicates some people's ancestors interbred with Neanderthals. One shouldn't speculate, but... ■

a grave moment

One of the activities I remember with great warmth from my childhood was a practice called 'making a visit'. This was a moment when I could be more fully present to the creator God as I sat quietly in a church. I could talk about my problems, make requests, remember others and thank God for the blessings of the moment. I have carried on this practice throughout my life.

Recently I popped into the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Christchurch to make a visit. I love the quiet of this beautiful building and the sense of calmness which pervades my being. I have many wonderful memories of this Cathedral dating back to Bishop Joyce and the great Christ the King processions of my childhood. I remember the installation of Brian Ashby and the packed welcome of Monsignor Joseph Cardijn – the founder of the *Young Christian Workers*.

As I settled into this sacred environment I became distracted as I thought I saw three holes and a pile of dirt over on one side. This was unexpected and slightly unusual. I have been in many wonderful Cathedrals and have never encountered

a pile of dirt in any of them. On reflection I wondered if the Bishops might be starting an organic garden.

What a fine example being set by our Bishops here in the heart of Christchurch. Pastoral leadership at its peak. This could start a trend amongst the 'people of God' out in the Parishes. Obviously each hole would need to be filled with top soil and provide one garden for each Bishop.

As I imagined the soil I could see where a row of silverbeet could grow comfortably alongside some beetroot and a few lettuces. Companion planting would be perfect and a fine symbol for a Christian community at work. This could be a perfect metaphor of what Pope Pius XI called the Mystical Body. It could also reflect the spirit of *Populorum Progressio* at the grassroots.

I felt very excited. We have all been waiting for this kind of exemplary leadership. I could see the homeless gaining some benefit here too. They could pop in on a regular basis, weed the garden and receive some of the produce. This is a win-win project.

I resumed my day and spoke with great enthusiasm about what I had been thinking to Catholic friends. Then some smart-alec told me I had got it all wrong. The soil wasn't for an organic garden but a burial area for the three Bishops of the diocese of Christchurch when they shuffle off this mortal coil. I can hardly believe it. Why would they be buried here?

This is a time of global catastrophe in the church and in the world which is replicated in New Zealand: the clerical sexual abuse crisis, unprecedented violence, a rapidly widening gap between rich and poor, a doubling of jail numbers in the last 20 years. The message of the non-violent Jesus has never been more urgent. The people of God are desperate for creative leadership grounded in the Gospel.

Perhaps I missed something. I know these men. I must have been dreaming. I am sure they will go and join Bishops Brian Ashby, Dennis Hanrahan and their brother priests at Bromley cemetery when their time comes.

Robert Consedine

Robert Consedine is part of the priesthood of the laity in Christchurch, a Treaty of Waitangi educator, author and writer

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A Mother's Journal...

Kaaren Mathias

Spring in Himachal Pradesh is now in full throttle. Each day it is a brighter, stronger green. Willows sprouting, pea plants growing and clouds of grass spray the dry mountain sides a jubilant green. Our plans for school health visits are thwarted by creeks flooding from snow melt. The grass on our children's cross country route is so long they complain they can't see their feet and fall down little ditches.

I'm enjoying reading ideas by Canadian philosopher, Bernard Lonergan SJ. His five transcendental imperatives resonate strongly with ideas of how I'd like to live. And I realise that my children can be my Zen masters for these imperatives...

be attentive!

Keeping company with toddler Jalori is a daily lesson in attentiveness. In the midst of the cacophony of recorder and piano practices in the morning, Jalori stops and pulls me down to sit beside her. She solemnly makes her dog noise. I pause and listen carefully – and indeed, far away, I can hear a barking dog. Attentive!

Walking up the road Jalori nearly falls out of the backpack shrieking and gesticulating. I stop perplexed and then follow her urgently pointing finger to see the sphere of fluffy dandelion on its long stalk. Plucking it, I pass it to my bright-eyed girl, with her mouth pursed and puffing. We watch the cloud of dandelion seeds floating away.

Do I notice and comment on the beautifully tidy bench and bunch of flowers on my windowsill, thoughtful work of my ten-year-old?

Do I see the shame of a patient with symptoms they barely dare to mention and gently ask the right questions?

Are my eyes and ears open and receptive?

be intelligent!

If I do manage to be attentive, what do I do with these observations? How do I then respond?

be reasonable!

Can I use good judgement? What is a sensible response? When do I speak? When do I remain silent?

be responsible!

I have choices about ethical consuming, the size of my carbon footprint, my response to a tricky work relationship... there are gradations in the moral quality of my responses to others/events around me. My children (at least until now) are fairly approachable about their behaviour and amenable to changing it. Am I also approachable and open to change?

be in love!

Being reasonable and responsible are adult type characteristics that I more naturally slot into, but that is only the clanging of noise if there is no love. It is harder for me to throw sense to the wind and to run with my enthusiastic eight-year-old boy all the way to the marble shop... to share our last jar of apricot jam with a guest slathering it thickly on our fresh baked bread and not to calculate... to take time to tell my co-workers that I've noticed what a big effort they put into preparing a health drama...

Can I be as generous, resolute and wide-armed as the spring green-ness in Himachal Pradesh?



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