

TUI MOTU InterIslands

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Encouraging Community

WE KNOW HOW TO DO IT

Jane Higgins, Neil Darragh,
Lynne Toomey and others
remind us

NEW PROCEDURES

Brendan Daly explains Pope
Francis's compulsory new
processes around sexual abuse

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EDITORIAL

It's Community Time

It's community time! Pentecost arrives at the beginning of winter injecting us with new energy— the breath of life. Time to take our attention from our neat list of duties in the Church porch and look around. Time to see beyond the stained glass to where needs call. Time to put our faith and experience to work for good in our communities. Time to break out of comfort, judgementalism and self-focus and become involved more in community-making — in our families, our local communities and our Earth community.

Kath Rushton reminds us of the Spirit breathing among us, guiding us to those things we had no time for earlier. Maybe it's about taking climate change seriously to give our young people a future on this planet. We've seen them on the streets doing their bit to make us think.

Maybe it's about supporting government policies to reduce poverty and homelessness. We might not have voted for the current government, but we can still see that they're working to stretch the country's resources to include those at the edges. Maybe we can affirm the good despite their mistakes. We can be grateful that our government doesn't have the hard line towards the poor we see elsewhere.

Maybe it's about taking off our hero-saviour cape to reach out to a group that shares our values and purpose, combining our energy with theirs.

Maybe it's time to sign up for a course that will stretch our minds and open us to new understandings and action.

Maybe it's about showing appreciation and kindness — spreading service, hospitality and encouragement around.

Maybe it's practising reflection and contemplation — reaching for the Love that is the source and heart of all life.

Wherever we're drawn, in celebrating Pentecost we're confirming our willingness to participate in God's mission with Spirit-flavoured warmth.

The contributors to this June magazine encourage our community-mindedness. We honour Jean Vanier as an exemplar of radical community-making. Jane Higgins reflects on how our response to the Christchurch massacre shows that we're community people to our toenails. Other writers analyse and suggest how we might refresh and develop the communities we belong to. Cecily McNeill explains how pornography can distort our relationships and makes suggestions for facing up to it. Barbara Menzies reminds us about the Palestinian communities who need our advocacy. And there is much more in this 238th issue.

We thank all our contributors whose writing, reflection, scholarship, art and craft make this issue a motivating read.

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

Thank You Jean Vanier



Jean Vanier 2012

Who would have thought that when in 1964 Jean Vanier invited Raphaël and Philippe, two men with intellectual disabilities, to live with him in a tiny house in Trosly-Breuil, France, it was the birth of a new community movement – L'Arche?

Who would have thought that people around the world, including his mother Pauline, would become involved in this community way of living the gospel?

And who would have thought that when Jean died on 7 May, L'Arche in Kāpiti would be celebrating its 21st year and Mount Tabor, north of Auckland, over 40 years?

We are mourning Jean Vanier's death – another in the generation of contemporaries – Mary Oliver, Daniel O'Leary, my own mother Flora Gilroy, Pauline O'Regan, Yvette Williams, Bob Hawke – who have broadened our vision, our humanity, our faith and our lives.

Ellen Rahner remembered Jean Vanier when she was in her 20s at L'Arche Trosly. She had become friends with Pauline Vanier and visited her daily. "During one of these visits, Jean came in while we were having lunch. Madame Vanier did not see her son enter. He put a finger to his lips, tiptoed up behind her and put his hands over her eyes. 'Guess who?' he

said, all white-haired and mischievous at 62 years old.

"That is the Jean I already miss – miss more than the extraordinary things he did and said. His profound words and the achievements of his life will be easy to read about for years to come. But I will miss the ordinary things. How badly he did dishes. He just grabbed a large handful of silverware and shook it around in the soapy water before throwing it in the rinse tub. 'You're going too slow,' he said, as I tried to rub the food off the forks and spoons.


"He had to be taken off dish duty and was assigned to putting leftovers away, and so he started going around to the dining tables trying to get people to eat whatever was left in the serving bowls. In his little house there was always dried spaghetti stuck to the wall above his stove. 'You throw it at the wall. If it sticks, that is how you know it's done.'

"I miss how he played with the people in his house. Jean-Pierre Pratt came into the living room one day. Without a word he went over to Jean and grabbed his nose. 'I have your nose,' said Jean-Pierre. Jean reached up and grabbed Jean-Pierre's nose. The two grown men looked at each other laughing and holding each other's noses.

"I miss his navy jacket with the zipper he used to move up and down before giving a talk and his navy corduroys with the worn back pocket. I miss the way he flapped his hands like hovering pigeons when he talked. Those long hands attached to long arms that were just slightly too long for his jacket.

"Jean always brought everything back to the ordinary. He will almost certainly be canonised, and perhaps his story and manners will be polished up a bit. But I hope he will also be remembered as a real person. My doctor husband says he will miss his hands and his feet. Jean asked him to look at the stricture in his right hand and check out the neuropathy in his right big toe. My husband took off his enormous shoe and then started reaching up his pant leg to take off his support sock. Jean's legs were long, and it took a minute to get to the top of the sock. 'How far does this go up?' he asked, and Jean erupted in laughter. It was easy to make Jean laugh."

We'll remember Jean for his community building – communities of people with and without intellectual disabilities who share one another's lives as equals. Jean taught that we all have abilities and disabilities and some are able to hide them better than others. "We must do all we can to teach people with disabilities to learn and take full part in life. But we must also learn to walk with those who will never be healed, who remain imprisoned in their anguish and weakness. They need friendship and community. They need us to reveal to them their beauty and their preciousness."

Enjoy the Mystery, Jean Vanier, and may your huge heart for community continue to inspire us. 

We KNOW how to do it

Reflecting on two recent events in Ōtautahi/Christchurch

JANE HIGGINS sees that we have within us the wisdom and capacity for building community.

In the wake of the shootings at the Al Noor and Linwood mosques, I think of a fragment of the poem *The Pedagogy of Conflict*. It's by Pádraig Ó Tuama, a recent leader of the Corrymeela community in Northern Ireland. Corrymeela was founded to foster reconciliation in the midst of the brutal and seemingly intractable sectarian conflict in that country.

*When I was a child,
I learnt to count to five
one, two, three, four, five.
But these days, I've been counting lives, so I count*

*One life
One life
One life
One life
One life*

*because each time
is the first time
that that life
has been taken.*

Fifty-one lives were taken in Ōtautahi/Christchurch on 15 March and many more were changed irrevocably. How can we build community after such a destructive act?

Mercy Women Ministering in Aranui

This is what I thought about in early May as I sat at a vigil for the celebration of a life. Not, in this case, a life cut short in tragic and terrifying circumstances, but one lived fully and faith-fully for 96 years.

The vigil was a farewell to Mercy Sister Pauline O'Regan at her home parish in New Brighton — among people she had lived alongside, served and built friendships with for nearly 50 years. Pauline was one member of a team of Mercy religious who went to Aranui in the early 1970s to live as neighbours among the people of Christchurch's poorest suburb.

What they did there drew on a tradition of ministry older than the Gospels. In the Gospels, this tradition is beautifully captured in the depiction of the house at Bethany where Jesus went to be among friends: Mary, sitting at his feet, offering a ministry of presence; Martha, bringing food, offering a ministry of service; and Lazarus, whom Jesus loved dearly, offering a ministry of friendship. (I'm grateful to Kathleen Duignan's beautiful song, *Bethany*, for the

recognition of these different ministries.)

As I listened in that parish church to people recounting stories of encounter and friendship with Pauline, I saw that the Mercy Sisters had done exactly as Mary, Martha and Lazarus had done — ministering to the people of east Christchurch in just those three ways.

The Aranui Sisters put down roots in the community living side-by-side as neighbours. They served the people for decades through their work in community development and advocacy and over the long haul they nurtured deep friendships there.

This is how to make community in times of struggle and hardship. What's interesting and heartening is that it is something we already know how to do. We only need

to look at the response of people in Ōtautahi/Christchurch and throughout Aotearoa since the murders on that Friday afternoon.

Ministry of Presence

First, there was the shocked recognition of what had happened: one life, one life, one life, and on and on, 51 times. The immediate response in those first few days brought people to gather in vigil around mosques, to stand in solidarity with members of the Muslim community. This, surely, is a ministry of presence.

We saw this presence in the memorial walls of flowers and poems and posters and treasures and in the people simply standing in front of these, trying to encompass the horror while saying, determinedly: "We stand with you." We saw it in the offers people

made to literally walk alongside Muslim women who felt unsafe taking their children to school or going to the shops.

The ministry of presence, of being with and walking alongside, is where community begins. It says: "I see you. I recognise you. I support you." It doesn't rush in to fix things because some things can't be fixed. But people can always stand with each other, listen to each other and share, however minutely, the burden of grief.

Ministry of Service

Not everything can be fixed, but some practicalities can be attended to, to support those in pain. We saw this as people began to mobilise, to bring to bear many forms of hospitality. These were often simple actions like bringing

We all have the knowledge, capacity and strength to build community. We will always need to respond to new and challenging contexts, but the wisdom of how to build community — how to offer our presence and service and friendship — lies within us all.



food to families still in shock, or pitching in to volunteer at the welfare centre, or signing up to Facebook pages to be called on when needed.

People also offered more lasting forms of support, including small and large donations of money towards the needs of the families. Individuals, organisations, schools, local and central government all looked for practical ways to help. This was a ministry of service that tried to ease the mundane and burdensome details of survival and basic needs while families grappled with the enormity of what had happened to them.


Ministry of Friendship

We now face the third ministry, the one for the long term: friendship. The building and deepening of relationships is the enduring work of community.

What does this friendship look like? At one level it looks like the actions of a friend of mine who told me that she'd never really talked with her neighbours who happened to be Muslim. But in the aftermath, she knocked on their door. They shared a cuppa. She offered help in any way she could and she will continue to be neighbourly and to deepen that friendship.

In a more organised way, we can look to the specific organisational structures that we have — parishes, community organisations, activist groups — to build relationships of recognition, respect and ultimately of friendship.

Those relationships are also about social change. The Aranui Sisters found that building community led them to advocate for justice with their neighbours around the forces that kept people in poverty. So, too, the communities that will grow out of the events of 15 March will find common and compelling purpose in striving for an inclusive society that respects all of its citizens and takes a strong stand against racism.

It's no mystery, this building of community. We know how to do it. They knew it at the house at Bethany; the Sisters of Mercy in Aranui knew it in the 1970s; we know it now, in the aftermath of 15 March. We all have the knowledge, capacity and strength to build community. We will always need to respond to new and challenging contexts, but the wisdom of how to build community — how to offer our presence and service and friendship — lies within us all. 

Artwork: *Marthas of Antigonish* by Anne Camozzi ©
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Jane Higgins is a Christchurch-based community researcher and evaluator who writes fiction in her spare time.



COMMUNITIES IN THE CHURCH

NEIL DARRAGH discusses how a mission focus in our local Church community develops belonging and takes the gospel into our society.

The first Christians founded local communities beginning in Jerusalem and spreading through Asia Minor and beyond. In the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles tell us about some of these communities; and the Gospels themselves were produced in those early Christian communities.

Today we use the term “community” quite loosely in the Church – but usually in contrast to its more “institutional” structures. Communities of vowed religious have been the builders of the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and small communities are nearly always sources of energy.

Many “sodalities”, usually run by laypeople though with clergy support, have always been part of the Catholic Church in New Zealand. The Society of St Vincent de Paul, the Legion of Mary and the Catholic Women’s League are three of the traditional sodalities that have survived through to the 21st century. Since the 1970s, ethnic communities such as the

Samoaan, Tongan and Tokelauan have been examples of strong, committed Christian community.

Today there are many newer communities with their own special devotions and mission recently arrived in New Zealand: Pax Christi, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Beginning Experience, Communion of Peace, Dove Catholic Fellowship for Women, Joshua Catholic Men’s Fellowship, Lamb of God Catholic Fellowship, Marriage Encounter, Passionist Family Groups, Family Life International, Secular Institute of Christ the King, Logos Project, Divine Mercy groups, Devotees of Señor Santo Niño and many others.

Local Community

Among this variety of communities, the “local” community is the most traditional and the most foundational to the life of the Church as a whole. The implication of the term “local” is that the community’s common bond is a neighbourhood, a town, or a suburb. This is what a “parish”

attempts to be. It is not founded on a special devotion or a special mission or a special charism.

Very important to its “local” character is that it does not exclude anyone on the basis of any of the other common marks of social identity such as race, language, gender, social class or migrancy. Nor is it focused on any special devotion or special spirituality or culture, though it will normally provide for and encourage any such smaller special communities of people within its boundaries. A further implication of this “local” identity is that it accepts a mission for the wellbeing of the whole locality including those who are not Christian.

Networks

Local communities are interconnected and crisscrossed by “networks”. These are multiple connections of people who do not belong to the same local community but who know one another, or know about one another, and “gossip the Gospel” between one community and another. These

networks connect communities and challenge communities. They are lines of communication; and at every node in these networks is a person with rich personal and community experience.

In the New Testament, Paul's letters give us many examples of such networks: people who travel between places, who write to one another, who tell stories about activities and events, who offer and seek hospitality from one another. Today these connections are much faster and richer than they were in Paul's time because of our speed of travel and the nearly instant and effortless possibilities of electronic media.

These networks are not under the control of any individual person or any authority. I confess that when my feelings about being a member of the Church are lowest it is the networks of people that the larger Church opens to me which keeps me belonging.

Belonging to the Church puts me in contact with so many diverse, interesting, good-hearted, generous, thoughtful, provocative and active people. Many of these are people I meet only occasionally or whom I have never met but will probably meet in the near future or whom I can meet if I need to or want to, people with whom I will have almost instant rapport because we have common values, some common rituals, and probably some common frustrations.

Threats to Local Communities

Communities are important. Networks are important. But among these, the most under threat at the present time are "local" communities. There are four main threats that need our attention now.

Believing but Not Belonging

One threat is that feature of many contemporary societies which British sociologist Grace Davie calls "believing but not belonging". In contemporary pluralist democracies, people may "believe" in Christianity (or any other religious or political ideal) but this need not be translated into "belonging" — into how they behave, who they meet up with, or where they go.

The effect of this is that belonging

becomes rarer and local Christian communities reduce in size. An exception to this trend is migrants who often maintain their religious "belonging" in their new country. In any case, sociologists warn us, the next generation of Christians will have less contact with real Christian communities. They will then become more and more ignorant about what Christianity actually stands for. Their information will be limited to what they see or hear from sources such as social media. If the "belonging" is not there, the "believing" will soon diminish as well.

*These threats are not inevitable. What happens in the future depends on our response. And this response depends not on our carrying on with "business as usual", but on our deciding what the purpose of our local church is, on what we think the Church is **for**.*

School and Parish Divide

Another threat is the divide between Catholic schools and the Catholic parishes. Many parents want their children in Catholic schools but, increasingly, neither they nor their children have any visible connection with a parish. Mass on Sunday is not part of the package of being "Catholic". Schools can be regarded as communities in themselves, but for the students this is a transitional community. Much of what it stands for will be left behind once they have left the school for the freedom of adulthood. Parishes, on the other hand, seem unable to interest school leavers (and most of their parents) in the elderly routines of parish liturgies. Catholic schools are producing one kind of Catholic, parishes another.

Priest as Religious Delivery Service

The third threat is from priests who see their role as providing religious services to needy parishioners. The

priest here becomes a deliverer of sacramental graces and pastoral care. This is scarcely a community, but rather a religious delivery service where parishioners become consumers of religious goodies. This particular style of priestly ministry suffocates rather than encourages the baptismal ministries of the community members and renders them passive. Eucharist on Sunday is a performance by the priest who says nearly everything and does nearly everything. Parishioners are expected to be there but have little say in what happens there.

Community's Self-Focus

The fourth threat is the one that seems to me to be the most important of all. This is the *self-focus* that occupies the attention and energy of many parishes. A "self-focus" means that people are members of the Church primarily for themselves, their best hope for their own salvation or for coming closer to God.

All Christian parishes are compassionate, of course (care of the sick, help for the needy, food parcels), and they have programmes for receiving new members into the Church. But in some, the outreach goes no further than that.

Mission-focused churches, by contrast, see the purpose of their parish as acting in service of the larger reign of God in the world. This is God's hope (the New Testament is all about this) that we all, not just church members, live in relationships of justice and peace with one another and in sustainable relationships with the Earth.


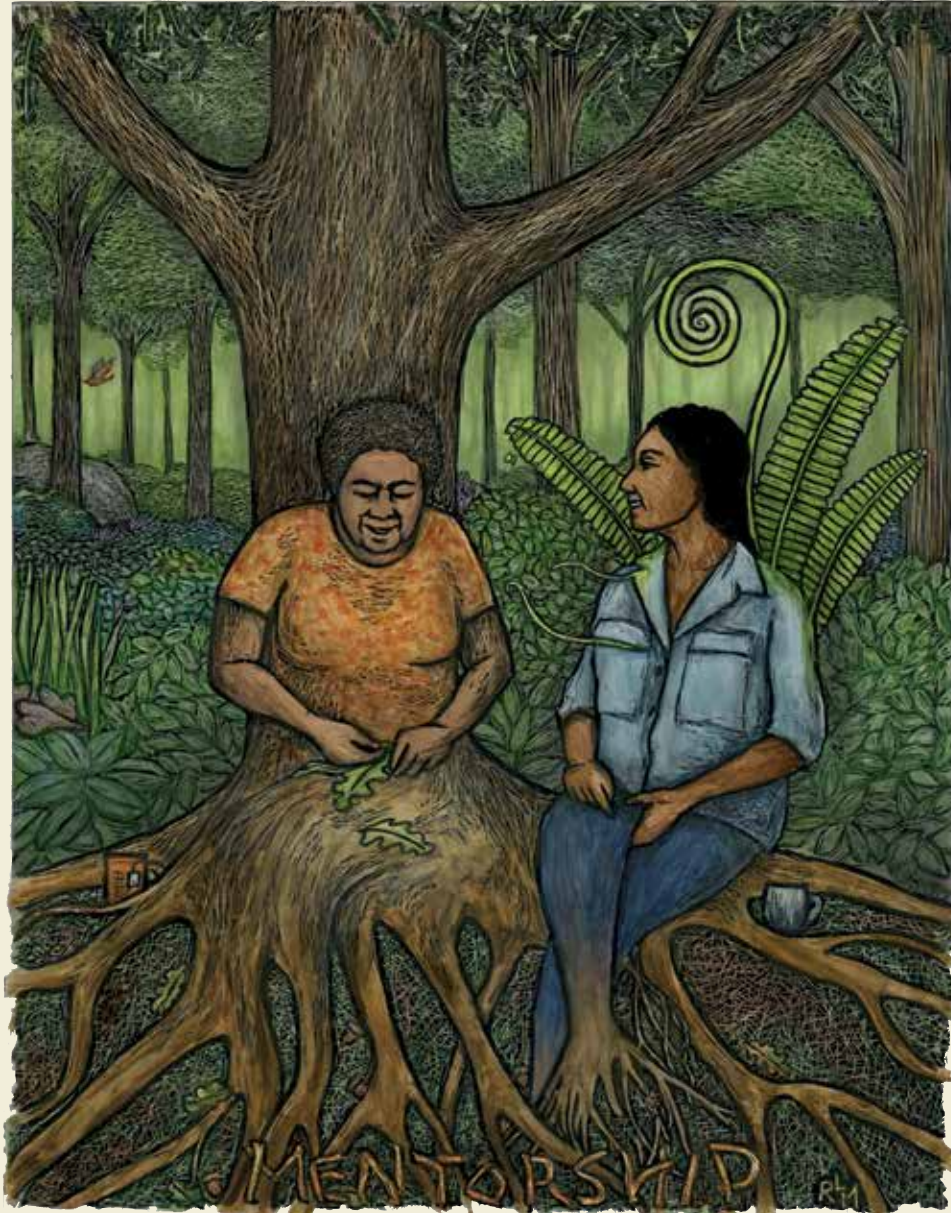
These threats are not inevitable. What happens in the future depends on our response. And this response depends not on our carrying on with "business as usual", but on our deciding what the *purpose* of our local church is, on what we think the Church is *for*. 

Photo by Priscilla du Preez on Unsplash



Neil Darragh is a pastor, writer, and theologian in the Diocese of Auckland with a long-term interest in the impact of the Christian Gospel in New Zealand society.

THIS PLACE IS



Painting: **Mentorship** by Ricardo Levins Morales © Used with permission www.rlmartstudio.com

FOR US ALL

LYNNE TOOMEY shares her experience of pōwhiri which has deepened her understanding of the power of manaakitanga—hospitality for community building.

***Nāku te rourou, naū te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi e!
With my basket, with your basket, the people will thrive!***

I was overwhelmed by the power and beauty of the waiata as I stood in support of the Muslim community outside the Al Huda Mosque in Dunedin on St Patrick's Day. The singing was led by whānau from the Araiteuru Marae, an urban marae in the heart of Dunedin. Even though I didn't understand all the words, the waiata was comforting amid the anguish and pain following the massacre of Muslim people at

prayer in Christchurch two days earlier. I felt the presence of the God of Love through the music and witness of the people. The leadership of the Māori people—singing “Yes” to aroha and community—is something I will never forget.

Nor will I forget the grief-filled faces of the Muslim people standing outside the mosque, looking out to those standing and singing in the street. How ironic that the fence in front

of the mosque, filled with flowers and messages, served not as an obstacle between us but as a space where we faced each other and saw each other. Tangata whenua and other Dunedin residents were on the street and the Muslim community heading to prayer stopped to turn, face and listen to us gathered to support them. The bonds of humanity linked us across cultures and religions.

Pōwhiri as Encounter

I feel this same enriching sense of encounter and community when I participate in the pōwhiri at the Araiteuru Marae. From the first karanga of welcome onto the marae, then sitting in the wharehau – with tangata whenua and manuhiri (visitors) facing each other across the room, we listen to each other, sing and learn from each other. We encounter each other in that sacred space. There is something about looking at each other, face to face, across the physical space that seemingly divides us but actually draws us close, that is powerful.

After the pōwhiri, the opportunity to share food and fun cements our building of new relationship and community.

Local Community Welcome

When Dunedin became a refugee resettlement centre in 2016 it heightened our awareness of the importance of being a welcoming community. While the City Council and mana whenua provided a much-appreciated formal welcome to former refugees coming to live in Dunedin, we also realised that as a local community we needed to create opportunities for meeting up with former refugees and other migrants to get to know one another and have fun together. How can we understand one another without ever meeting? How can we overcome prejudice if we never encounter difference?

Last year the Manaakitanga Community Engagement Pōwhiri project was born through the leadership of Tania Williams at Araiteuru Marae, Paul Gourlie of the Dunedin Multi Ethnic Council (DMEC) and Steve King from the Red Cross. The project involves people with connections to the Marae, DMEC, Red Cross, Otago Muslim Association, Dunedin Churches Welcome Refugees, the Dunedin Refugee Support Group and others. The Dunedin City Council funded the pilot project and a group of volunteers, many from churches, were trained in the understanding and practice of manaakitanga so they could participate in welcoming newcomers onto the marae.

The project brings former refugees, migrants, newcomers and other Dunedin people together through the experience of pōwhiri – a uniquely New Zealand welcome. It shows people that they are welcome in this place and are part of our community. It emphasises that *this place is for all of us*.

Manaakitanga Practised

The feedback from the pōwhiri experience has been overwhelmingly positive. The mystery of connection and encounter is expressed by one of the participants: "something touched me."

The kaupapa of the Dunedin project is about

manaakitanga, the all-encompassing sense of welcome, care, encounter and relationship. Coupled with this is the shared view that we are all God's children. In all our ethnic, religious and cultural diversity we are united in our shared humanity. We are linked to the land, the people who have gone before us and creation itself.

Feeling at Home in Aotearoa

When I became involved in the pōwhiri project last year, I had no idea what the experience would mean for me. It has opened my mind to learning to see and do things differently. Above all, it's opened me to recognise the presence of the universal Spirit of God working among us all in these occasions of welcome.

I came to New Zealand as a child, nearly 60 years ago. Until last year I had never been welcomed onto a marae, by way of a pōwhiri. I've reflected on what difference it has made for me.

"This place is for all of us." Said on the marae, these words have special meaning. Māori have been marginalised, had their land confiscated and suffered racism in their own land. Yet now, Māori are at the forefront of offering welcome and hospitality to others.

In a mysterious way it has affirmed my identity as a New Zealander. I have always felt earthed in New Zealand – now that has been validated. Tangata whenua have confirmed that this place is also my place and I am welcome here. I am grateful for that.

But with that right and honour of belonging comes responsibility. The challenge for New Zealanders is to be builders of community, reconciliation, hope and right relationships.

"This place is for all of us." Said on the marae, these words have special meaning. Māori have been marginalised, had their land confiscated and suffered racism in their own land. Yet now, Māori are at the forefront of offering welcome and hospitality to others. Māori spirituality, guardianship of the environment, language and communal way of life have been denigrated. Yet now, Māori lead the way in offering healing and support to others. This is humbling.

My hope, with the pōwhiri project, is that I will learn to welcome others onto the marae so they will feel part of our local community. And also that I will listen and learn to welcome the richness and wisdom of the Māori worldview into my life.

I have a lot to learn and I am grateful for the opportunity to begin.



Lynne Toomey and her husband, Sean, are parishioners at Mercy Parish, South Dunedin.



Being of One Heart and Soul

ELIZABETH MACKIE asks if we are as radical and committed in community-building today as were the early Christians.

In the Acts of the Apostles we find intriguing references to how the early disciples began to build their first communities. The characteristics included a shared vision, leadership and the common good: “Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common” (Acts 4: 32). This model of community living was a radical change in their lives. It was so radical that, as we read in Acts, some tried to avoid giving full commitment to this way of living and so held back some of their possessions (Acts 5:1-11).

Today the call to community, whether in families, workplaces, churches or countries is just as radical and demands a similar level of commitment. So what does it take

to build community or help existing communities to grow strong?

Shared Vision

To have “one heart and soul” requires participation and engagement around a specific purpose. This may be as straightforward as organising a staff outing or as complex as managing the United Nations or a global Church. It is imperative that as many members as possible take part in determining and communicating the overall vision. The vision will attract commitment from members and draw them together only if they feel they have been heard and they see their hopes and dreams included in the purpose or mission statement.

Shared Vision Produces Fruit

I observed a vivid example of people catching the vision in a South Asian

country in the early 1990s. Mia (not her real name), a young educated woman encouraged by her women friends, started community-building among very poor women in an urban area.

She went door-to-door gathering the women to talk about their situation and their needs. The women then formed into local groups and under Mia’s leadership they developed ways of working together to improve their lives.

Mia’s original idea evolved into a shared vision. Now the vision incorporates the wishes and voices of the thousands of women making up the organisation. And emanating from this community vision come outstanding results.

There are now several hundred local groups, all working for the good of women. They come together in regional assemblies to share

information, success stories, problems and to develop new plans.

The women have improved their literacy and numeracy, set up small businesses, campaigned against the excessive use of alcohol by their husbands and served in local government, where they significantly reduced the level of corruption and achieved tangible results for their communities.

I'm inspired by this community. They are empowering the most oppressed members of the population; they draw strength from one another; they are confident in claiming their rights of which they had previously been deprived or ignorant; and they have achieved greater security for their families. Mia (no longer young) is still working with them – but she's confident that the work can go on without her now.

I wonder – can we see a similar level of participation and commitment in our church communities? Do we listen to everyone and consider their ideas and needs? Do the least or the different know that their aspirations will be caught up in the overall vision of parish or diocese? Or, do we still have a long way to go in this regard?

Common Good

"Everything they owned was held in common." We see the practice of sharing in common in families, religious congregations of sisters and brothers and other forms of intentional community. But our modern societies have moved away from this notion of the common good.

In contrast to the community in Acts, we're confronted by individual and national consumerism, hoarding, tax evasion and greed in our societies. At the same time the poor remain poor, the hungry go without, and the homeless look for the safest doorway or bus station to shelter in.

We invite failure if we try to build community without challenging these individualistic and anti-community attitudes and values.

We understand the common good well at the family level – sharing and saving for what we need. And we admire the generosity of those who give to others in the form of

cash grants, clothing, food and other assistance. But if communities are to be strong, then the good of each member is paramount and each of us needs to contribute to ensure that all members have their needs met. This is a challenge for us today every bit as radical as for the first Christian communities.

The Rights and Good of All

The key lies in an understanding of the rights of all and the good of all. It is not simply a matter of some being generous and others needy. It is a deep belief in the rights of each person to share the goods of this Earth together in such a way that no one has too much, no one goes without and Earth is revered and cared for.

Communities depend on the strength of the relationships established among their members. When we genuinely love one another, then we can receive divergent opinions respectfully and debate vigorously without damaging our common vision and our bonds of relationship.

When we take the large picture view we know we are far from realising the common good, but we can see it flourishing in smaller community groupings.

I'm encouraged by the shift in language that some political leaders made in the last election campaign in New Zealand. Yes, we heard about the economy – endlessly. But we also heard about compassion, kindness and fairness in the rhetoric. And how refreshing and novel that was!

I remember how the South Asian women's organisation worked at sharing for the common good. In each local group they set up a system of small contributions which they held in common – like a community bank. Individual women could borrow from the community fund when they had a particular need. This system meant that the women could support one another and in doing so they deepened their reliance on one another.

Leadership

An important element in any community is to agree on the form of leadership. History provides endless examples of monarchical and hierarchical leadership, mostly patriarchal in nature and autocratic in practice. And vestiges of this leadership remain even in modern and enlightened democracies. To combat all-male control and to keep developing democracy, the United Nations and analysts publish records of the numbers of women and of minority groups represented in the parliaments of the world.

The Church is slow to make changes to the structures of leadership which are almost entirely hierarchical, patriarchal and clerical. But within the Church we find different models of leadership. For example, religious congregations, for the most part, have moved from a single "major superior" to a model of team leadership. In this model, decision-making happens in prayerful consultation and with deep respect for each member.

For communities to function positively and for the good of all in the group, the members need to know that their voice is vital for good decision-making and that their opinions matter.

The Greatest Is Love

Ultimately, communities depend on the strength of the relationships established among their members. When we trust freely and practise openness, when we genuinely love one another, then we can receive divergent opinions respectfully and debate vigorously without damaging our common vision and our bonds of relationship.

Such communities flourish and, like the early Christian communities, may elicit from "outsiders" the surprised response: "See how these Christians love one another!"

Painting: *Never Alone* by Shelby McQuilkin ©
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Elizabeth Mackie OP, former assistant editor of *Tui Motu* magazine, is involved in community and parish and promotes *Tui Motu* each month.

RESISTING PORNOGRAPHY'S MESSAGE



CECILY MCNEILL writes about the ready access secondary school age young people have to pornography and suggests resources for dealing with it.

With the rise of the Internet and the proliferation of smartphones, the global pornography industry has grown astronomically. Pornography is now easily available to our young people, something that is made clear in the Office of Film and Literature Classification research report, *NZ Youth and Porn*, published December 2018. More than 2,000 male and female 14–17 year olds were asked if, how and why they viewed on-line pornography. And most of the secondary school age young people had seen pornography — defined as “explicit images, video, or movies of a person or people having real sex or doing sexual things and you can see their genitals”. Some were exposed to it accidentally but others viewed it regularly and they had started by the time they were 14.

Readily Available

As well as establishing that porn is a “fact of life” for our young people, other key findings were that it influences the way they think and act; that the reasons why they view porn and how they feel about how it affects them, is complicated and

can also be troubling; and that they think there should be limits on its availability. All agreed that it’s definitely not suitable for kids and for that reason think that there should be restrictions on its availability.

Although sex education is included in the school curriculum, many said that they watch porn to get ideas about sex — it’s a primary way they learn about sex. But they also thought pornography has a negative influence on attitudes towards and behaviours about sex. For example, it can set false expectations and unhealthy views about sexual relationships. And it can normalise violence and aggressive behaviour. Most of the young people had never talked about pornography to a parent or caregiver and so had received no adult guidance.

Addictive Properties

Some of those who viewed porn were worried about their level of use — that it was addictive. Mental health professionals share this concern. Deanna Hollis at Wellstop, an agency for treating people who exhibit or are in danger of exhibiting harmful sexual behaviour, said she

had seen a “huge increase” in children coming for therapy where the trigger for their problem was exposure to violent pornography. She said there is evidence to show that the same parts of the brain that respond to drugs also react to pornography.

Therapist Rick Williment warns that the word “addiction” is more likely to deter people from seeking help. He tries to encourage people not to judge themselves because often they do asking “Am I screwed up because I do this shameful thing?” He would rather say something like: “Let’s understand how you came to this and how it serves you.”

Global Industry Targeting Young People

So we are right to be concerned about the level of pornography readily available and its potential effect on attitudes and behaviour. This is a lucrative global business preying on children and young people. Melinda Tankard Reist, advocate for girls in Australia, is forthright: “It is wrong to leave sexual formation in the hands of the global sex industry. We need to do more to help young people



stand up against warped notions of sexuality conveyed in pornography.” We value healthy sexual relationships as foundational to the wellbeing of our communities and society. And we want our children and young people to grow up with positive sexual education and experiences which are conducive to their age and development. So we need a critical, relational and collaborative approach.

Parents Not Aware

Hollis notes that parents may not be aware of how their children and young people are encountering porn. “What was pornography 20 years ago has become primetime television and what is porn now has become hugely violent and pretty much undermines all the positive messages we’ve been trying to teach children.”

The *NZ Youth and Porn* report agrees that the “nature of porn” is different now. Young people are likely to see “violent or aggressive, misogynistic and coercive behaviour”.

Parents may think their young children are all right watching YouTube. But music videos have become increasingly sexualised and there are no age ratings or warnings that protect children from pornographic films and advertising. Gaming can be an issue too — R18 games promote sex and

violence yet very young children can be playing them.

Promoting Discussion

Rather than feel defeated or alone in the face of pornography, New Zealand website *The Light Project* offers adults information and a way to talk about it. The site also provides young people with recommendations about how to be critical about porn. For example, it suggests that young people start talking about sex with friends and trusted adults and ask questions such as: “Is porn a legit educator? What’s porn telling us about sex? Are porn companies really interested in young people having healthy sex lives? How is watching porn changing how we think and behave?” *The Light Project* offers parents and young people a range of resources which give perspective about addressing the problem.

Our society needs to encourage young people to think critically about what they see.

Parents might ask their teenagers what they think porn says about women, men and why they think people like it. And they can also discuss values of respect, equality and consent, and how porn often does not portray respectful, safe sex that is likely to feel good for everyone involved.

There is good news: it might be easier now for parents to have these discussions with their children than even a couple of years ago. The #metoo movement has given women a tool — speaking up and solidarity with others — to draw attention to unwanted and abusive sexual behaviour towards them by men. Discussions about consent, respect and power dynamics are now very much a part of our society. And we are coming to realise that it is by openly discussing sexual behaviour — analysing what is healthy and unhealthy — that transformative change will occur. We can take the same approach towards the pornography industry’s inroads in our country.


Education

Good sexual education provides an opportunity for a counter-narrative to porn. Rick Williment talked about his visit to a secondary school to discuss with a senior class the kind of sexual

education students need now. The students shared what they had learned from pornography and Rick was able to discuss with them how it was giving them unrealistic expectations. Such forums provide young people with the opportunities to question and learn in a safe environment.

Regulation

Parents can limit their young children’s screen time but this is harder to do with young people. Those who responded to the survey said that they would welcome some kind of on-line restrictions. The Government intends to take regulation forward although just how is not yet worked out. The report acknowledges that any technical or legal fixes will only ever be partial solutions but that regulation does provide options for limiting access to young people — especially children — who may be vulnerable. And young people are more likely to see pornography for the first time by accident.

There is no doubt pornography is ubiquitous on-line. As a society we must ensure that children are being given the tools to assess what they see in the context of healthy, mutually caring and respectful relationships. And that those who are damaged by exposure to pornography are honoured for who they are and supported in their recovery. 

Resources for Parents and Young People

Report *NZ Youth and Porn*: www.arataiohi.org.nz/resource-centre/health/nz-youth-and-porn
www.thelightproject.co.nz (New Zealand)
www.mediasmarts.ca/tipsheet/talking-your-kids-about-pornography---tip-sheet (Canadian)
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/big-issues/online-pornography> (Australian)



Cecily McNeill is a Wellington journalist who has a 37-year-old passion for social justice which she delights in finding new ways to communicate.



APARTHEID IS NOT THE ANSWER

BARBARA MENZIES discusses Palestinian and Israeli relations and how by favouring Israel's policies the world is denying Palestinians their human rights.

In mid-April Israel began demolishing 500 Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem. This was the first stage in constructing an Israeli settlement in Palestinian territory – an illegal act in international law. But Israel has supportive allies. President Trump recently unilaterally “recognised” Jerusalem over Tel Aviv as the capital of Israel. His son-in-law Jared Kushner is the co-director of a family foundation which funds Israeli settlements.

Daily life is difficult, Israeli-regulated and unpredictable for Muslim Israelis and Palestinians. Whereas the Christchurch massacre of Muslims at prayer shocked our country and the world, worshippers at Al Aqsa Mosque on the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem, are subject to frequent attacks, violent expulsion and exclusion by both Israeli police and the Israeli Defence Force (IDF), usually without being reported abroad. We seldom hear about them because Western media is silent on Israeli crimes due to effective Israeli hasbara and Zionist pressure.

On 9 April each year Palestinians mark the 1948 Deir Yassin Massacre when a village of 600 men, women and

children were killed on their village streets and in their homes. A force of 120 Zionists attacked the village with the intention of driving non-Jews out of Palestine. Ironically, the site of the obliterated village is less than a kilometre from Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Museum – both reminders of cruelty, inhumanity, racism and exclusion.

Founding Myths Prevail

Israel and its Zionist supporters speak of the 1948 War as an attack on the infant state of Israel by its Arab neighbours. This narrative supports the founding myth of Zionism that in 1948 Palestine was a “land without a people for a people without a land”. Both myths are the basis of Israel’s self-justifying claim of the “right to self-defence”. Unfortunately their Western allies including the USA and UK support their position. Whenever news emerges that Israel has launched bombing raids on the civilians of Gaza, or targeted sniper fire against women, children, medics and journalists as during weekly peaceful protest marches, the allies tend to excuse Israel.

For example, the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel during the 1967 war are now called “disputed” rather than “stolen” territories by the USA, indicating its support of Israel.

And the myths create a climate of unquestioning support by Western media. Despite Israel being nuclear armed and having the eighth-largest army in the world, the media often depict it as brave, vulnerable and threatened, the only democracy in the Middle East which is surrounded by hostile Arab neighbours determined on its destruction.

Deals behind the Scenes

In 2016 New Zealand co-sponsored the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 condemning illegal Israeli settlements in territory occupied since the 1967 war. Israel responded by immediately withdrawing its Ambassador and barred the New Zealand Ambassador from Israel. The following year, the *New Zealand Herald* reported that “Bill English smoothed over New Zealand’s relations with Israel after the resolution caused a diplomatic spat”. The article said that a group of 24 international law experts had concluded that the resolution was improper because it failed to note the “complexities on the ground”.

Bias in Reporting

I think the article is an example of the critical ways that a dominant narrative maintains and legitimates the privilege of the powerful. To deconstruct the narrative we could ask: Whose voice is heard and whose is not heard? Who benefits from and who is harmed by this account? What or who is missing from the account? What could or should have been included?

We hear the voices of the writer and the Director of the Israel Institute of New Zealand, a Zionist lobby group. But the voices of Palestinians, those most affected by the ongoing expansion of settlements for Jews, are excluded.

None of the “independent experts on international law” is identified and their expertise and independence is not established.

The article ignores that the USA made the rare choice not to veto the Resolution. And there is no discussion of the significance of this decision or an analysis as to why.

Basically, the article ignores the effect of Israeli settlement expansion on Palestinians, and erases the impact of these “complexities on the ground” on the indigenous population.

State Sponsored Discrimination

However, the impact is of long-term suffering for Palestinians.

This is the Israeli pattern for establishing a settlement on Palestinian owned land. The Israeli military declares “state land” as a “closed military zone” or “military training zone”. The “civil authority” then demolishes the homes and denies Palestinian residents access to their crops, water and electricity in the zones. They build extensive housing developments for Jews-only with roads and infrastructure. The evicted Palestinian residents are barred from using the roads. The IDF protects the settlers

but it does not intervene when the settlers attack the Palestinians — children going to and from school, adults grazing their livestock in the olive groves. Even centuries-old olive trees on which the Palestinian owners depend have been uprooted.

Attacks Ignored

In the ancient Palestinian city of Hebron, an Israeli settlement has been built above the Palestinian homes and businesses. The IDF maintains an armed presence for the 400 settlers. Their unpredictable “protection” measures create difficulties for the other 200,000 inhabitants. Checkpoints regularly impede adults travelling to work and children getting to school. Soldiers impose random road closures that prevent parents from meeting and protecting their children from the settlers. They take no action when Palestinians are abused by the settlers. The main streets in Hebron are now closed to Palestinians — kept for Jewish settlers only — and over 1,000 Palestinian shops have been boarded up and sealed shut. The Palestinians have strung chicken wire above the walkways in the ancient Hebron market to protect their stalls and shoppers from missiles, including human and animal waste, thrown down by the settlers.

Suffering Continues

In 2018 an International Peace Flotilla to Gaza was boarded by Israel in international waters and the crews were assaulted, arrested, detained and their boats and cargoes confiscated. All attempts to recover the stolen funds, medical supplies and boats were thwarted. But months later the international organisers learned that the much-needed medical supplies and the refitted boats of the flotilla intended for the Palestinians enduring an 11-year blockade had been sold and the proceeds used to fund further Israeli settlements.

Meanwhile, Israel’s “innovative” munitions industry develops weaponry, guidance systems and technology which it promotes as “field tested”.

The bombing of civilians in Gaza is framed as “collective punishment” for resisting the 12-year blockade by firing rockets on Israel. Despite the collective punishment of civilians being banned under international law, Israel enjoys impunity and is backed by the USA.

Israel, seeing itself as the “only democracy in the Middle East”, has just voted for the Nation-State law. It ensures apartheid, making Israeli Jews first-class and Palestinians second-class citizens. The Knesset has also passed legislation which criminalises criticism of its policies.


We cannot let this continue. 

Photo: *Safety Net In Hebron* in Wikimedia Commons



Barbara Menzies lives in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland), works for Literacy Aotearoa and enjoys lifelong learning through listening to the people of the land.

A Day in the Monastery

by Terence McSweeney
On retreat at Mount Mellaray
Monastery, Ireland 2018

1 4.15am Rise from a restless sleep
Of heavy dreams, clammy and frantic on a New
York street
Go, in silence.
Floor, stairs and me; we creak together
Through the kitchen, the secret door and the out-
of-hours public chapel
And into **MATIN'S** and **VIGIL'S** haven
There, sparse, shy and sandled souls are gathered
Facing four and three silent brothers, side on;
In their pristine, pressed, creamy hoods
Except for one, of another coloured, visiting race
From Glenstal, I'm told.
Psalms, given melodic voice and meaning through
chant
Just two or three, but enough to start the day.
They send me back to my cell with its Gothic
panes
Some Merton absorbed, then slumber

2 7.15am Rise – **LAUDS** calls, Steps retraced
back to the haven
Catch the chanted psalms and work on why
All the while hunger-calls distract
At least the effort is being made.

3 8.30am Sustenance – porridge-less, prune-less,
honey-less
A modern sacrificial lamb; a petty penance
Yet a Siberian serf's feast
Be grateful – I truly am and read some more
Merton and rush to **PRIME & TERCE**
Served printed words – enjoyed and appreciated.

4 Two hours to fill
Sink in to arm-chaired, landing libraries, more Merton,
Newman, Lady Guenther and others
A line here, a page there; with saints and scholars, sinners
and Popes
All catalysts which till the mind and give good preparation
For sowing Mellary's abundant spiritual seeds



8 And COMPLINE

A final Merton muse and well-earned
slumber
A job well done for now

7 Must tell him at VESPERS

Can't wait to confirm the decision
Then go to silent supper
Contemplation

6 I go to NONE

It's simple
The decision is made
Simple it is
All is love
All is a gift
A life can be love
My life can be love
My life will be love
Fueled by prayer

5 Two hours gone in two minutes and
SEXT is here to cover the seeds
and complete the planting

Can dots be joined? Can thoughts be
ordered?

How can one even start to unravel
the mystery?

What mystery?

Why make this so complex

Let's try simple

Let's have dinner



Pope Francis Sets New Procedures

BRENDAN DALY outlines Pope Francis's new compulsory procedures for dealing with complaints of sexual abuse.

Pope Francis published a *motu proprio* titled "You Are the Light of the World" (*Vos Estis Lux Mundi*) on 10 May. A *motu proprio* is a legislative document popes use which means "at my own initiative". "You Are the Light of the World" outlines the procedures to deal with complaints of sexual abuse or failures of bishops and religious leaders to deal properly with complaints in both canon and civil law. Bishops must observe civil reporting laws in each country.

The document deals only with procedures. The penalties for sexual abuse will be given in the forthcoming revised penal law from canons 1311-1399. As pope, Benedict published a draft revision. The text is expected to be finalised and published soon.

Sexual abuse is defined as "crimes against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue consisting of: forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts."

This is a broad interpretation of what "force" means. By including "abuse of authority" in this description, the cases of people such as Cardinal McCarrick (USA) are encompassed. The description also includes lecturers and students, seminary staff and seminarians or young religious.

Abuse includes actions with people under age 18 years and also vulnerable persons. Vulnerable persons are defined as "any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence". A person being counselled, foreign students and new immigrants would come into this category.

Clergy using child pornography has been a canonical crime for many years. According to Pope Francis: "child pornography means: any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit

sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes." Again this is a broad description. In jurisprudence a clear distinction is made between, say, accidentally seeing pornography on the Internet (not a crime), and downloading or copying it in any way, in which case a crime has been committed in canon law.

New Zealand has had procedures for dealing with complaints for over 20 years. However, many episcopal conferences do not have such procedures—they have been given one year to have people and procedures in place for dealing with complaints.

A major advance in the *motu proprio* is the requirement that priests, deacons and religious must report sexual abuse when they know it has happened or they believe that it is happening. The reports would usually go to the bishop or the religious superior. If a report involves a bishop or religious superior abusing or failing to act on abuse complaints, the report goes to the metropolitan (in New Zealand, Cardinal Dew), or the papal nuncio or directly to the Holy See. Persons making complaints are protected in canon law, and canon

law holds any discriminatory action against them as a criminal act.

There has been a general law in the 1983 Code of Canon Law that makes a crime of someone in authority failing to act, thereby allowing harm to other victims:

“A person who abuses ecclesiastical power or an office, is to be punished according to the gravity of the act or the omission, not excluding by deprivation of the office, unless a penalty for that abuse is already established by law or precept” Canon 1389 §1.

“A person who, through culpable negligence, unlawfully and with harm to another, performs or omits an act of ecclesiastical power or ministry or office, is to be punished with a just penalty” Canon 1389 §2.

“You Are the Light of the World” removes any doubt that this canon includes failing to take effective action against abusive clergy or religious.

Care of Victims

Throughout his pontificate, Pope Francis has been most concerned about the spiritual care of victims. A victim met him once at the Vatican and gave him a picture of Michelangelo's *Pieta* in St Peter's Basilica – Mary holding the dead body of Jesus. The man told Francis that Jesus had his mother but he had nobody to care for him. This experience led the Pope to name the canonical procedures for the removal of bishops as “Like a Loving Mother”.

“You Are the Light of the World” article 5 deals with the care of victims. Francis emphasises that care of victims is much more than a financial pay-out. It includes listening, support, spiritual and therapeutic assistance. Victims must also be informed of the outcome of investigations.

Complaints Against Bishops and Religious Leaders

The cases of Cardinals Barbarin (France), McCarrick (USA) and Pell (Australia) among others have generated a lot of publicity. Following this publicity and questions raised about dealing with accusations against bishops, Francis devoted a

significant part of his *motu proprio* to procedures for dealing with complaints about bishops and other religious leaders.

Penal law is directed primarily at clerics and religious. There are still some major issues around dealing with complaints against leaders of lay associations of the faithful such as the *Sodalitum Christianae Vitae* founded by Figari. There are very few members of these lay movements in New Zealand.

Francis emphasises that care of victims is much more than a financial pay-out. It includes listening, support, spiritual and therapeutic assistance. Victims must also be informed of the outcome of investigations.

Vatican Departments Dealing with Abuse Cases

There is sometimes confusion about which Vatican congregation deals with a particular case. Only complaints against clerics are dealt with by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Dismissal of Religious brothers and sisters comes under the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes. If a priest fathers a child the case is dealt with by the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.

Complaints Procedures in New Zealand

Complaints about sexual abuse by bishops or their failure to act are made to the Metropolitan bishop of the country. New Zealand has a National Office of Professional Standards financed by the Bishops' Conference as required by the *motu proprio*.

When handling complaints, the Metropolitan must inform the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. And each month the Metropolitan must inform the Congregation about the progress

of the investigation. The whole investigation is to be completed within three months. At present this three-month timeline applies to investigations into bishops only – no timeline has yet been set for the investigation of complaints against priests and religious.

The Bishops' Conference must also draw up a list of qualified people to undertake abuse investigations. The Metropolitan remains free if necessary to use other people in a particular case. When the investigation is complete, the Metropolitan writes a *votum* (an authoritative opinion) that expresses his opinion about the case. The *votum* and all the evidence in the case is sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Vatican, which decides how the case will be dealt with.

In the case of Cardinal McCarrick, it was an administrative process for dismissal from the clerical state – dismissed for solicitation in the confessional. Archbishop Apuron of Guam was found guilty of sexual abuse in a canonical penal trial. Archbishop Robert Finn of Kansas City was forced to resign for not observing civil laws on reporting abuse.

Revision of Penal Law

This law for the universal Church is a significant step forward. There have been criticisms that it is not strong enough. I think the forthcoming revision of penal law will be crucial and hopefully we will receive this very soon. It promises to contain penalties and address issues such as prescriptions (the statute of limitations), which cause difficulties today. It is hoped other legal measures will be taken, including making sexual abuse a permanent impediment (irregularity) to ordination and the exercise of ministry. 🕊

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YOUR SERVANT IS LISTENING

AGNES HERMANS asks Paula Hoeffler, a priest from the Resurrection Community in the USA, about her call to ministry and her involvement in the Roman Catholic Womenpriests movement.

How and why did you come to be ordained?

In about 2011, I saw a documentary, *Pink Smoke over the Vatican*. This started a group of us exploring the idea of women's ordination. Eventually we formed the "Resurrection Community" and as we were not allowed to meet in Catholic venues, we started meeting in our local Episcopal church.

Ordination was not something I had considered for myself, but I certainly felt supportive of others who had been called. On Sunday 15 January 2012, I read the call of Samuel at Mass in our parish in Cincinnati. When I sat down I said: "Speak God your servant is listening." I heard: "I want you to be a priest." I resisted the thought because I didn't want to be part of the male, clerical, hierarchical Church as it is. Then I heard: "It could be different." I recognised this voice as from God and I started shaking and crying. My husband Ed was with me and he asked me what was wrong. When I told him he said: "Keep listening, because if it is from God, God will keep calling you." And God did keep calling me.

This experience led me to find out

what I needed to do to become a priest. I was about to retire after 25 years teaching in a Catholic school, so I waited. Soon after retiring, I was diagnosed with

a malignant cancer. This added an urgency to my desire to respond to God's call, and after being successfully treated for the cancer, I started the preparation required for ordination.

I was ordained on 16 May 2014 in an Episcopal Church in Cincinnati by Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP) Bishop Joan Houk from Pittsburgh. The ordination rite was the approved rite of the Roman Catholic Church for the ordination of deacons and priests.

All Catholic women priests and bishops have sacramentally valid ordinations in apostolic succession. The first seven woman priests were ordained by a male bishop outside of any diocese on the Danube River in

2002, and the same year, two women were ordained bishops in Europe.

In the 1970s, several women were ordained in Eastern Europe to serve the people under very difficult circumstances because most of the clergy were imprisoned. After the fall of the Iron Curtain the women priests were forced to recant by the Vatican. Ludmila



The RCWP is a growing movement which believes that women and men equally represent Christ in ministry. It is about grassroots reform in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.



Javorova of the Czech Republic refused to recant. Her story is in the book *Out of the Depths: The Story of Ludmila Javorova, Ordained Roman Catholic Priest* by Miriam Therese Winter.

What study is required to become a woman priest?

Most women priests have a Masters or PhD in divinity or theology. And life experience counts in the preparation for those aged 55 and over. As I had a background in theology and had spent 25 years in Catholic education, my professional development was counted. Each candidate for ordination has to complete 10 study units on the sacraments, and is assigned a mentor priest. There is also a liturgical practicum and spiritual discernment. The preparation process usually takes about two years to complete.

What is your life as a priest like?

I serve in the Resurrection Community in Cincinnati where I have lived for many years. I respond to invitations



and these are used to help fund our annual retreats and gatherings, travel and hireage fees for venues — we can't meet in Catholic facilities.

There are over 206 women priests in the USA today and about 55 internationally in Europe, Canada, Philippines, Central and South America, South Africa and recently in Taiwan. Most women priests are educated middle class white women, so we are trying to reflect on our white privilege and reach out to form inclusive communities where all are welcome.


The RCWP is a growing movement which believes that women and men equally represent Christ in ministry. It is about grassroots reform in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. We believe that accepting women as priests is a powerful influence, uplifting women in all situations in society.

What advice would you give to women interested in becoming a priest?

Listen to your heart, keep listening and praying. Then seek out someone who will listen to you — a spiritual adviser or friend — and then find more information on our website www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org

Has there been any hope of the hierarchy of the Church recognising women priests?

The main source of hope for the RCWP is the support from the people of God. They support broad reform within the Church towards more inclusivity. It is not just a matter of "add women and stir".

We contend that there are many necessary changes needed in the structure and operation of the Church. The present hierarchy opposes the ordination of women, but I believe that time, the Holy Spirit, and the *sensus fidelium* will prevail. "Obedience to God comes before obedience to men" (Acts 5:29). 

to preside over home Masses, baptisms, weddings, funerals and anointings. Meeting people with openness and listening to their stories often leads to requests for ministry, especially from those marginalised and disenfranchised from the Church.

I am married with three children and seven grandchildren. My husband and I live in a shared household with our daughter, her husband and two children.

How are women priests viewed by the institutional Church?

The ordination of women contravenes Canon Law 1024 which states that only a baptised male can be a priest. So women priests are automatically excommunicated.

We believe that just as for apartheid, if an unjust law cannot be changed, it must be broken. In 2010 the Vatican stated that women's ordination was one of the gravest crimes in ecclesiastical law, which puts it on a par with the sexual abuse of minors. However, unlike women

priests, so far the Vatican has not excommunicated paedophiles.

Who supports you?

My biggest support is my husband Ed. I belong to the organisation of RCWP and we get support from one another. We have a conference call every month and in 2017 we had our first US national assembly of women priests. Our next assembly will be held in 2020 in Indianapolis.

The mission of the international RCWP movement is to prepare, ordain in apostolic succession and support, primarily, women who are called to the priesthood in an inclusive church. RCWP is at the forefront of a model of service that offers people a renewed priestly ministry in vibrant grassroots communities, where all are equal and all are welcome.

Women priests are called worker-priests as we don't get paid for what we do. People are able to make donations to the RCWP organisation,



Agnes Hermans undertakes community projects and offers spiritual companionship and supervision. She is a founding member of the Contemplative Network Aotearoa.



Painting: *The Creation Song*
by Shiloh Sophia McCloud ©
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www.shilohsophiastudios.com

Listen to the Voice of Sophia

ELAINE WAINWRIGHT focuses on Sophia's song of delight in creation in Proverbs 8:22-31.

We seldom hear readings from the Book of Proverbs in our liturgies. We're familiar with the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, and the historical Narratives — from Joshua to the Books of the Kings. We pray the Psalms regularly which are part of the third segment of the Bible — Wisdom Literature. But it is rare to hear readings from other books in the Wisdom collection.

The extract from Proverbs 8:22-31 is not typical of the maxims or proverbs that give the book its name. Rather it is a song of praise in the voice of *Sophia*/Wisdom of the one who created and shapes the universe. Sophia sings she is there — caught up in the creative activity as the

foundations are laid down. "I was by your side", she says to the divine one, "a unique craftswoman".

Through their history the people of Israel usually named God using male imagery, Lord and King being the most common. But encounters with neighbouring nations and more varied roles given to women expanded their imagery to include the female. In this song in Proverbs, *Sophia* draws us into the interrelationships of the universe.

Sophia sings of the "first" unfolding of the divine design, before the deep/*tehom* we read about in Genesis 1:2, before the oldest of the works of the Creating One.

Sophia already exists before life was called forth by the One who creates and shapes it. It is through the repetition of "before . . . before . . . before" that we can understand the agelessness of *Sophia* in relation to the apparent timelessness of the universe.

It is easy to see the relevance of this text from Proverbs to our world today. *Sophia* is concerned with ecology; she rejoices in the diversity of species: birds, insects, cattle and reptiles. When we think of the human destruction of so many living creatures and their habitats today we realise how far our situation is from the words of her song:


"I was by your side a unique craftswoman
Delighting you day after day
At play everywhere in the world,
Delighting to be among the human family."

Elaine Wainwright is a biblical scholar specialising in eco-feminist interpretation and is currently writing a Wisdom Commentary on Matthew's Gospel.



The song draws us into the interrelationships among the divine, the human and the whole of material reality. It invites us to encounter *Sophia* at play everywhere in the world, delighting to be among the human family.

But we need also to be aware that *Sophia* would weep at human destruction of creation. Recent reports, such as IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) Global Assessment report, give us cause for concern and urgent action. They provide the evidence about the wellbeing of planet Earth from research in the sciences. The *National Geographic* magazine claimed in 2018 that even with its widely diverse collections of animals and plants, Australia leads in extinction rates worldwide. Australia has 35 endangered species and New Zealand has 28 – both countries registering threats to the survival of their native species through human actions.

We can imagine that the voice of *Sophia*, the one who was there before the oldest of God's works, might be lamenting in our time. Her voice from the heart of the Trinity needs to touch us. We, the human community, must now right our wrongs so that we can join in *Sophia's* voice song of delight in the Earth community. 

Proverbs 8:22-31

The Wisdom of God cries aloud"

"You, my God, created me when your purpose first unfolded,
Before the oldest of your works.
From everlasting I was firmly set,
From the beginning before Earth came into being
The deep was not, when I was born,
There were no springs to gush with water
Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills, I came to birth,
Before you made the earth,
The countryside, or the first grains of the world's dust
When you fixed the heavens firm, I was there;
When you drew a ring on the surface of the deep;
When you thickened the clouds above
And fixed fast the springs of the deep,
When you assigned the sea its boundaries,
So the waters could not disobey you
And when you laid down the foundations of the earth,
I was by your side a unique craftswoman
Delighting you day after day
At play everywhere in the world,
Delighting to be among the human family."

[Source of Translation Unknown]

Shiloh Sophia McCloud has dedicated her life to the belief that self-expression is a basic human right. She brings this work to thousands around the world through her paintings, poetry and teachings. She leads a global movement of revolutionary education focused in Intentional Creativity®, as offered in the Color of Woman Teacher Training. She co-founded a Studio and Museum, called MUSEA, in Sonoma, California, with her husband Jonathan.

Poetry and Paintings: www.shilohsophia.com

Workshops: www.cosmiccowgirls.com

Movement: www.musea.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Artist.Shiloh.Sophia>

The Universal Christ: How a Forgotten Reality Can Change Everything We See, Hope For, and Believe

by Richard Rohr

Published by Convergent Books,

SPCK Publishing, 2019

Reviewed by Pat Neuwelt


BOOK

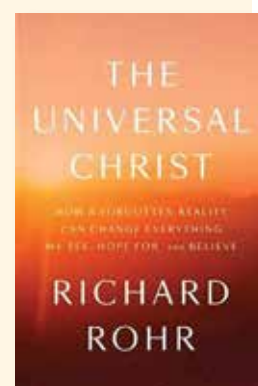
The *Universal Christ* is Richard Rohr's hot-off-the-press book — an absolute gem! It is a call to personal spiritual transformation and action for peace in the world. Rohr invites the reader to explore a richer understanding of Jesus in both his humanity and divinity — a Jesus Christ for our time. In my view, this book encapsulates Rohr's core teachings.

Drawing on a lifetime of study and human enquiry as a Franciscan priest and teacher of the Christian contemplative path, Rohr offers a series of profound insights that take the reader on a journey.

It begins in Part 1, "Another Name for Everything", in which he explores who and what "Christ" is, drawing on rich insights from science and from many Christian mystics.

In Part 2, "The Great Comma", Rohr takes the reader deeply into the humanity of Jesus, openly critiquing Church teachings offering "a disembodied Jesus". Rohr states: "Humanity needs a Jesus who is historical, relevant for real life, physical and concrete, like we are ... a Jesus we can practically imitate, and who sets the bar for what it means to be fully human. And a Christ who is big enough to hold all creation together in one harmonious unity."

While this book may sound heavy, Rohr writes in a conversational style that is honest, often humorous and truly heart-warming. For example, after dedicating the book to his recently deceased dog he later writes: "Honestly, and without any stretch, my dog Venus taught me more about 'real presence' over a 15-year period than my theological manual ever did." The writing style invites personal reflection. The book lends itself to being slowly savoured alone, but can also be broken open collectively. It is a book worthy of shared study by a circle of friends or small faith community — and there is a companion study guide available for purchase. *The Universal Christ* is highly recommended to anyone who has an inkling that Christ is truly another name for everything, a force of Love at the heart of the universe. 



Richard Rohr's *Daily Meditations* are at:
<https://cac.org/category/daily-meditations/>

KATHLEEN RUSHTON
explains how Jesus
sends the Spirit to
reannounce truths we
may not have had the
insight, knowledge or
understanding to hear
before now.

IT'S TIME TO HEAR THE TRUTH

Jesus's words in John 16:12-15, proclaimed on Trinity Sunday, show how he remains with us *through the work of the Holy Spirit*.

The scene is the last supper (Jn 13-17). After the footwashing (Jn 13:1-30), Jesus gave a farewell discourse (Jn 13:31-16:33) and he prayed (Jn 17:1-26). His discourse has three parts: a beginning discourse (Jn 13:31-14:31), a central one (Jn 15:1-16:4), and a final one (Jn 16:4-33).

Cultural Framework

The earliest Christians would have recognised this talk by Jesus as a farewell address. It was a genre they knew when a well-known leader or teacher, such as Jacob (Gen 49) and Moses (Deut 31-33), gave instructions before death. In the ancient world the dying leader's or

teacher's farewell address contained their last will and testament. And it wasn't about goods and property as we have today.

The leader about to die expressed his deep concern for the wellbeing of the group in general as well as individuals after his death. He announced that his death was about to happen, he reviewed his life to set the record straight, stressed that relationships were to continue and predicted the good things as well as hard times ahead. He encouraged his followers to practise virtues and avoid vices. He named a successor, gave a legacy and finished with a prayer.

Two Levels

We find this framework and purpose used in the evangelist's creative presentation of Jesus's farewell address. Jesus's final words are of consolation and encouragement. And there is movement between two levels of time.

In the first level we are taken back to the last supper and the end

of Jesus's life on Earth and the actual situation of the disciples. Jesus talks of "going away", meaning he was departing from his present life in his suffering and death on the cross. His "return" to the disciples was to be as the risen Jesus.

In the second level we have the situation of the disciples after Jesus has departed this Earth.

As we read we can be aware that this situation includes us in our times and places.

Seeking Deeper Meaning

In the text, Jesus repeats the verb "declare" (NRSV) or "tell" (JB) three times (Jn 16:13, 14, 15). We find clues to its significance in the Greek Old Testament when this verb has the sense of re-announcing what has been heard previously — mysteries *already communicated*. So Jesus is encouraging the disciples to face the hard times

Kathleen Rushton RSM lives in Ōtautahi Christchurch where, in the sight of the Southern Alps and the hills, she continues to delight in learning and writing about Scripture.



16 June – Trinity Sunday:
John 16:12-15

ahead by seeking deeper meaning in what has already happened.

Scripture scholar Raymond Brown explains: "The declaration of the things to come consists in interpreting in relation to each coming generation the contemporary significance of what Jesus has said and done. The best Christian preparation is not an exact knowledge of the future but a deep understanding of what Jesus means for one's own time."

In other words, Jesus's ministry and trial are over. But the implications of his death and resurrection for all disciples and for all creation need to be worked out generation by generation in every place.

As Jesus knew the hearts of those earliest disciples, Jesus knows we are concerned with troubles (Jn 14:1, 27). He said: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (Jn 16:12). When they, and we today can bear it, the Spirit will re-announce, re-proclaim what has been received from Jesus who was sent by God (Jn 16:14).

God, Jesus and the Spirit

Jesus's identity and his relationship with God are the central issues. Jesus is "the way" because he is "the word made flesh" who reveals who God is ("truth"). When people come to believe *into* him, they share in eternal "life". In the work of guiding disciples, Jesus and the Spirit share similar titles. Jesus is "the truth" (Jn 14:6) and the Paraclete is the Spirit of Truth (Jn 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) who will "guide you into all truth".

The Greek word *pneuma*/Spirit is used throughout the Scriptures for the Hebrew *ruah* meaning the "wind". Sometimes it is translated as "breath" — essential for life. Both images, wind and breath, portray the Spirit's unseen wonder known by what it does, the effect it has and how it feels. The Spirit flows through all creation bringing life and love.

Just as Jesus teaches and guides (Jn 6:59; 7:14, 8:20), so does the Paraclete (Jn 16:13; 14:26). The Paraclete's teaching glorifies Jesus (Jn 16:14) and Jesus glorifies God (Jn 14:13; 17:4). As Raymond Brown says: "The one who Jesus calls 'another

Paraclete' is really another Jesus. Since the Paraclete can only come when Jesus departs, the Paraclete is the presence of Jesus when Jesus is absent." Jesus named the Spirit as his successor who is a bridge between the past of his historical life and the post-Easter life of the Church in this world God so loves (Jn 3:16).

The ecumenical Christian Church is one of the largest groups of people in the world. It is time for us to "bear" to hear the truth and, enabled by the Spirit, transform our faith into action.



In Our Generation and Place

We can ask what the Spirit is re-announcing to us about the truth of God *already communicated* in what Jesus said and did. There are pointers. For example, the World Council of Churches recently released the *Roadmap for Congregations, Communities and Churches for an Economy of Life and Ecological Justice*

saying: "We invite congregations, communities and churches to join a pilgrimage for an economy of life and climate, to commit to make changes in the way we live, to share successful ideas and to encourage one another."

And the United Nations released the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report on the global state of biodiversity to date. It reveals that 1 million species are threatened with extinction. It says: "We tried to document how far in trouble we are to focus people's minds, but also to say it is not too late if we put a huge amount into transformational behavioural change."

God Acts

We could think it is coincidence that these two reports were released so close to each other. But God acts through incidences, not coincidences. Jesus's words echo through the generations: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (Jn 16:12). The ecumenical Christian Church is one of the largest groups of people in the world. It is time for us to "bear" to hear the truth and, enabled by the Spirit, transform our faith into action. Pope Francis encourages us: "The Spirit, infinite bond of love, is intimately present at the very heart of the universe, inspiring and bringing new pathways" (*Laudato Si'* par 238).



Photo by Dawid Zawila on Unsplash



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A Leader with a Vision We Can Share

Former Australian Prime Minister Robert James Lee Hawke — Bob Hawke — who led the country between 1983 and 1991, died last month. He was Australia's most beloved and popular politician. Despite increasing levels of political division, tributes flowed for the 89-year-old from all sections of Australian society and for good reason: Hawke was known to work tirelessly for all.

Perhaps it was his upbringing that made him cognisant of the broad cross-section of people that make up a nation. Born to a Congregational minister and a teacher, Hawke was exposed to people from all walks of life from a young age and over his lifetime lived and worked all across Australia. Such experiences taught him empathy and made him as comfortable in a union meeting or in parliament, as in the pub or at the racecourse.

Indeed, Hawke's love of beer and sport endeared him to many, and allowed him to reach across political and class divides and rub shoulders with Australians of all stripes. It was a pastime he clearly relished, and made him Australia's most relatable leader. Stories abound of his personal style — replying to letters he received from children expressing their concerns, and jumping into a stranger's car asking to be dropped home after a cricket match. He was a prime minister without pretence.

But Bob was certainly more than just an amiable "people person". He was well educated and creative. He introduced Medicare, Australia's publicly funded healthcare system, to guarantee medical access for all. And he overhauled and modernised the Australian economy to ensure our prosperity and safeguarded social security for the children of low-income families. When he came to office, only 30 per cent of Australians finished school, one of the worst retention rates in the developed world. By the time he left, it had more than doubled.


He led in the region as well, establishing APEC, the Australian Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, to bind Australia closer to its neighbours. China, Japan, the United States, Russia, and Southeast Asia also found a firm friend in Hawke.

When the 1989 Tiananmen Square student protests were met with government violence, Hawke extended all temporary Chinese visas in Australia and granted permanent visas to 42,000 Chinese. He cried during his speech

announcing the decision, displaying a humanity for which the Australian-Chinese community has been forever grateful. His actions symbolised the hopes of Hawke's Australia: to be a kinder multicultural society that embraced, rather than feared, migrants.

Whereas today some politicians play on race to score cheap political points, there was nothing Hawke hated more than racism. He could not hide his disgust at the tepid international protest against South Africa's apartheid. As a trade union leader he spearheaded boycotts of the touring Springboks rugby team. As Prime Minister he rallied Commonwealth leaders to commit to financial sanctions against South Africa. Those sanctions were later credited as being decisive in helping end apartheid altogether.

Hawke's death came just two days before Australians went to the polls to vote for their next prime minister. I hope that highlighting Hawke's legacy and achievements will serve as a challenge to the new government. And that it will offer Australians an opportunity to reflect on what kind of country we want to be.

Hawke's ambitious vision for a kinder country — a kinder world, even — is one we should always share. 



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Jack Derwin is an Australian journalist currently working for Channel Nine in Sydney. He grew up in Orange NSW and has a long-standing passion for social justice.





Living in the Presence

I felt lethargic a few Sundays ago and I decided to go for a walk. It was raining and dark – a cold Dunedin night. Unsurprisingly, I didn't see many people. I started to pray aloud, talking to God about people I knew and situations both personal and political. When I returned cold and wet to my flat, I'd had no sign that God had heard me but I felt at peace. I'd felt God's presence envelop me between the raindrops and the soggy orange leaves clogging the gutters, their colour washed out by sodium streetlamps. I knew God's presence in the same way that I know the sun.

Most lunchtimes I try to sit outside absorbing the warmth and light of the sun (whenever Dunedin weather cooperates). When the sun sets, it is no longer visible. Yet signs of it are everywhere. The moon reflects its light. Rocks and walls continue to radiate its heat. Leaves wait as patiently as I do, knowing this essential source of life will rise, as it always has, in a few hours time.

I went on a prayer walk after a dumping of snow at home in mountainous North India in January. I had the company of our dogs. It was cloudy and cold and the trees were dusted with snow. As I made my way up the hill everything felt mystical, transformed beyond the ordinary. From the ridge on a clear day I can see across to the high Himalayan peaks. That day all the trees nearby were iced with snow and the horizon swathed with cloud. But I knew when the storm ended I'd be able to see the peaks again – steadfast and awe-inspiring.

The mountains are the source of the cold air and play a part in bringing snow that revolutionises the landscape for a time. They give me an image for the way God transforms my life, often in ways I don't understand. I find that by taking time to reflect on my life, I can sometimes understand how God is with me, even if I'm not aware of it at the time. God is foundational, helping me make sense of

my relationships, work, learning and daily routines.

God is like the sun and the mountains: sometimes hidden, obscured, invisible, out of reach – yet always there. These images give me a sense of divine presence in my too often rushed, impatient, absorbed life. Sometimes I realise I have more certainty in the existence of the sun or mountains than I have faith in God's presence. God is big enough for that. And by spending time outdoors I find I stop, listen and reflect more intentionally. I'm grateful for the sun revealed daily and the mountains obscured by clouds and revealed after the storm – they are images of God's loving presence in light and stone.



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Shar Mathias enjoys reading, running, tramping, music and a lot of other things. She studies ecology and lives in Dunedin.

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A Glad Obedience: Why and What We Sing

by Walter Brueggemann

Published by Westminster John Knox Press, 2019

Reviewed by Ray Stedman

BOOK

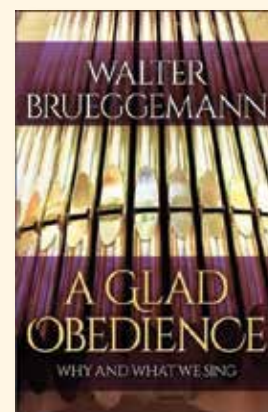
A *Glad Obedience* is a compendium shot through with insight and wisdom. At first glance it would appear that it is a book which church musicians might be glad to read. The picture of organ pipes and the subtitle seem to indicate this. But appearances can be deceptive: the book is an analysis of the literary/theological content of a number of cherished hymns and Psalms.

Brueggemann is seriously concerned about the many vacuous songs now in vogue as the style and idiom of popular music infects our worship. His exegesis and

analysis of the material he has chosen is impressive. His is a great mind and he uses it to good effect. His reflection on the Psalms is particularly insightful.

For the many who are similarly concerned, this book will be reassuring and strengthening; you are not alone, you are not a voice crying in the wilderness, others have these concerns too.

For me the book is one to dip into — a pick up and flick open sort of book. Its physical presentation is tending to the dense — close-ish spacings, narrow inside margins which together with Brueggemann's scholarly language and vocabulary make for heavy, but not intimidating, going. 



Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians.

by Austen Hartke

Published by Westminster John Knox Press, 2018.

Reviewed by Lynne Taylor

BOOK

I f you would like to better understand issues around gender and sexuality, then Austen Hartke's book is for you. In it, Hartke, like a kind friend, answers your questions and shares stories and theological reflection on gender identity. He offers a largely accessible read, with scholarly endnotes and suggestions for further reading.


In the first part, Hartke introduces his story, along with some of the issues facing gender diverse people. He then clearly defines key terms, and introduces three ways that gender identity issues are generally understood theologically.

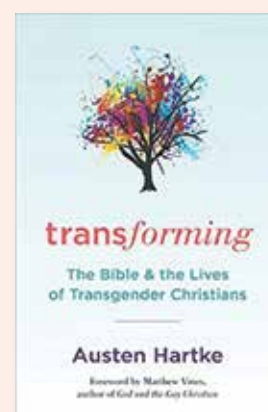
The second (larger) part provides biblical and

theological reflection, interspersed with stories from transgender Christians. What are the gender implications of being made in the image of God? How should we read bible passages on gender roles? What can we learn from eunuchs? What does Jesus's abundant life look like? There is much to be explored here, and I recommend a slow and thoughtful read.

The book concludes with practical suggestions for how the church can support trans people.

I appreciated Hartke's gentle (and remarkable) graciousness.

He wants you to understand, because he cares about people. He offers a pastoral interweaving of theology, bible and personal stories as he works to create space for the flourishing of people of all gender identities. 



Poverty of Spirit

by Johannes Baptist Metz

Published by Paulist Press, 1998


Reviewed by Mike O'Brien

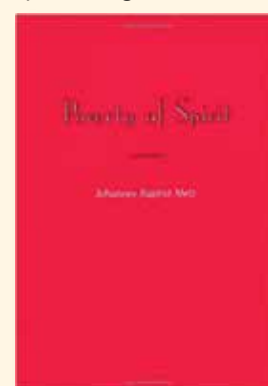
BOOK

I spend a significant amount of time and energy engaging with issues of material poverty, especially as this affects children and families. The levels of child poverty in this country are a scandal, especially as there are a number of actions that can easily be taken to reduce the scourge of poverty.

It is, therefore, an interesting challenge to read *Poverty of Spirit* as it engages with a dimension of poverty which doesn't always receive much attention. The author sets out a series of brief essays (around 4–6 pages each) which engage and encourage reflection on aspects of and questions about "poverty of spirit". These engage with human beings' spiritual relationships with their God

and their relationships with other human beings. In these essays we are regularly and thoughtfully challenged to reflect on our own relationships in both these areas, and encouraged to strengthen — with great benefits to ourselves — both our relationships and the communities in which we are located. There is much here for individuals, families and small groups to work with and I could see the essays providing fertile ground for study groups.

I found myself thinking often about the questions and issues being raised and their implications for my life. They left me reflecting on my own work, relationships and commitments. Through consideration of the spiritual the work on material poverty is strengthened — poverty of spirit supplements that work rather than replaces it. 





The Chills: The Triumph and Tragedy of Martin Phillipps

Directed by Julia Parnell
Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

FILM

Twenty-one line-ups, 31 members and a single songwriter. Martin Phillipps was the heart of The Chills during a long and tumultuous career, and still presides over the latest incarnation of the band in 2019. Perhaps the leading group to come out of the Dunedin Sound of the 1980s and '90s, The Chills swayed on the cusp of international musical fame before beginning a slow disintegration following their landmark album *Submarine Bells* in 1990.

But this is no conventional rockumentary, skating over its subject's inevitably turbulent history and punctuated by soundbites from talking heads and numerous clips of gigs and recording sessions. Rather, director Julia Parnell's focus is firmly on Phillipps the man — a gifted songwriter, but also a flawed individual who has come to recognise his failings and is willing to reassess his life and career in the light of the past.

At root, this is a confessional film and Phillipps bravely exposes himself to the audience — warts and all. We see him pottering around his Dunedin villa, sifting through his vast collection of books, posters, CDs, plastic toys — and even eggshells with faces painted on them! Only a step away from being a hoarder, he also maintains a comprehensive collection of press clippings and other Chills memorabilia

that he draws on during the documentary.

Of stocky build, with puffy face and needle-scarred hands, today Phillipps is a far cry from the indie pop prince of the 1980s. His recent medical history provides the narrative scaffolding for the film. We see him as an outpatient at Dunedin Hospital as he is told that he has only months to live unless he stops drinking. He also suffers from hepatitis C, and we follow his progress as he undertakes expensive new treatment.

While drink and drugs are traditional distractions for rock groups, the film makes it plain that Phillipps's major personal deficiency lay in poor communication. Pushing band members through punishing touring and recording schedules in Europe and the US, Phillipps time and again failed to attend to their individual needs, resulting in the group's extraordinarily high turnover.

The film ends on a note of hope. We see Phillipps practising with his new line-up, belting out his latest offerings with a new confidence and verve. Now increasingly self-aware — both of his health needs and relationship deficits — he issues an open apology to those he has hurt or offended in the past and looks forward to a personal and musical renaissance. 🐦

The Fire Keeper's Girls

by L P Hansen
Published by Onepoto
Reviewed by Gloryah Melville

NOVEL

The *Fire Keeper's Girls* is about teenage cousins Gemma and Alice, who are sent to spend summer with Samantha, a strange woman they don't know. The girls develop a bond over their time with Samantha and take part in "the game". She teaches them many things through their research about extraordinary women and their places in the world. The girls learn about why they were sent to Samantha and are inspired to overcome their past traumas and lead brighter futures.

This book was an enjoyable read as it was easily

applicable to my own life. As a teenage girl, I can relate to the pressure that Alice and Gemma experienced in their past and how their stay with Samantha influenced their future. The book focuses on women's empowerment and details of the 25 inspiring women that Alice and Gemma researched are at the back of the book. I learnt a lot about the importance of knowing my own gifts and finding my place in the world.

I recommend this book particularly to girls aged 12–18, who will appreciate its story of resisting the pressure to conform, finding your own passion and creating your own future. 🐦



CROSS CURRENTS



by Susan Smith

Keep Love of Sport Alive

Yvette Williams, one of New Zealand's greatest athletes, died just before Easter this year. She leaves an inspiring personal and sporting legacy. To prepare herself for the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, she moved from Dunedin to Auckland where she had to fit her training around working full-time as a secretary. So during her lunchtime she used to run up Auckland's hills in a pair of army boots, and when her office day was finished, she worked with her trainer for a further three hours.

Unlike athletes today she did not have a personal dietician, physiotherapist, masseur or sports doctor. And the government of the day did not subsidise her training – none of the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on potential Olympic gold medal winners nowadays. She did not have the benefit of tax and rate payers' money providing well-equipped gymnasiums and wonderful sporting venues. Her attitude to sport had nothing in common with that of star athletes who switch codes and teams at the drop of a hat in order to earn more money. Yvette Williams was someone who loved sport and her country. Love of sport, not money, figured prominently in her wish to excel.

Yvette retired from competing in 1956 and then went on to coach athletes, particularly those with intellectual disabilities. Sadly, attitudes at senior and elite level in some sports have eroded in New Zealand since the 1950s. We have seen the worst effects of big business dominating – wealthy schools poaching rugby players from less affluent schools, sexual misbehaviour, violence off and on the field, drug-taking to enhance physical strength and stamina,

chasing advertising contracts and the corrupting influence of big money.

Thankfully Yvette's spirit is still shared by the many volunteers across the country who continue to coach and encourage young people in sport.

Benedict Contradicts Pope Francis


Who needs enemies when your friends include cardinals and a former pope? Pope Francis probably never asks himself that question but there will be many who are wondering what on earth is going on. In April Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (retired Pope Benedict) published a 6,000-word statement, with conclusions that are contrary to what Francis is saying and writing about the sexual abuse in the Church. Ratzinger lays the blame primarily outside the Church on the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s. He wrote that among the freedoms ushered in by the social revolution of the 1960s Western world was a "sexual freedom, one

which no longer conceded any norms . . . Part of the physiognomy of the Revolution of '68 was that paedophilia was then also diagnosed as allowed and appropriate." (<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/full-text-of-benedict-xvi-the-church-and-the-scandal-of-sexual-abuse-59639>).

Ratzinger denies that clericalism has anything to do with the present crisis confronting the Church. How will he respond to the evidence of sexual abuse in African, Asian and Latin American countries, which were practically untouched by the social revolutions of the 1960s? Can we expect another letter?

Slur on Laity

In a letter in *The Tablet* (16 February 2019), New Zealander Jim Neilan wrote: "It would seem that the planned punishment for Cardinal McCarrick and other ordained sexual abuse criminals is to reduce them to the lay state. What an example of clericalism . . . Do away with the idea that such criminals must be pigeon-holed as laity in order to keep clergy on their pedestals."

I wonder if Church authorities realise how damaging it is for lay people to see that the worst possible punishment for recalcitrant clergy is "demotion" to the lay state. What does that say about the position and role of laity in the Church? 



TUI MOTU InterIslands
The Independent Catholic Magazine Limited

Tui Motu - InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual, social and ecological 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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We welcome letters of comment, discussion, response, affirmation or argument of up to 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge longer letters, while keeping the meaning.

OUR BISHOPS ARE GOOD SHEPHERDS

John Dew's article "Call me 'John' not 'Father'" (TM May 2019) provides a good opportunity to reflect on how fortunate we are to have our present group of bishops in New Zealand.

The Pope is continually condemning clericalism and insisting that bishops should be shepherds who "know the smell of their sheep". In this he is encountering violent criticism from those who prefer power and authority to love and service: those determined not to give up the titles and power structures that undermine, not only the spirit of the Vatican Council, but the very values of the Gospel message.

Our bishops are free of this — they know their people, are comfortable in any company and are good listeners. They are good shepherds. They face numerous problems, many originating years ago when the Church (and society) had little understanding of the issues involved.

Our Prime Minister has received

worldwide acclaim for her response to the Christchurch mosque massacre with her genuine empathy for victims and concern for migrants and refugees. We should be proud that our bishops also stand tall on the world scene — that in our small country they are an example of fostering a spirit in the Church which is so badly needed today.

Jim Neilan, Dunedin

REASONS FOR HOPE

I believe with this edition (TM May 2019) you have raised the quality of magazine publication another notch. Every contribution is so relevant, thought provoking, informative and challenging. Congratulations to all. I see the "new commandment" in a new light; I hope your Cardinal will have a great following by the laity. I am hoping our Australian Bishops' Conference is thinking along with Stephanie Lorenzo, Peter Matheson and Francis Sullivan as our Plenary Council draws near. Pray for us.

Mary Engelbrecht, Perth

Collision, Compromise and Conversion During the Wesleyan Hokianga Mission, 1827–1855

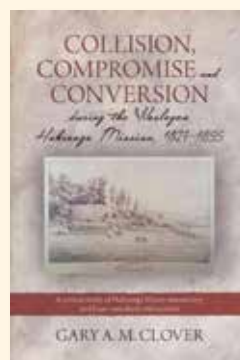
by Gary A M Clover
Published by The Copy Press
Nelson, 2018
Reviewed by Mary Caygill

BOOK

This important study of New Zealand Wesleyan Methodist history in the Hokianga is a critical addition to our understanding of the impact made by the Wesleyan Mission in this region. Clover brings to life the story of the establishment of a second Wesleyan station in Northland. Given that the historical emphasis has tended to be focused on the Anglican Church Missionary Society in the Bay of Islands area, this meticulous recounting from a Methodist historical perspective is a welcome redressing of historical emphasis.

Clover's scholarly book is not for the faint-hearted reader — it's 523 pages — but it is a rewarding read. It explores the critical dynamics associated with Māori-Pākehā interconnections and relationships of the time, particularly the Wesleyan missionaries' presentation of the gospel and the subsequent Māori response.

True to the title, Clover mines the depths of available historical material in order to establish something of the dynamics of "collision, compromise and conversion" that resulted from the legacy of this Wesleyan Mission.



I am, like Clover, a committed Methodist seeking to further my own awareness of New Zealand Wesleyan/Methodist history.

This book expanded my knowledge of key events, interactions and personalities at play. It offered a valuable perspective on how the "conversion experience" was lived out by Hokianga Māori of that time.

This is a substantive piece of scholarly research which asks deep questions about the transmission of the gospel in this land and the nature of conversion itself in differing cultural interactions.



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Looking OUT and IN

Surrounded by the gloss and chrome of the airport in Dubai and feeling less than gleaming myself, I found the recently released IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) Global Assessment report on the *Guardian* front page. The report describes the catastrophic and rapid decline in species diversity and the “fraying and thinning” of the web of the natural world that sustains us. It made me feel nauseous and overwhelmed at the fragility of the future and staggered at the huge losses in biomass and diversity of all species described.

Meanwhile, around me were vials of amber perfume, aisles of technological trinkets and miles of polished marble floors. Oil-fired air-conditioning (how strange that burning coal makes cold?) ensured I was oblivious to the desert heat glowering outside. Dubai may have a larger environmental impact than other cities on this fragile planet, but we’re all complicit — I came and went from Dubai by plane.

Looking around, it seemed as if every pyramid of chocolate and each glistening showcase of watches was as polluting as the shoals of plastic rubbish that swarm down hillsides and redeploy on street corners in my home in North India.

The message of global inter-connectedness is key. The edifices of global finance, commodified health, social inequality and the existence of places like Duty Free in Dubai

lead (through a series of tangled and perverse pathways) to the extinction of a frog species in Costa Rica and to toxins in olives bought at Pak’n’Save.

From the airport I continued to my meeting in downtown Dubai, where we discussed strategies to increase equity in global health. We recognised the carbon cost of our flights but went ahead with meeting face-to-face anyway. I have no way of assessing whether the good emerging from that meeting balances its environmental costs.

The disconnect between actions and their distant consequences is one of the reasons it is hard to do things differently. A purchase of a couple of cheap T-shirts today will pull on the tangled threads of the global web in different ways. Could it give a vote of support to cotton-growers to be heavy handed with herbicides which lead to an impoverished habitat and, eventually, erode genetic diversity for a spider species? Could my purchase add to the vote of 1,000 other purchases that encourage the T-shirt factory manager in Dhaka to maintain harsh or unsafe labour conditions? Or could it provide income to sewing machinists who have no other choices?

These are not easy thoughts or conversations. None of us like to feel complicit in the systematic destruction of the ecological web that sustains us. But we all are. The more I know, the more ethically fraught my choices on travelling, consuming and just living

become. It is no longer enough to be a well-intentioned and mostly eco-ethical person. To halt this cataclysmic decline in the environment we have to do more than taking cloth bags to the shops, recycling, riding a bus or bike and eating vegetarian.

There are strategies and careful structures behind the scenes to ensure the pre-eminence of global capitalism — and environmental destruction. I cannot afford to be naïve. We must all be strategic and deliberate in our response to this IPBES report.

We can ponder aloud with our children, friends and random strangers about how we can all live in ways that minimise environmental damage.

We can give our vote to leaders who will action policy for the Earth.

We can be inspired by Extinction Rebellion.

We can make noise. Loud noise.

And we can try to live as radically as we can. Like that young carpenter, the preacher guy who, before the time of oil-cooled glassy airport terminals in hot deserts, warmly promoted the idea of loving our neighbour — humans and other species — as we love ourselves.



Kaaren Mathias lives with her husband, children, a cat and a dog, in a small town in North India and works in mental health.



With arms that serve and unite, bless us
With attitudes that encourage rather than judge, bless us
With minds that grow in compassion, bless us
With hearts that seek the common good, bless us
With souls that reach for communion, bless us
Breath of Love

From the *Tui Motu* team