

# TUI MOTU InterIslands

CELEBRATING 21 YEARS 1997–2018

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ANNA HOLMES and TINA BEATTIE on 50 years of *Humanae Vitae*

JOEY DOMDOM, MAYIE PAGALILAUAN and JUDITH SALAMAT on migrant caregivers of the aged

JENNY DAWSON and TRISH MCBRIDE discuss the living wage

MIKE RIDDELL and ALOFA LALE share their faith

PLUS young people on their Catholic education



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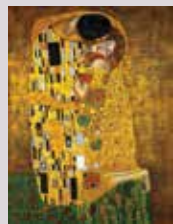
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## EDITORIAL

### Babies and Other Things

Children and babies have made worldwide news lately — and the stark contrasts in these news stories bring home the inequalities of our world. We feted the birth of a baby girl to our Prime Minister and her partner in the style of a royal birth. We are interested in how Jacinda will manage a baby with her role —she reminds us that mothers do it all the time and that she'll have support. I sense that the world is encouraging her.

At the same time, we heard of a nine-month-old baby taken from its parents at the Mexico-USA border and interned in the Bronx. This action was the direct result of the US government's "crackdown" on asylum seekers and immigrants crossing the border without correct visas. Thankfully the world did not buy the rhetoric justifying separating children from their parents in this way and President Trump stopped it — to an extent.

We heard of Spain agreeing to take a boatload of African asylum seekers — many of them mothers with children — crossing the Mediterranean to Europe when Malta and Italy refused them entry.

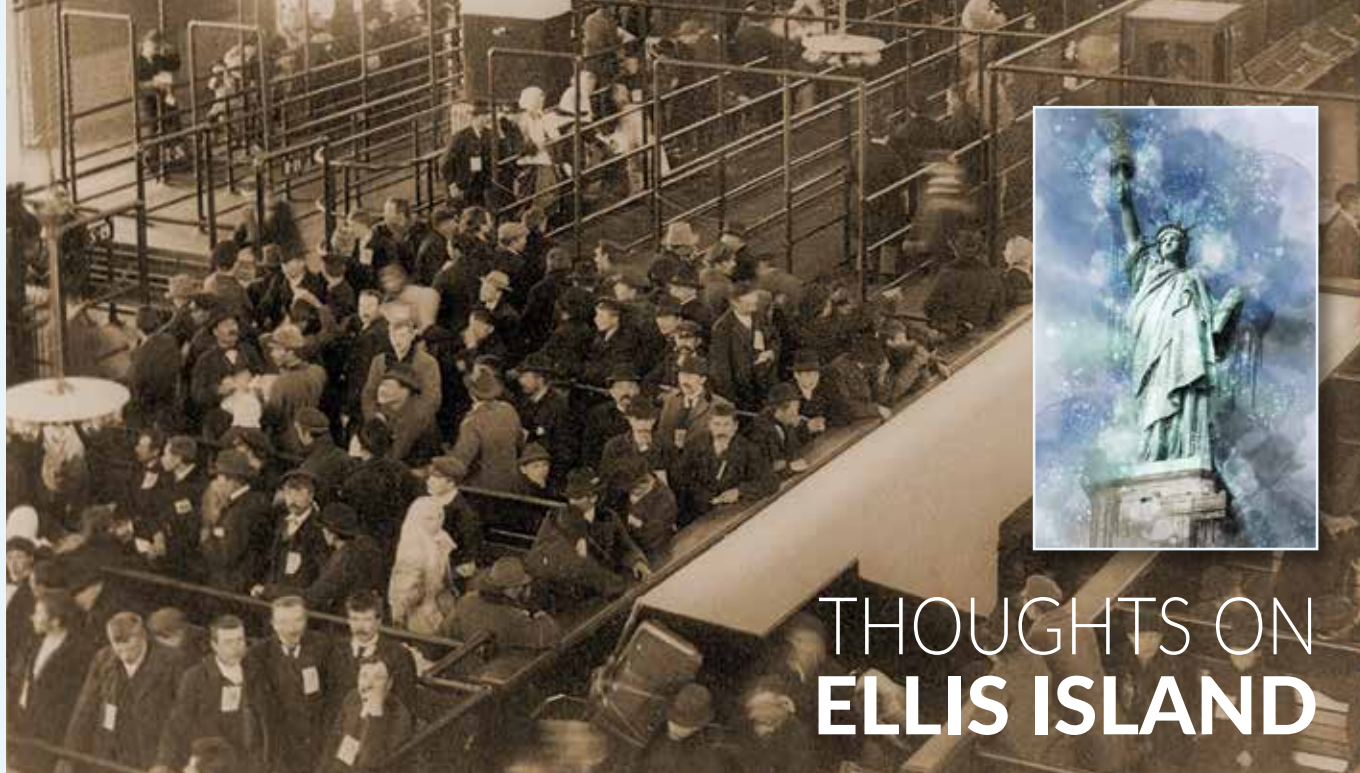
And we know of the Australian government's festering policy of keeping young men refugees and asylum seekers interned in offshore sites — despite the reported rise of mental illness among detainees, compounded by their trauma and the hopelessness they now feel.

I want to think that the outcry against governments subjecting children and adults to inhumane treatment is prophetic. That God's mission is being proclaimed as compassion, the belief in human dignity and a sense of responsibility for the common good. Many of the situations in countries from which asylum seekers are fleeing have their roots in the colonisation and on-going interference and exploitation of the countries to which they now seek entry. I want to think that the call to offer humble hospitality to new arrivals now, is also a call to reconcile the past sinfulness that has affected generations. It is our truth and humility in attitude and actions that will count — we will show Christianity at its most challenging, relational and profound.

This 228th issue explores how the UN global goal of sustainable consumption and production affects us in this part of the world — our visa situation for supposedly "low skilled" workers in our aged care industry and paying workers a Living Wage. And as well as articles discussing the significance today of *Humanae Vitae* on its 50th anniversary, we're given glimpses by Mike Riddell and Alofa Lale into their spirituality. And there's much more.

We thank all our contributors who by sharing their faith, reflection, research, art, craft and generosity are inviting us to this month's feast.

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



## THOUGHTS ON ELLIS ISLAND

**E**llis Island, a former Immigration Centre, is in New York Harbour. Our personal guide, a New Yorker of Italian-Sicilian descent, was dressed as an Immigration Official of about 1900. And he had an encyclopaedic knowledge of Ellis Island — known also as the Island of Tears.

The name “Ivan Tolic” — my grandad — is in the Ellis Island Archive. He is recorded on the *S.S. La Bretagne* manifest as having arrived in New York on 16 May 1904 aged 19 years.

He would have stood on the deck of his ship and seen the Statue of Liberty. He was on his way to Aotearoa which he knew as New Zealand. He spoke no English. As I stood in the same Great Immigration Hall, 114 years after his transit through Ellis Island, I felt every bit his grandson.

In his time, ships were boarded in New York Harbour. No ships docked at Ellis Island as there were no wharves.

Doctors, disease specialists, immigration officials and others went out to the ships. They boarded and began their work checking all the passengers. They had to be disease-free to immigrate. No one was accepted who could become a liability on the government as there was no welfare system.

People with illnesses would be sent back to where they had come from in Europe — hence the “Island of Tears”. Some diseases were contracted on the ships in transit and steerage, with its overcrowding, was

not a good place to travel.

First and second class passengers clear of disease could disembark and were free to go anywhere. My grandad caught the train to San Francisco and from there a ship to New Zealand.

But all steerage passengers were sent to Ellis Island where they underwent the six-second check. If an immigrant faltered climbing stairs under the gaze of a doctor, then they were sent back. All people with illnesses were sent back.

Twelve million people went through Ellis Island between 1892 to 1954 and 20 per cent — 2.4 million people — were returned to where they had come from. However, 9,600,000 entered America so Ellis Island was also the Island of Hope and Dreams.

We visited the Tenement Museum on the Lower East Side near Chinatown, Little Italy and Soho and saw the records of the next stage in the immigrants’ journey. And, standing on Mott Street in Chinatown, we could see where some of those immigrants’ families are settled now.

Ellis Island and the Tenement Museum highlighted for me that, aside from the Indigenous people, everybody in America arrived from somewhere else. It becomes imperative then that the earlier migrants offer the Torch of Liberty to new migrants now — those who come by sea in precarious boats, those seeking asylum from war-torn situations and anyone who dreams of a better future, like my grandad Ivan Tolic.

The inscription on the Statue of Liberty reads: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

It struck me that the inscription does not have an expiry date. Liberty still calls and liberty is bigger than any wall.

I think that Liberty’s invitation applies to Aotearoa New Zealand today. Yes, we can certainly take more migrants into Aotearoa. But if there is to be a policy it will require dialogue and consultation with Tangata Whenua o Aotearoa.

I saw a picture at Ellis Island that showed where the Native Americans lived on Turtle Island (mainland USA). It highlights the fact that the immigrants were not entering an empty country. Nor were the Native Americans waiting to be discovered. While the immigrants experienced hope, unfortunately the Native Americans’ experience was very different. They suffered historical trauma, colonisation and the destruction of their nations. It seems to me that immigrants in America need to address these matters. ■



**David Tolich** is an advocate and activist. He lives with Jill Mooney in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland).





# 50 YEARS

## – from *Humanae Vitae* to *Amoris Laetitia*

ANNA HOLMES outlines the strengths and weaknesses of *Humanae Vitae* and suggests *Amoris Laetitia* provides couples with more hope.

A storm of protest was unleashed when, on 25 July 1968, Pope Paul VI released *Humanae Vitae* (HV), his encyclical written in response to the Pontifical Commission on Birth Control.

The Commission had been set up in 1963 by Pope John XXIII following the introduction of the first contraceptive pill in 1960. Pope Paul increased the membership of the Commission from six to 72. The majority were clerics, together with 13 physicians

and five women — three married. Their report to Pope Paul in 1966 reaffirmed the ideals of no abortion and faithful, lifelong marriage. It proposed that under certain circumstances contraception should be permitted. It was leaked to the press in April 1967.

HV ignored the majority report and agreed with the opinion of seven clerical members on the total ban on artificial contraception, although serial abstinence using fertility awareness was acceptable. Cardinal Ottaviani, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, persuaded Pope Paul that any change would undermine the authority of the magisterium.

### What Did *Humanae Vitae* Say?

HV is divided into three main sections. The first covers what it means to be human and how married love and sexuality can be lived in Christian community.

The second proposes that freedom and wholeness is inherent in the unitive (becoming one) and procreative aspects of marriage. Contraception is forbidden because it prevents procreation, a God-given aspect of marriage. It suggests interfering with procreation was claiming a power that belongs to God alone. HV also suggests that the self-discipline necessary to achieve periodic abstinence to prevent conception enables couples to grow in unselfishness and responsibility. It states some of the possible evil consequences of contraception.

The third section appeals to couples, priests and bishops to adhere to the teaching of the Church and for men of science and medicine to increase knowledge about fertility and periodic abstinence.

### Insights of *Humanae Vitae*

HV stated many important insights about love and sexuality for the first time in papal documents. Faithful married love enables couples to grow together in a relationship which has equally important emotional, psychological, physical, social and spiritual aspects. This gives the best possible conditions for raising children. The love expresses responsibilities towards self, spouse, children and society lived out in responsible parenthood. It is influenced by the physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, social and economic environment of the couple.

The document identified overpopulation, the costs of rearing and educating children and the changing place of women as issues prompting new and important questions for married couples to consider. It also expressed fears that contraception might be used to exploit women and promote promiscuity, particularly among young people. It proposed that some governments might use contraception, abortion and sterilisation to promote racist, eugenic or other oppressive policies. It goes

on to point out that only by social and economic progress for all will the promotion of true human values be achieved. These very important aspects of *HV* have been restated a number of times by Pope John Paul II and Popes Benedict and Francis.

And these fears have been realised. Forced sterilisation, one child policies, sexual harassment, exploitation of women and children, the over-sexualisation of all forms of media and the prevalence of pornography are all recognised problems today. They are problems that make it difficult for young people — particularly adolescents — to know what sexuality can mean at its most profound.

*Christians live in this world in the process of becoming whole in Christ. In such a world the law of love is not a brick wall stopping development, but a trellis which allows movement on either side and enables growth upwards towards the light.*

### Debate Over *Humanae Vitae*

*HV* boldly pronounces: “No member of the faithful could possibly deny that the Church is competent in her magisterium to interpret natural law.” But the faithful could and did — in large numbers. Over the next 25 years debates raged within the Church. Many believed the magisterium could not comment on sexuality while it believed that God’s law prevented humans from using their knowledge to address human concerns. Pope John Paul II fuelled the debate by attempting to suppress it, refusing to appoint bishops who would not sign a declaration supporting *HV*. By 1980, bishops and priests recognised that the majority of Catholics had rejected the ban on contraception. But Pope John Paul ignored their requests for further reflection on the topic at the Synod on the Family in 1980. Instead, he reiterated the total ban on contraception — as if the matter were settled.

### Social Context

*HV* was at odds with the world it existed within. The 1960s and 1970s saw widespread, rapid social change, with a newfound freedom from social and sexual restraint. Abortion was legalised in many countries, freeing women from unwanted pregnancies. The final result of these freedoms went beyond the separation of sex from reproduction to the separation of sex from faithful, loving relationships.

### Silencing Catholic Voices

The debate over *HV* led to shutting down discussion about sexuality and contraception in the Church. It also led to a general dismissal of what are valid Catholic concerns about the dehumanising possibilities of some technology. The last 40 years have seen an explosion in understanding and manipulating fertility — IVF, embryo transfer, surrogate mothers, freezing eggs and sperm and selective abortion of genetically abnormal embryos, to name a few.

### Two Different World Views

I think that the lack of communication between the magisterium and the faithful was caused by two world views talking past each other. The magisterium believed creation was hierarchical, eternal and layered — human goodness was obedience to Church laws. But the world view of the Western world for the past 150 years has been increasingly scientific, rational, individualistic and evolving. Many Catholics, including priests, found it impossible to believe in a Church that maintained an unchanging view of God’s law, as if all revelation was accomplished. They left the Church in large numbers.

Two strands of Catholic moral theology contributed to the state of discord over *HV*. The traditional strand is deductive, static, abstract, rational and absolute — so contraception is always intrinsically evil and natural law is about particular actions rather than a state of being. Morality consists in conforming to the norms of the Church community.

The second strand, developed most fully after Vatican Council II, is inductive, dynamic, concrete and particular. It suggests that growth in moral maturity is a serious responsibility of each person in faith and the final authority of moral decisions is the individual informed conscience. This way of understanding has not been developed and well taught. Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia* says of pastors: “We have been called to form consciences, not to replace them.”

### Hope for the Future?

At present there is increasing interest in spirituality and the mystery of human beings. We know the universe is still expanding and evolution is continuing. We have a new physical understanding of creation as an intimately interconnected series of communities from its smallest to its largest dimensions. Christians live in this world in the process of becoming whole in Christ. In such a world the law of love is not a brick wall stopping development, but a trellis which allows movement on either side and enables growth upwards towards the light.

This concept was not discernible in the authoritarian statements in *HV* but is clearly present in *Amoris Laetitia*. Pope Francis speaks of love as both self-giving and other-receiving. He suggests excessive idealism about marriage puts people off rather than supports them. He proposes three words for good relationships — please, thank you and sorry. He encourages couples to make peace before going to bed. He also says: “I understand those who prefer a more rigorous pastoral care which leaves no room for confusion . . . Jesus wants a Church attentive to the goodness which the Holy Spirit sows in the midst of human weakness.” I agree. How hopeful it is to hear this now in our troubled world. ■

Painting: *The Young Holy Family* by Daniel Bonnell ©  
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**Anna Holmes**, married to John for 50 years, now has a great-grandchild. She tutors medical students, passing on her experience of 46 years as a GP.



# HUMANAE VITAE

- A Woman  
Theologian  
Reflects

TINA BEATTIE discusses questions arising from the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* and its significance for women.



In 1968, I was a 13-year-old Presbyterian attending the Dominican Convent School in Lusaka, Zambia. My best friend was one of eight children, and she told me that her mother was saying a *novena* for a ninth child. I was in awe of this Catholic family who knelt around the living room every night to say prayers to Mary and who had a glow-in-the-dark crucifix in every bedroom. I also understood enough of Catholicism to know that the question of family planning had suddenly acquired monumental significance, though it would be many years before I would become a Catholic myself and acquire an insider's view of these things.

When I eventually read *Humanae Vitae*, I was surprised by its positive understanding of married sexuality. I thought that, if one bracketed out the prohibition against all forms of artificial contraception, the rest of the document offered a beautiful theology of marriage.

However, in the course of my theological studies I have become concerned about both the style and content of the encyclical, and its continuing negative impact upon the credibility and coherence of Catholic moral teaching. I will focus on some of the questions that arise, particularly on its significance for women.

## Overwriting Tradition

Moral theologian Joseph Selling has spent years studying Church teaching on marriage and contraception, and he concludes that the emphasis on the unitive and procreative function of every sex act, rather than on the meaning of marriage as a whole, has no precedence in tradition.

It found its way into magisterial teaching through the theological writings of former Archbishop Karol Wojtyla, later Pope John Paul II, who was a friend of Paul VI and had shared his ideas with him prior to the promulgation of *Humanae Vitae* (HV).

Theology of the body has its roots in these early writings of Wojtyla and was developed by John Paul II in his influential but idiosyncratic catechesis on the Book of Genesis.

In its emphasis on sexual complementarity, "feminine genius" and the essential heterosexuality of the human made in the image of God, theology of the body presents itself as a development beyond a hierarchical understanding of sexual difference to a theology of equality in difference. But with its sexual essentialisms and romantic stereotypes of femininity, many theologians — myself included — would argue that it simply perpetuates the same old hierarchies in a new guise.

## Experience of Sex in Marriage

*Humanae Vitae* asks us to believe that God intends the human sex act to be, on every single occasion, an expression of unifying love and potentially procreative as far as natural circumstances allow.

But that is not how we experience sex. As every married couple knows, sex can be exquisite, sublime and all the rest of it, but it can also be humdrum, disappointing and frustrating, and at some point it is likely to become a stumbling block in most marriages, as we negotiate our different expectations, desires and appetites. This is true in the best of marriages, but in the worst of marriages sexual intercourse can become a channel for the most extreme forms of violence and humiliation — usually, but not always, for the woman.

## Quality of Relationship Primary

This is why the quality of the relationship rather than the sex act itself should be the focus of the Church's theology. The moral worth of any sex act must surely derive from the quality of the relationship as a whole rather than — as is presently the case — the logistics of each individual sex act defining the moral worth of the whole relationship.

Natural family planning works for some couples, but for many others it places a heavy burden upon their marriages. I have met women whose pelvic floors have been weakened and whose appetite for sexual pleasure has been destroyed by the physical and mental exhaustion of multiple unplanned pregnancies.

For many women, sexual desire is at its strongest when they are fertile, and the need to avoid sex at those times if they do not want to fall pregnant is a cruel imposition which hardly strengthens the unitive aspect of sexual love.

Given that strict adherence to Church teaching also entails avoiding non-penetrative forms of sexual pleasure — mutual masturbation, for example — the burden of frustration may be intense. Some tell of their reluctance even to touch each other during times when lovemaking is to be avoided, for fear of arousing their desire. This is hardly a unitive approach to sexual love.

There is nothing in human experience or in the natural order which supports the claim that the unitive and procreative aspects of the sex act cannot be separated. The unitive aspect of sexual love can be enhanced when the fear of pregnancy is removed, and a woman's capacity to conceive is independent of her emotional state during sex.

One might argue that, if God had clearly intended that these two aspects should never be separated, it would have been easy for the female body to evolve a hormonal response that would repress fertility in situations of rape or lovelessness, so that no child would ever be conceived by a woman who felt hatred, terror or disgust for the man penetrating her.

One reason why rape is such a potent weapon of war is that it constitutes the most invasive and intimate form of territorial conquest. Across the world, this violent patriarchal ethos prevails, and harrowing stories of rape and unwanted pregnancy bear powerful witness to a very different combination of sex and procreation from that of the papal romance of *HV*.

Pope Francis reminds us time

and again that the Christian faith finds its most authentic expression when it is animated by solidarity with those who are vulnerable, poor and exploited. *Humanae Vitae* has little to offer in this respect, particularly to women and girls who are at risk of sexual abuse and violence. Rather than encouraging them to protect themselves against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, *HV* would condemn such women to a lifetime of bearing and caring for the children of their abusers.

We might also think of the plight of migrant workers and those who work long hours away from home, for whom opportunities for married sexual intercourse might rarely coincide with the rhythms of natural family planning.

### Not Accepted by the Faithful

There is however another important factor in evaluating the magisterial authority of *HV*, and that is the *sensus fidei*. This sees the Church's teaching tradition as being vindicated and authorised by the assent of the whole community of the faithful — laity, theologians and bishops — through careful discernment and prayerful practice.

Given that numerous surveys have shown that the vast majority of Catholics worldwide practise some form of artificial contraception in defiance of Church teaching, one can legitimately ask if this teaching has been rejected by the faithful in a way that calls into question its authoritative status.

### Role of Conscience Needs Emphasising

Many argue that the most problematic aspects of *HV* are discreetly being written out of Church teaching by Pope Francis. Recent papal writings emphasise the importance of responsible parenthood and the role of personal conscience. In *Amoris Laetitia* Francis reminds his fellow bishops that "We have been called to form consciences, not to replace them". The revised statutes for the Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life, issued by Francis in May 2018, describe the role of the dicastery as being to support and coordinate "initiatives in favour of

responsible procreation".

Yet there are still many couples who believe they are bound by the teachings of *HV*. There needs to be a clear and authoritative statement that affirms the role of conscience and recognises the complex realities of sexuality, love and procreation — three aspects of human life that often tragically fail to coincide for many reasons.

I remember with affection that large Catholic family I knew as a school girl. Nobody is suggesting that couples should not practise natural family planning if it can be incorporated harmoniously and effectively into their marriages. Nor am I suggesting that large families should be condemned through a Malthusian concern about overpopulation. Indeed, a more realistic theology of sexuality and procreation would give the Church a far more credible voice in speaking out against population control policies that violate human dignity and the right to family life.

But some of us do not feel that our God-given abilities and capacities are fully expressed in parenthood. Women today have opportunities for education and participation in public life which were denied to our mothers and grandmothers, and these, too, can be experienced as gifts of God which require careful balancing with the responsibilities of motherhood.

We should be able to make moral decisions in the light of our Catholic faith, our social responsibility and our domestic situations, free from the Catholic culture wars fuelled in no small part by *HV*, in which some seem to regard the control of human sexuality as the defining hallmark of faithful Christian discipleship. ■

[The full text of this article is on our website: [www.tuimotu.org](http://www.tuimotu.org)]

Painting: *Family Bliss* by Frédéric Bonin-Pissarro © Used with permission [www.fredericpissarrousa.com](http://www.fredericpissarrousa.com)



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# Being a MIGRANT CAREGIVER

JOEY DOMDOM, MAYIE PAGALILAUAN and JUDITH SALAMAT share some of the findings from their research into the situation of migrant workers providing care for the aged in New Zealand.

Christine (not her real name), a nurse who worked in a hospital in the Philippines for nearly four years, found that what she earned would barely meet the family needs. She decided to migrate to nurse in another country and so provide better economic opportunities for her family. She applied through agencies and was advised to come to New Zealand as a visitor and, while here, to have her visa converted to a work visa. She had to take big loans to pay the agency and for “show money” — indicating she could support herself while in New Zealand. Leaving family behind she was convinced she had made the right decision for their future.

Soon after arrival Christine looked for healthcare employment. Through the assistance and referrals of friends an aged-care facility provided her with the possibility of being employed as a caregiver. She recalls: “The condition was to be in a week-long training as a volunteer caregiver plus three days of orientation. This was while I was waiting for the conversion of my visa and the formal job offer. I wanted work, so I accepted the condition. The week of training and a day of orientation were not paid. That’s how I became a caregiver.”

Although Christine has been a full-time caregiver for the last three years she needs to renew her work

visa regularly. “My contract expires in June next year. We hope the contract would be renewed so Immigration can extend our visas. I just want to stay here. I don’t know for how long, but I want to raise my family here.” Even though Christine is a registered nurse in the Philippines, her role as a caregiver here is considered “low skilled”. New Zealand has no formal scheme for caregiver migration. She would not qualify and could not apply for long term residency.

## The Demand

Christine’s situation is a product of the demand for healthcare workers across the world. The increase of populations of aged citizens in many developed countries is causing the increased reliance on overseas trained health workers like Christine. The ageing population refers to the imbalance in the unusual growth in the number of older people and the corresponding number of births per capita. In New Zealand, people aged over 65 years will double in the future. This demographic change has a significant impact on health services with the expected prevalence of chronic illness, disability and co-morbidity. The demand on funding for health services is said to be increasingly pressured and acute, and the domestic supply of health workers is unlikely to meet

the demand. As care for the aged is considered to be a low skilled, low status vocation it is difficult to attract local workers, especially young people.

## Migration of Health Workers

Developed countries recruit and attract workers from less developed countries, like the Philippines, to cope with the demand. This has resulted in an unprecedented migration of health workers across the world. At the forefront of this global phenomenon is the formal caregiver sector. But it is claimed that this sector currently is poorly understood, marginalised, unregulated and under researched. The lack of attention the caregiver sector receives makes it vulnerable to exploitation right from the initial processes migrant workers undertake in their countries of origin.

## Oversupply

In the the 1990s and early 2000s, the Philippine government expanded nursing education and migration in response to the demand for health workers overseas. Nursing schools were established throughout the country and students enrolled with long term aspirations of landing an overseas job. The Philippines was considered one of the world’s largest suppliers of nurses.

However, the demand abruptly shifted during the recessions of the



late 2000s. The number of new nurses grew faster than the available hospital positions in the Philippines. In one academic year there were more than 70,000 newly registered nurses, not to mention those unsuccessful in the licensure exams, and only around 30,000 hospital nursing positions. This over supply led to the situation where nurses wanting to work overseas worked without pay in hospitals in order to gain the required experience for nursing jobs overseas. And where nurses even paid the hospitals to work and gain experience. While over optimism to migrate encouraged many to become nurses, the result was a great number of inexperienced nurses unable to find nursing jobs and build careers. Many eventually became caregivers, and in some instances domestic helpers, in developed countries.

## The Reality

After investing in her costly nursing education, Christine's only option was migration even if it meant not fully practising her nursing profession. "I am okay now being a caregiver because I'm able to save and send some money back home," Christine says.

She takes comfort in the support of the Filipino community and her Church. "Pinoy (Filipinos) help each other. We share stories. I am not alone. Though we are not really close, we feel connected." Christine is very positive about her work. "I view the residents as my grandparents. I miss my family and the residents are a substitute to my family. When the residents are abusive, I look at it as a challenge. I think of caring for them as looking after my grandparents."

But it can be difficult. Christine and most migrant caregivers are confronted with adversities including discrimination, verbal and physical abuse, and bullying from co-workers. On her first week at work Christine learned to be vigilant around facility residents. "A resident pulled my hair — I did not know yet I had to be on guard all the time. Physical and verbal attack occurs almost every day. An internal report is written if we really get hurt like having bruises."

A study of the lack of clarity around boundaries and job descriptions

reveals that the role of migrant caregivers could change depending on the situation on the floor. Migrant workers take on, or are asked to assume, responsibilities beyond the area of care provision. Employers find it convenient but it is an exploitative path of saving resources at the expense of vulnerable migrant workers. Christine explains: "I have always been rostered to 3-10 pm shift. It is very tiring to be in this shift because I have to do most of the cares in a 15-bed wing. On top of this, my duties include cleaning and doing the laundry that take an extra 2-3 hours. I requested my supervisor for one morning shift a week so I could rest a bit. I did not get a response."

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***I view the residents as my grandparents. I miss my family and the residents are a substitute to my family. When the residents are abusive, I look at it as a challenge. I think of caring for them as looking after my grandparents.***

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Another practice that feeds on the migrants' vulnerability is allowing them to work for an extensive period of time. Christine confides: "My permanent shift is 36 hours. I take as many shifts as I can. If I can grab 84-85 hours per fortnight then that's okay. I can save more. I can send more money back home." While workers may be happy with extra money, over-long hours cause risks for both the residents and the caregivers.

It is important that we acknowledge, discuss and right these challenges and issues. It is too easy for exploitation and abuse to thrive when they are left.

## Source of Strength

Despite these structural barriers, migrant caregivers strive to settle into New Zealand society through their resilience and hard work. Regardless of the economic and work challenges, they feel their future is here. Christine says: "I have a job and earn more here than in the Philippines. Though New Zealand is far, the possibility

of being together here as a family strengthens me to work hard and face all difficulties." Christine hopes and prays that things will be better: "If I need to pray, I just go to the staff room and pray. My family is also praying for me. Prayer is my source of strength. I also involve myself in the Church aside from going to Mass. It is a way of giving thanks to God for the blessings and the guidance I receive." She intends to take courses to meet the required competencies to practise as a registered nurse here.

## Vulnerable

Central to the phenomenon of the consumption and provision of care for the aged population is the vulnerability of both the aged residents of healthcare facilities and their migrant caregivers. Older people need intensive healthcare and with the pressure on funding and resources, they risk substandard care.

Alternatively, the lack of conversation and understanding about the situation of "low-skilled" migrant caregivers shields practices that exacerbate marginalisation of this essential but vulnerable group.

Church and communities can do much to spread a better understanding of immigration policy, employment and the working conditions of migrant caregivers among us. ■



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**Mayie Pagalilauan** is an early childhood centre manager at Little Earth Montessori Kapiti. She arrived in New Zealand in 2006



**Judith Salamat** is a registered Diversional Therapist who works in a residential aged-care facility in Kapiti Coast.

Joey, Mayie and Judith have all experienced working in aged-care facilities in the Wellington Region.

# Working for Family-Fair Wages

“**W**hy aren't you at school?”  
“Because Mum says there's nothing for us to take for our lunch.”

Several years ago, when I was living in another part of the country, occasionally the children next door would appear at my door mid-morning on a school day and this would be the conversation. I longed to be able to make them lunches and take them down to school to join the other kids, but I knew that would do nothing for the dignity of the parents who were doing their best on a single low income. We would make cheese toasties together and they would miss another day at school. I resolved that when possible I would do something about child poverty in our country.

In late 2014 I returned to live in Porirua. The first Sunday I went to a new church where in the notices time at the end of the service we were told about a forthcoming meeting of the local Living Wage Network. With our parish priest I went along and discovered that not only is our Anglican Diocese of Wellington a member organisation of Living Wage Aotearoa but the Diocesan Office is also an Accredited Employer!

Quickly our parish became a member organisation, too, and I soon attended a five-day national training event. This was about learning how to organise a peoples' movement, based on the principles of Saul Alinsky. The trainees were from groups who don't always work well together – faith traditions, unions and community groups – the three strands of the Living Wage Movement. The focus of our practical sessions was the slow but sure (as we are finding now) process of working with city councils to pay the Living Wage to all their employees – both those employed directly and contracted.

**Jenny Dawson**, Anglican priest, spiritual director and supervisor, life partner and parent, paints and plays in Pukerua Bay, Porirua City, though her heart is in Te Wai Pounamu.



From September 2018 the Living Wage will be \$20.55 per hour, which is calculated very carefully to be the amount needed to live a basic yet decent life, and to participate in the community. This is in contrast with the Minimum Wage (\$16.50 per hour) which too often means parents have several poorly-paid jobs and some days children have no school lunches.

A few weeks ago I was at Parliament with three others from Living Wage Aotearoa meeting with Ministers about implementing the Living Wage for all those employed in the Core Public Service. A couple of days earlier, a group of us attended a Porirua City Council meeting to ensure progression of their commitment to paying the Living Wage. Again and again, we are seeing the process of stepped implementation being driven by people of diverse backgrounds who want to build relationships because of their concern for the dignity and participation of all people in our communities.

The Living Wage Movement is sweeping this country and other parts of the Western world. Research tells us that paying people adequately makes life better for everyone in local communities because any increase in household income is spent locally. Workers are happier, more stable and appreciate their employers more. I have heard many workers' stories of the difference the Living Wage has made to family life – and I think of the little children who lived next door to me.

The Living Wage Movement is about sustainability because it is broad-based and because it builds deep relationships – often where there have been divisions. Ultimately, it is not just about one issue. Communities are discovering tools to make a difference on issues that matter locally. It is a responsible movement because it is being realistic in not asking City Councils or other employers to take big steps

quickly that they (or ratepayers) cannot manage.

As a member of a faith group (Porirua Anglicans), I know deeply that my Gospel-based starting point is respected by the diverse people I campaign and celebrate successes with. I enjoy being asked to lead in prayer at our meetings and when we go – yet again – to the City Council. Our Christian faith has spoken strong words about the gap between rich and poor, and the indulging in excessive consumption that contrasts with real poverty. From



Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (On Capital and Labour) through to Pope Francis's recent *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), Catholic social teaching has called for the right of all workers to receive wages sufficient to provide for their families. My own bishop, Justin Duckworth, said in 2015: "As a Church we have to be people who actually live what we proclaim, and where better to start than with the Living Wage campaign."

You can read more about "The Living Wage as a Gospel Imperative" on [https://www.livingwage.org.nz/information\\_sheets](https://www.livingwage.org.nz/information_sheets). ■



## JENNY DAWSON and TRISH MCBRIDE explain the Living Wage Movement and the training for negotiating wages workers can live on comfortably.

**T**he Hamilton bus drivers, with the support of their union, were on strike to demand the Living Wage of \$20.55 per hour – the 2018 figure which will ensure a sufficient income to cover workers' most basic expenses: accommodation, food, transport, medical and childcare. It "enables workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society". The figure is established yearly by independent research of the Family Centre Social Policy unit.

The Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand (LWM)

was launched in Wellington and Auckland in 2012. Other regions followed. With shared values of justice and respect for all, people from three strands – unions, faith-based and community organisations – came together to raise awareness of the consequences of low incomes on individuals and their communities, and to train workers in discovering their political power.

I attended training led by dynamic Sister Maribeth Larkin. She is a member of the Los Angeles Sisters of Social Service, a qualified social worker, and is currently working for the Industrial Areas Foundation to support organising in Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Maribeth assists institutional leaders from Churches, synagogues, schools and unions to develop relational power and engage in a process of practical democracy.

She teaches ordinary people how to shape and influence public policy around issues including the increase of wages and benefits, healthcare availability and education reform. Maribeth cites Avishai Margalit's *The Decent Society* (1996): "The thesis is

that a decent society is one whose structures do not limit people and whose citizens do not humiliate each other." And "We're trying to create these kinds of relationships, networks and organisations to teach people how to build bridges across race, language, religion, culture and economic status, to build trust and act together on the issues we want to work on."

Maribeth grew up in an involved parish family where Catholic social teaching made sense. She entered the Sisters of Social Service in 1970, part-way through her social work studies. This Benedictine-based Congregation was founded by a remarkable Hungarian woman, Sister Margaret Slachta (1884-1974), whose mission statement was: "Go out of the desert and into the centre of life. We are to be pioneers for a better world, working for social reform, not through decrees imposed by power but through renewal of the spirit from within."

Early in parish work Maribeth distributed food and other essentials to the needy but came to recognise a different calling – to empower people to change unjust structures for themselves, helping them discover the shared values and power of working on common concerns with others from different backgrounds. In other words, equipping them with a fishing rod, not simply giving a fish.

The social justice I learned in the Catholic context is deeply important to me and I was privileged to learn some key understandings during Maribeth's sessions.

First, Maribeth identified the crucial basis for group action as intentional, relational conversations in all organisational contexts. This requires sitting together for one-on-one conversations to establish relationship and common values. This is mandatory for all in leadership roles in order to maintain the energy and effectiveness of their organisation.

Maribeth also stressed the importance of personal connecting before group meetings. We each introduced ourselves and our

backgrounds to the group at the beginning of the course. The tangata whenua present recognised this as what they already do: acknowledging relationship before getting on with business is an important aspect of whakawhanaungatanga. This can be an unusual initial component in Pākehā business meetings. Some of us came away planning to incorporate this into our organisation.

Because the training was broad-based, not confined to LWM processes and strategy, we could apply it in any context. One exercise got the people from each strand together. The rest of us had to ponder what we had been learning so we could critique our own institution. And then come up with a do-able next step to improve matters.

We learned about the Organising Cycle and its progression. Listening/Relating (individuals and small groups); Discerning issues together; and Planning, Acting/Negotiating; Evaluating and Celebrating – then repeat! And the key concepts of activism – like the Iron Rule (never do anything for anyone they can do for themselves), research, power analysis and negotiations.

Finally, we practised a negotiations scenario with teams of four "employers" and "employees" bargaining towards a Living Wage deal. We came away empowered by what we had learned, and better able to recognise our common values and passion with many different "others".

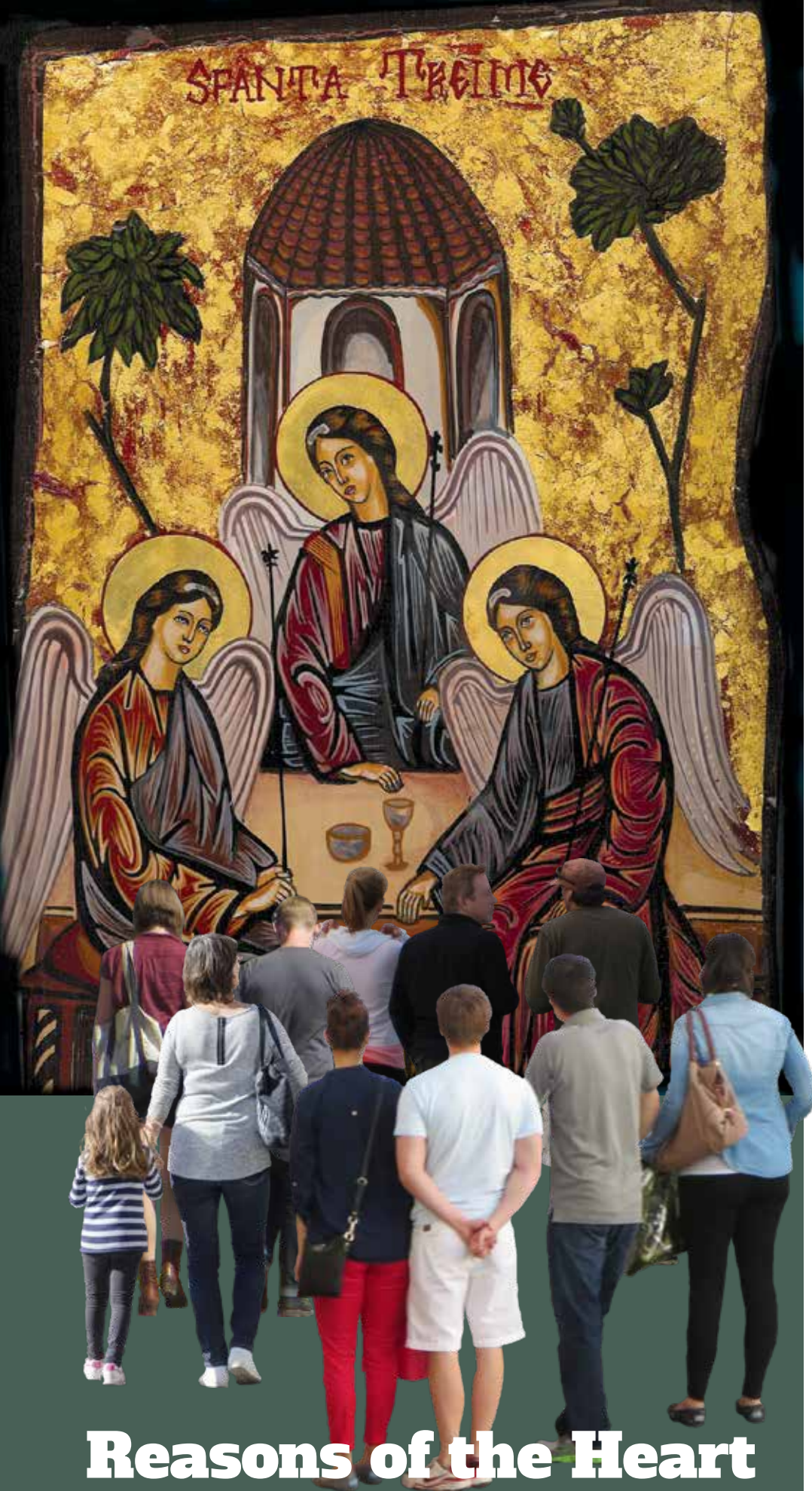
The online list of Living Wage employers in New Zealand includes Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian parishes and organisations, but so far no Catholic ones.

If you are willing to help move this campaign along to further justice and the dignity of hard-working Kiwis contact: [www.livingwage.org.nz](http://www.livingwage.org.nz) ■



Wellington writer **Trish McBride** is a retired counsellor and spiritual director. She identifies as post-denominational and belongs to St Andrew's on the Terrace.





# Reasons of the Heart

MIKE RIDDELL shares why he chose to become a Catholic 21 years ago.

**W**hy did I become a Catholic? I've never found my answer to this question completely satisfactory. It may as well be asked why I became human? To either query I'd have to reply that I don't recall the condition as a decision, so much as something I woke up to.

I do remember a small joke I made with the priest who interviewed me and inquired why I wanted to join the Church. It was a legitimate question, given that I'd been a Baptist clergyman, and a lecturer in Practical Theology at New Zealand Baptist College. Here I was, knocking on the door of the Catholic Cathedral in Dunedin, seeking admission. I suppose he wanted to know what journey had led me to his presbytery.

"Well," I replied. "I decided that if I was going to be associated with institutional scandal, I might as well come to the mother of them all." It was a pointed answer, given that we were seated in the former home of the Christian Brothers. Fortunately for me, the young priest laughed at my audacity. He led me in the rite of reconciliation. My penance was to go out into the world and be grateful for the beauty of it.

## Influence of James K Baxter

I blame James K Baxter for many things. I'd been reading his poetry and mystical writings for years. He was the one who compared Catholicism to a chestnut, demanding that one get bloody fingers finding a way past the outer spikes to get at the nut of love. As a former cleric, I understood that well. Very subtly, Baxter had been beckoning me to the heart of a deeper faith.

## Feeling at Home

I came to my first Mass as an outsider. The same young



priest was presiding, and began the service with a call for us to share the peace among ourselves. A woman in front of me turned and took my hand apologetically. "I'm sorry about this," she said. "We're not usually this friendly." I was immediately entranced. It seemed to me a refreshing honesty after years of false Christian bonhomie.

My wife (who had been born into a Catholic home) and I were invited to a dinner with the then Bishop, Len Boyle. We shared whisky together, and he entertained us with his history of growing up in Southland where his parents owned a pub in Nightcaps. All this earthiness and humour made me feel that these were my people — that I was not so much joining a denomination as being welcomed into a tribe of sorts.

## Room for All

Let's be frank. The process of following Christ demands association with the wider community who are attempting the same thing. Some of these are more congenial than others. One of those I encountered in my early days of Catholicism thoughtfully gave me a fundamentalist book entitled *Rome, Sweet Rome*. It was the religious equivalent of *Mein Kampf* for disciples. But I was stuck with him as a fellow Catholic.

The word "catholic" with its subtext of embracing all appealed to me, even if it hasn't been universally practised. I liked to watch the people stumbling back from receiving communion — a motley bunch if ever I'd seen one. A good number would head straight out the back door, desperate for a ciggy. There was no hiding the fact that we were all sinners of one sort or another.

Being part of the institutional Church is not quite the necessary compulsion it once was. I would guess that a large number of readers who are parents have children who feel no need for it. This doesn't mean they are "outside the fold". So long as they feel connected to us and follow their own path of growth and spirituality, who can question them? They're Catholic in the sense that's the Church they don't attend.

## We Are Church

Personally, I wasn't educated or indoctrinated into the faith. It wasn't the stellar pronouncements of the magisterium that beckoned me. It was the people, the people, the people. The kindness, the acceptance, the brokenness, the humanity, the humility — these were the qualities that won me over. And I include the priests who helped ease me into my new home.

Nor was it doctrinal enlightenment. I wasn't turning from the darkness to the light. Neither the Assumption of Mary nor transubstantiation were compelling factors in my shift of allegiance. I glanced them in my peripheral vision as one does when noticing a flattened possum on the tarmac. All of these denominational struggles for ownership of the truth seem to me like children's games.

*I claim my identity as one of the faithful, and refuse to either surrender it or have it taken from me. We, the people, are the Church. Her sins are our sins, her hopes are our hopes. May we celebrate the messy nature of who we are, never failing to imagine further healing.*

I suppose I should mention that I'd been drummed out of Baptist circles because of the publication of a novel I wrote while working at the theological college. I was deeply hurt by this, because I didn't want to accept a chasm between my art and my faith. In my mind it became an honourable discharge, allowing me to pursue my career as a writer without having to be apologetic about it.

As a Catholic, I was welcomed — words and all. My new surrounding family appeared to celebrate art rather than fear it. My intuition is that the sacramental life encourages a broad appreciation of beauty and the symbolic. The encouragement to see the mystery within the mundane flowers into an openness to hidden meaning in the ordinary — the very essence of artistic endeavour.

## Encouragement and Fresh Hope

I doubt whether I could have sustained my Catholicism so naturally

had I not been living in New Zealand, which is a satisfactory distance from Rome. Over my early years in the faith I bore the scandal of the Church in a visceral way, fulfilling my prior prophecy. But I couldn't be bothered leaving, because that would hand the game over to the institutional deathmongers.

And then along came Francis. For the first time in my exploration of these ancient halls of religion, I began to feel the fresh wind of the Spirit. It seemed to me a reprising of Vatican II, where John XXIII is reported to have said: "I want to throw open the windows of the Church so that we can see out and the people can see in." I warned to Francis the moment he asked us to pray for him.

We still await the spring rains, when women will be priests, the eucharist unchained, the power structures spiked, and the safety of

children and other victims enshrined. These are dreams to be carried in the heart, harboured over generations. But there's currently a crack in the stone edifice, and the hope that light might shine through.

Looking back over 21 years as a card-carrying Catholic, I have few regrets. I claim my identity as one of the faithful, and refuse to either surrender it or have it taken from me. We, the people, are the Church. Her sins are our sins, her hopes are our hopes. May we celebrate the messy nature of who we are, never failing to imagine further healing. ■

Painting: Modern hand-painted icon of the Trinity from Romania



**Mike Riddell** writes novels, plays, films and apology notes. He cooks when he can and breathes intentionally on a daily basis.

**H**aving felt God's call into ministry and having that call affirmed by the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, in 2003 our family left all that was familiar in Cannons Creek, Porirua and embarked on a journey to Dunedin. My husband and I had both been accepted to train for Presbyterian Church ministry. Some people thought we were crazy leaving our jobs, families and support systems behind and taking our three children to a different city – a colder one at that.

In 2006 I graduated from the School of Ministry. In February 2007 I was called to a part-time Stated Supply ministry at the Otago Peninsula Presbyterian Parish and then later that same year the Otago Peninsula Presbyterian Parish (OPPP) called me to be their full-time minister of Word and Sacrament.

### **New Minister and Diminishing Community**

For eight years we ministered together as a Church family. We were committed to making Jesus Christ known.

However, as the years went by our numbers began to dwindle as some parishioners died, a few left the area for work and many became frail and unable to attend services. Our youth work and mission to the community was not translating to more, excuse my language, “bums on pews”. We were losing members. Although we were attracting a few new members – and I was excited about this – one or two members of the congregation thought they were the wrong kind of people. Yet, they were the vulnerable, seeking a place to belong, and the very ones that Jesus calls us to minister to.

With fewer members the bulk of the ministry fell on fewer shoulders. It was becoming increasingly hard to do the work without the physical support needed to run a Church. The average age of the congregation was 70.

Some members found it increasingly hard to find meaning in a congregation that they saw as dying before their very eyes. A few in our congregation were vocal in their doom and gloom.

# a call in the dark night

**ALOFA LALE reflects on her journey through a painful period of her life in ministry.**

At the same time, I was clear that God's call to be the minister at OPPP was still in my heart whether we were few or many.

So what happens when the “harvest is plentiful and the workers are few”?

Tiredness and a sense of pessimism began to creep in. After what felt like endless meetings a decision was made to dissolve the OPPP, and on 19 April 2015 I led my last service as the minister.

In hindsight, I can see that it didn't really take that long to dissolve the worshipping congregation once the mind had been made up. But in this instance the heart was a hindrance to progressing the decision. I had to disengage my heart from the process and engage with my head.

### **Into the Dark Night**

I had a huge sense of self-doubt and failure at the time. I thought the OPPP was dissolving because of me. I had painful thoughts of inadequacy.

***I believe Jesus has been with me every step of the way and will continue to be with me always.***

Would this be happening if I was not Samoan and not a woman? I offered to resign so that the church could remain and grow with another minister. I was told that it had nothing to do with me and that the combination of dwindling numbers, dwindling finances and earthquake-prone buildings meant that we could not continue to carry on.

I remember after our dissolution attending a service at a local Presbyterian church and being asked what it felt like to be the minister who had closed down one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in Dunedin. I quickly left after the service because I didn't want to add any epithets – to be the emotional, weeping minister who had closed down one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in Dunedin. Although, everyone who knows me





knows that I am prone to bouts of hay fever any time of the year.

### Questions Echoing in the Dark

Some ask how I managed to get through this painful time in my life. It was not easy and I still reflect on that time and wonder if there was anything I could have done differently. Should I have dug my heels in and not cooperated with the process? I asked myself, what would that achieve? I decided that staying and fighting would have caused more heartache for all concerned and it really was not my fight. The majority had spoken and the die was cast.

My family learned to walk on eggshells around me during the whole dissolution process. I didn't really share my feelings with them. I didn't want them to feel any animosity towards the Church because their mother was losing her job.

In a Pacific context, the focus would have been on solving the problem. Just one fundraising project

***Some ask how I managed to get through this painful time in my life. It was not easy and I still reflect on that time and wonder if there was anything I could have done differently.***

to save the Church would bring in thousands. We had done that in Porirua. But the same mentality cannot be transferred that easily from congregation to congregation. As far as my family was concerned everything was fine. I didn't want to worry them and I carried on, one foot in front of the other, one day at a time.

### Crucial Support

All Presbyterian ministers are required to undergo supervision as part of their ministry. I could not have got through this dark time in my life without my supervisor's support. Many times I

would go into Wendy's office upbeat and happy and leave with a tear-stained face after having let it all out in the safety of that space. Other times it would be the opposite. Without Wendy's ear and heart, I would not be where I am today.

### New Call, New Dawn

God must have thought that I had my prayers on repeat during that time because that was all that was on my playlist. Dear God and Dear God over and over again.

Then God threw me a pitch from way out left field. After a year of wandering in the wilderness doing some teaching, preaching here and there and picking up a part-time Stated Supply in Dunedin South, God sent me an answer to my repeated prayers.

I saw the position for Mission Coordinator at Mercy Hospital Dunedin advertised in Jora job alerts. I read the Job Description and thought: "I can do that." I applied for the position and I got it.

When he offered me the job, the CEO asked how I would feel working for a Catholic organisation. I said that I could see no problems — after all, we all seek to serve Jesus Christ. I said maybe the question should be asked of the Catholic community. Richard said: "We have, and the ones we have asked are all good with it." I replied: "Then I am all good with it, too."

### Jesus With Me Every Step

"I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13). A painful time in my life has been like a blink of an eye because I have felt the strength of the Lord in my very being. With the Lord nothing is impossible. This I believe because Jesus has been with me every step of the way and will continue to be with me always.

God is good! All the time! God is good!

*Soifua ma la manuia. ■*



Rev Alofa Lale was born in Wellington and has three children. Alofa is the Mission Coordinator at Mercy Hospital in Dunedin.



## *When Morning Comes*

When morning comes  
Darkness slips to memory  
And night-held fears dissolve into the light  
And all around a new day starts appearing  
Stretching out across the board of hope  
I am alive and blessed for one more journey  
Till evening comes  
The day belongs to me

When morning comes  
Dark is left abandoned  
The kiss of daylight breaks the spell of night  
And dreams recede as on an ebbing tide  
Your step is light your path so very clear  
Unafraid you make the day your friend  
Till evening comes  
With shadows once again

When morning comes  
Like no morning ere before it  
With shafts of light to pierce the dark of night  
We rise as one excited and together  
On wings of light we soar beyond the stars  
We are the hope that blesses all tomorrows  
When morning comes  
And evening is no more

— James B Lyons

Photo by Takashi Yanagisawa in Unsplash.





# What I Value Most Now from My Catholic Education

**Esther Robinson** is working as a Ministerial Advisor in Parliament. She went to Catholic primary and secondary schools in Gisborne and has an MPols.



**D**uring my schooling I wasn't particularly aware that my education was specifically Catholic as I didn't know any different. Although Religious Education was a significant part of the curriculum I was taught, I didn't view the subject as any different from my other

mainstream subjects – it was just what we did. It wasn't until I reached university that I realised the depth and breadth my Catholic education provided me. For instance, I had an awareness of a variety of religions, not just Catholicism. I had an appreciation for basic philosophical

**Callum MacLeod**, a psychology student at Otago University, is interested in music, driving, TV shows and human behaviour.



**I**t's hard to write about what I value the most about my Catholic education and upbringing as it has always been such a large part of my growing up. It's hard to imagine a life without it. However, by looking at the

friends I have made over the years – people of many different faiths and walks of life – I can gather an image of the values I learned that have made me, in turn, who I am. You see, by looking at the friendships I have

**Georgia West** is married to Stefan and works for ACC. She is renovating their home in Ngaruawahia and assists with the College rugby teams.



**I** come from a loving family of Catholic faith. My brother and sister and a lot of my extended family went to Catholic schools – something that is a privilege. My parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and my siblings all have something in common from our family life and

fostered in our education – each of us is a kind person and we are all hospitable.

I didn't really love the school work at Sacred Heart Girls' School in Hamilton – but I did love the extracurricular activities it provided, particularly the opportunity to be

**Cavaan Wild** is completing a law and arts conjoint degree at Victoria University. He is looking forward to starting work next year and being able to read something that isn't cases or academic articles.



**M**y first thought about what I gained from my Catholic education was an overriding guilt, superstitions and a ban on meat on Fridays.

So, I asked my Mum. And she said a lot of things in the space of a few texts. "A mandate to care about people. To build a life based on virtues. To think about the common good."

But perhaps what stuck out the most was when she said: "a fascination and talent with words born out of the rich language within Catholic ritual. And a bottom line of goodness."

I went to a Catholic primary school. We fed some of our students, we couldn't afford sports equipment. Even as children, the practical importance of caring for each other

**Hannah Bergin** finished at Marist College in 2011, then studied a law and arts conjoint at Auckland University. She now lives in Wellington and loves exploring this new city.



**I** attended Marist College for seven years and many of the valuable lessons and experiences I learnt there still serve me today. There was a strong sense of community at Marist. We were always encouraged to extend our network beyond our

immediate group of friends. There was a strong sense of connection between year levels. I value this experience because it taught me it is possible to connect with a huge variety of different people from different backgrounds, and the importance of



## We asked a group of young adults to write about what they value most from their education in Catholic Schools at this time in their lives.

questions. I understood symbolism in art and culture. I could analyse religious conflict in an informed way due to a basic understanding of historical and biblical context. However, what I value most from my Catholic education, something that I perhaps didn't appreciate at school,

is the value of social justice. Viewing political, social and economic issues through the lens of the social justice principles I was taught at my Catholic school followed me through my tertiary education and into my career path. Albert Einstein talks about education as being something that

remains after one had forgotten what one has learnt in school. In this sense, I may not be able to quote scripture or remember every Station of the Cross, but my Catholic education, specifically social justice principles, have remained embedded in my moral compass and this I highly value. ■

formed, I can easily say that these are the most important part of my life. My Catholic education has taught me just how precious each individual person is, that all lives are equal and in turn, all people should be treated equally.

This makes forming friendships easy. Respect is given, not earned, and I have found that this respect has been given back time and time again. The values I have been taught are a baseline for how I treat other people.

I've lived in flats with the people I got to know during my school education so I know these friendships and more will always last, if respect is given. ■

involved in Young Vinnies (St Vincent de Paul). Being able to provide a caring hand for those struggling and in need really taught me to value people, the meaning of true empathy and most importantly, to be kind to everyone. Practising Catholic values, I realise, will be something I continue

to cherish in my adult life, especially in the everydayness of life. It is what prompted me to work in areas where careful listening and making a difference, especially for families finding it hard to cope, is important. And also it has led me to become a volunteer at the SPCA and in

supporting young peoples' sports.

My husband and I are currently expecting our first child – a wee girl due at the end of August this year. Before we even fell pregnant we knew that our child would be getting the same thing we did – a Catholic education. ■

was an imperative. After all, how can children be children if they go hungry? How could children be happy if they had no-one to play with?

In Year 13 English we read a book called, *How Many Miles to Babylon?* It gets its name from a nursery rhyme quoted as:

*How many miles to Babylon?  
Fourscore and ten, sir.  
Will I get there by candlelight?*

*Yes and back again, sir.*

What I gained from my Catholic education: a compulsion to do all the good I can, by all the people I can. That eventually, like everyone else I'll die, reaching Babylon in hopefully more than fourscore and ten years. And in that time, far better I use it for something gainful, making the most of the candlelight. Metaphors. Catholic education and an English teacher

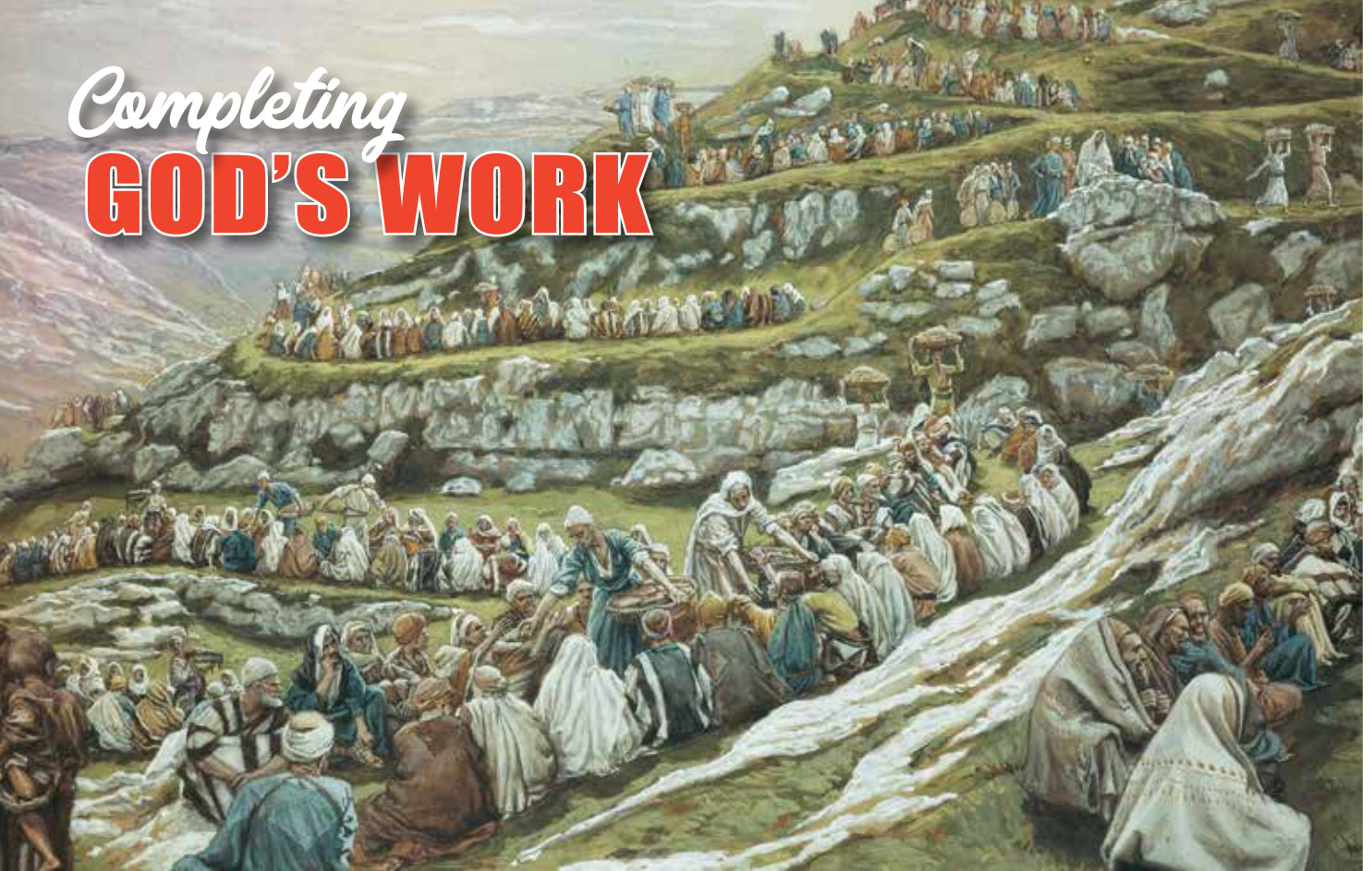
for a Mum made me an inescapable disciple of the metaphor. God helps those who help themselves. That might be Protestant. But Catholicism was always more guidelines than strict rhetoric. It doesn't matter if the arms holding you are tattooed, scarred and beaten. The embrace is everything. ■

forging strong personal connections with those around me. The strong community at Marist made for a fulfilling and rewarding experience at school. Secondly, I highly value the emphasis that was placed on social justice during my Catholic education.

The importance of social justice and of being "other-centred" rather than "self-centred" was an important value that extended into all our classes at school. I learned that a community is always stronger when individuals look out for one another. We all have

a responsibility to serve the needs of others and to use our individual skills to assist others. Coming to learn and understand the significance of social justice is what I value most from my Catholic education. ■

# Completing GOD'S WORK



**KATHLEEN RUSHTON points to significant aspects of John 6:1-21 that link the feeding story with the reason for Jesus's ministry and our own living.**

**T**he Fourth Evangelist begins with a prologue (John 1:1-18) which inserts Jesus, imaged as the Word and Wisdom *Sophia*, into God's work of ongoing creation. God's ongoing work threads throughout in words and phrases — the works of Jesus are to those on the fringes of society and religion. These fringe-dwellers included those ignorant of the Torah (Jn 7:49); the physically marginalised (the sick man by the pool Jn 5:1-15; the beggar born blind Jn 9:1-41); the geographically marginalised (the official Jn 4:46-54; and the woman of Samaria Jn 4:4-42).

Being attentive to clues found in the Prologue when we hear the Gospel proclaimed from John 6, on the last Sunday of July and for all the Sundays of August, helps us to be aware of the spirituality Jesus lived, and with him, to complete the works of God in our time.

John 6 divides into two parts. The first tells of the feeding of a large crowd (Jn 6:1-15) and a boat trip (Jn 6:16-22). The second records a long discourse (Jn 6:22-71). The feeding of the five thousand, found in all four Gospels, is shaped differently in the Fourth Gospel: location, timing,

actions and words. The first four verses are an introduction: Where? Who? When? Why?

## Where?

A new place is introduced. Jesus goes "to the other side of the Sea of Galilee", also described as the "Sea of Tiberias" here (Jn 6:1) and after the resurrection (Jn 21:1). Why does the Evangelist so name the sea and the city of Tiberias (Jn 6:23) in the only references to them in the New Testament? Between 17-20 CE, Herod Antipas (4 BCE-39 CE) built Tiberias on its waterfront location. He was the first local ruler of Galilee for centuries and the son of Herod the Great. He named this new administrative capital after the Roman Emperor Tiberias. The reign of Antipas was a time of relative political peace. Galilee developed into a small, prosperous Jewish kingdom where collusion existed between Herodian rule and the provincial aristocracy.

## Who?

"A large crowd kept following him" (Jn 6:2). Jesus disappeared in the Jerusalem crowd (Jn 5:13). Now, a new set of characters enters: a crowd from Galilee. The founding of Tiberias and the giving of land to its inhabitants meant local people were displaced and there was pressure on landowners to break up small holdings. The fast-developing Herodian economy of Galilee affected the lives of the marginalised crowd — tax collectors, peasants, lepers, the sick, small farmers, labourers, widows, women,



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.

**Sunday, 29 July**

**Roman Lectionary, 17th Sunday Ordinary Time – John 6:1-15.**

**Revised Common Lectionary, 10th Sunday After Pentecost – John 6:1-21**



children. They were Jews living under Roman occupation. They were mostly poor, earning their living on land, sea or by trade. All had a collective history of exile and deportation, of being ruled by other nations, of working day and night and paying huge taxes in society from which they did not benefit.

## When?

Passover time is the context of the beginning of the ministry of Jesus (Jn 2:13) as well as his arrest, trial and execution (Jn 11:55-19:14) and also of John 6. This festival was one of three when all Israelite males were commanded to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 16:16). This week-long spring festival celebrated the Exodus (Ex 12:1-18) and is associated with liberation and with God's salvation past and future.

## The Why of Where, Who and When

So why does the crowd near Tiberias seek out Jesus at Passover time? During changing times, maybe, the marginalised crowd could not afford to make the journey to Jerusalem for the Passover. They came to Jesus who preached and healed in the countryside. He avoided the cities of Tiberias and Sepphoris. Change occurs not only through money and markets but when a change of values means people and resources are exploited for profit rather than for providing what is needed for subsistence. The works of Jesus resist the changing values and attitudes represented by the rise of Sepphoris and Tiberias. He adapts the Wisdom and Exodus traditions to a new situation in a prophetic critique of the ways things were.

## Wisdom Sophia

By John 6, Jesus is established as Wisdom Sophia who invites her people to "come eat of my bread" (Proverbs 9:5). The Fourth Gospel has no Eucharist institution narrative, so John 6 is seen as the counterpart of Last Supper accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus takes the initiative. On whose behalf? The marginalised. Jesus "looked up and saw a large crowd" and then asked Philip where they might "buy bread for these people to eat" (Jn 6:5-6). The word used for "buy" in their conversation comes from the word for the market place, *agora*.

Andrew noticed a boy with five barley loaves and two fish. Barley was the food of the poor and slaves, and was also fed to animals. The barley loaves evoke Elisha feeding a multitude (2 Kings 4:42-44). The word "bread" back then, as today, meant both bread and food in general. Behind "bread" in all its senses is the hard work and the self-giving of men and women to provide for families. In ordinary life, meal and sacrifice are linked. Bread in its particular and widest sense comes from the soil and water that irrigates it.

Jesus's words and actions echo the Passover deliverance from slavery in Egypt and God feeding the people with manna and quail (Ex 16) in the spring. The cycle of the seasons connects with the Passover. So, at that time, the Galilean hills would have been covered with lush grass and wild flowers. Jesus gives directions to "make the people sit down," using a word meaning to stretch out for

the meal. Reclining was the customary position for eating. The references to "a great deal of grass" and having "as much as they want" evoke Psalm 23:1-2: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures." The reader is prepared for the declaration of Jesus later: "I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10:11).

## Gather the Fragments

After Jesus had given thanks (*eucharistein*), he distributed the bread himself. This recalls the Last Supper stories where Jesus acts in this sequence: he took the loaves, gave thanks (*eucharistein*) and distributed them. Provision for all gathered and some left over is a recurring description of biblical meals. God says to Elisha: "Give it to the people and let them eat ... they shall eat and have some left." In the Exodus wilderness feeding, they gathered 12 baskets of left-over manna. The Greek words for fragments and gather were used in the early Church when speaking of Eucharistic fragments.

According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, about one-third of the food produced in the world for human consumption gets wasted or lost every year. What can Christian communities learn from the spirituality of Jesus to complete the works of God when he directed his disciples to gather up the surplus so that nothing is lost? What can the Christian community learn about caring for the landscape when the Gospel says the place was cleaned up and restored to how it was found? ■

Painting: *The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes (La multiplicité des pains)* by James Tissot. Brooklyn Museum.

# ROHINGYA APPEAL

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# Goodness and Sincerity of Heart

ELAINE WAINWRIGHT introduces the Book of Wisdom and points to how wise living today involves caring for all life — Wis 1:1, 6-7, 12-15; 2:23-24.

- Wis 1:1 *Love righteousness, you rulers of the earth,  
think of God in goodness  
and seek God with sincerity of heart; . . .*
- Wis 1:6 *For wisdom is a kindly spirit, . . .*
- 12 *Do not invite death by the error of your life,  
or bring on destruction by the works of your hands;  
because God did not make death,  
and does not delight in the death of the living.*
- 13 *For God created all things so that they might exist;  
the generative forces of the world are wholesome,  
and there is no destructive poison in them,  
and the dominion of Hades is not on earth.*
- 14 *For righteousness is immortal.*
- 15 *But the ungodly by their words and deeds summoned death; . . .*
- 16 *for God created us for incorruption,  
and made us in the image of God's own eternity,  
but through the devil's envy death entered the world,  
and those who belong to the devil's company experience it.*
- Wis 2:23
- 24

**T**he First Reading for the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (1 July 2018) is from the Book of Wisdom and it is eclectic: three verses from Chapter 1 (Wis 1: 13-15) and two verses from the second chapter (Wis 2: 23-24). This prompted me to be a little more expansive and choose seven verses from Wisdom 1 and the two verses from Wisdom 2. I want to have a more representative piece of text so that I might introduce you to the Wisdom literature. And I want the chosen text to enable us to explore how Wisdom writings provide a rich resource for ecological reading.

## Types of Writing in Old Testament

Readers of Israel's scriptures, known by Christians as the Old Testament, are familiar with the different types of writing within it. So much is "historical", tracing the story of



the covenant relationship between God and Israel. To this is added the voices of Israel's prophets speaking God's challenges and promises to the nation. And there are 150 psalms — the nation's book of prayer. Probably the least known are the Wisdom writings, the latest collection to be added to Torah, History and Psalms. They are unique, rising from the reflection on life of the sages — wise ones of Israel. The Book of Wisdom was written around the first or second century BCE. It personifies Wisdom as female and sings her praises as well as calls readers to right living. It functions well, therefore, as a text to be read ecologically.

### Wisdom Speaking to All of Us

The opening verse of the Book of Wisdom (Wis 1:1) singles out one group of readers: you rulers of the earth. We will extend the book's readers/recipients far beyond this exclusive, hierarchical and generally male-gendered group. An ecological perspective might lead us to name the recipients in this verse simply as "earthlings" (those of and on Earth) and to hear the sage's opening call: Love righteousness, you earthlings.

"Righteousness" is a key virtue in Israel's scriptures, especially in the call of the prophets and the prayers of the psalmist (eg, Psalm 37). It is the right ordering of relationships not only within the human community ("they shall be kept safe forever" (Ps 37:28a) but with the other-than-human: "the righteous shall inherit the land and live in it forever" (Ps 37:29).

We will always need to engage critically with righteousness or right ordering in different times and different places. For contemporary ecological readers, right ordering will be informed by what we now know of human dis-order in relation to Earth — our exploitation of water resources, our pollution of the oceans, our destruction of species and our lack of awareness and attention to ecological imperatives, like recycling.

### Seek Goodness and Sincerity

As we read on as Earthlings invited to love right ordering, we encounter a further invitation: think of God

in goodness and seek God with sincerity of heart. This is another way of inviting us into the right ordering that is of God and can be discerned through a lens of goodness and sincerity of heart. And at this point of the unfolding of the universe, such "goodness" that is of God must include not only the human realm but also the other-than-human.

*We know that today wisdom must extend beyond the human realm. The one who is "wise" is not only a lover of humanity but of the entire cosmos. We can acclaim wisdom as a "universal spirit" personifying such love.*

In Wis 1:6, we hear the exclamation, "wisdom is a kindly spirit!", and further exploration reveals that the Greek word *philanthropos* used in this phrase means literally "love of the human one" (kindly). However, we know that today wisdom must extend beyond the human realm. The one who is "wise" is not only a lover of humanity but of the entire cosmos. Unfortunately, there is no Greek word for this cosmic love (as there is for love of the human) but we can acclaim wisdom as a "universal spirit" personifying such love.

### Avoid Causing Death

Wisdom 1:12 – 14 yields very readily to an ecological reading shaped by an expanded consciousness. The death and destruction that the sage calls to readers' attention will be perceived as more expansive than that afflicting the human community. Wisdom calls her readers/hearers to avoid inviting death by the error of their lives. We can understand that as the death of sea creatures choked by the plastics in our oceans, pollution and destruction by pesticides and other toxic chemicals in some of the planet's richest lands and waterways.

The sage challenges her ecological

readers with the expansive claim that "God did not make death" nor does God "delight in the death of the living" — of anyone or anything living in the cosmos. Wisdom 1:14-15 closes this short invocation with a vision of hope for the human community informed by an ecological imperative:

... God created all things so that they might exist;  
the generative forces of the world are wholesome,  
and there is no destructive poison in them  
... righteousness [God's right ordering] is immortal.

Wisdom's sage is attentive also to what is destructive of this right ordering, recognising that "the ungodly by their words and deeds summon death" (Wis 1:16).

### Invitation to Reflect

The reading closes with Wis 2:23-24, a climax to our ecological interpretation. Wis 2:23 invites us, the cosmic community of all that is, into God's eternity. However, the final verse reminds readers of the presence of death that the sage attributes to the work of the devil. But an ecological reader can bring a particular perspective on these final verses beyond that of the sage: both life and death may, indeed, be part of the cosmic processes that are unfolding in our extraordinary universe and both can be celebrated. Wisdom's sage is indeed a rich source of reflection for the ecological reader of the biblical text. ■

Painting: #411 by Bjorn Richter, Norwegian painter, sculptor, designer and writer © Used with permission. [www.bjornrichter.no](http://www.bjornrichter.no)  
"The sales of my work help me continue my (often idealistic) work for our planet. I began expressing my concern in painting in 1974 — probably the first artist to do this."



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

# Waking Up to Our WASTEFULNESS



**W**e live in an “easy come, easy go” kind of world, where, as long as you can pay for it, everything is expendable. It’s no surprise then that waste has become a natural byproduct of this mass-producing world: a minor sin, a victimless crime.

While waste, of course, permeates all corners of life, nowhere is it more apparent (read: abhorrent) than when it comes to food.

We’ve seen a recent glut of television programmes glamourising the act of cooking and dining, but these programmes don’t deal with the realities of food. We gush about our love of food and cooking but evidently our adoration only extends to the act of eating. We’re not interested in where our food comes from. How much we throw out barely registers. It’s become mindless consumption at any (and all) cost.

New Zealanders, for example, rate eradicating hunger as one of the most important goals of society, yet throw out almost \$2 billion dollars of food each year. And it’s not just their back

pockets they’re hurting when they throw away food: at the same time, one in every 14 Kiwis is unsure of where their next meal is coming from.

Meanwhile, in Australia our landfills receive almost nine million tonnes of food waste each and every year. In fact, per capita, we rank as one the world’s most wasteful nations. It’s gotten so bad that Australia actually rejects 86 out of every 100 tomatoes it produces based on appearance alone.

Think about that for just a second. What other industry could justify, much less survive, letting the vast majority of what it produces go to waste for no real reason at all? And yet the food industry lets most of what it produces go to rot.

Of course, this is not an issue at the barn door. Farmers know what they produce is good and edible. Supermarkets, however, don’t agree — or at least don’t believe that we, the consumer, would be happy with an odd-looking bunch of vegetables. So they dump them en masse.

This divide between consumer, supplier and producer is the crux of this problem. A barbecue chicken tossed into a skip bin at the end of the day’s trade might not seem like much if you can’t see the 4,000 odd litres of water that it took to produce it. Nor the faces of the locals who

went hungry that very same night.

Given this sorry state of affairs, it’s encouraging to see a few initiatives directly attempt to balance the scales. OzHarvest, an Australian organisation, has become a go-between, taking food that would otherwise be wasted by supermarkets and others and seeing that it finds those with empty stomachs. If you’re not at risk of going hungry you can still shop at their supermarket with the proceeds helping those in need. Their branches in New Zealand, the UK and soon South Africa demonstrate the need is global.

But supermarkets and consumers are slow to change. With the human population swelling to almost 10 billion by 2050, there will be yet more mouths to feed and even fewer resources to do so.

We simply don’t have time to remain set in our wasteful ways. For every meal we throw out there’s someone who went needlessly hungry. For every ingredient tossed, we’ve squandered the very things we’re quickly running out of.

Ethically, it can’t continue. Realistically, it won’t. If we don’t make the change ourselves, it’ll soon be forced upon us when we’ve exhausted our resources and all our other options. ■

**Jack Derwin** is a journalist and writer currently living in Córdoba, Spain.





# Let's Move from **Thinking** to **Speaking**

**JULIA SPELMAN**  
suggests that making te  
reo Māori compulsory in  
school may encourage  
us all to learn, speak and  
sustain our legacy.



“Sustainability” is a word that can make you feel anywhere from inspired to guilty. On the small scale, I see the irony of rushing past my overgrown vegetable garden to go to work – only to buy overpriced, sad looking vegetables at the supermarket at the end of a 12 hour day. It doesn’t feel very sustainable for the environment or for me. On a bigger scale, in a recent study published in the journal *Science*, researchers have found that a vegan diet is probably the best way to reduce environmental impact on the planet. That message doesn’t land easily in New Zealand, with our long agricultural history and an economic reliance on meat and dairy exports.

I have been thinking about sustainability in another area – the sustainability of te reo Māori. In particular, the ongoing debate about whether to introduce te reo Māori as a compulsory language in school. Some of those against this proposal say the language is not sustainable because it is not spoken outside of New Zealand and has no useful purpose. Some people think that the responsibility to sustain the language is one that rests with Māori only, despite the history of language suppression that led to its decline and endangerment.

I’m fortunate to be connected to my whakapapa and to Waipapa, my marae in Kawhia. Although I look pretty Pākehā, my whānau have both Māori and Pākehā heritage. My tūpuna are Ngāti Hikairo, landing in Kawhia in the Tainui waka. I didn’t grow up speaking te reo but as I learn more, I am also learning about who I am and where I come from. I often work with Māori clients, some of whom speak te reo and it’s an important way of connecting. It also helps when I go with my Dad back to Kawhia, to sit in the back of the wharehau listening as the kōreo slides from Māori to English back to Māori as needed.

I recently heard an interview with someone around my age saying how excited they were to be living in a time when New Zealand was changing and te reo is really gaining traction, with hundreds of people turning out for free classes in Christchurch and more reo casually entering the daily lexicon. I’m not sure that’s an opinion

shared by everyone in New Zealand but I do hope we’re in the process of turning the tide. As with many social changes, it’s one that requires effort and courageous leadership from political leaders but also within families, schools and communities.

My view is that making Māori compulsory is a necessary step. We need more trained teachers, we need to normalise learning and speaking, and we need more te reo Māori in our civic and public life. Wellington City Council just announced a goal to make Wellington a te reo Māori city by 2040 and one of the parts of its strategy is to make te reo a desirable competency for council staff.

Many people say they want to learn Māori but find it difficult to know where to start. I have friends who feel guilty about making multiple New Year resolutions but not quite managing to make it to classes. (Or, indeed, to stop eating meat or to stop buying plastic or to spend more time in the garden or any other number of things we think we “should” do.) Starting small, with some te reo fridge magnets and labels around the house or an introductory course, is still a start. But enabling the next generation to learn in school means they have the best opportunity to learn while they’re at an age where they will soak it up with ease. I certainly wish I’d learned more te reo at school as it is much more difficult to learn as an adult.

We don’t have to achieve everything all at once. Encouraging ourselves and each other to take steps towards sustainability – environmental, cultural and spiritual – is best done with compassion. But sometimes we need structural change, too. Making Māori compulsory would help us as a nation to deepen our identities as Māori and Pākehā and to step confidently, together, into the future. ■

Illustration by Sandy Leaitua ©



**Julia Spelman**, of Ngāti Hikairo descent, is a barrister at Pipitea Chambers, Wellington. She has been appointed to assist Dame Margaret Bazley with the external review of Russell McVeagh law firm.

## At Play in the Lions' Den: A Biography and Memoir of Daniel Berrigan

By Jim Forest

Published by Orbis Books, 2017

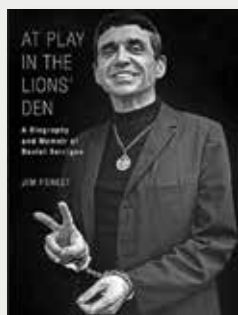
Reviewed by Peter Matheson

BOOK

**B**eware this book! If you have urgent tasks to be done they will be scandalously neglected because Berrigan's extraordinary saga will take you over. I found that, anyway, devouring its 330-odd pages in two great gulps. Couldn't put it down ...

Most of us know of the Berrigans, Daniel and Phil, because of the Ploughshares controversy of 1980. With six others they broke into the GE assembly facility near Philadelphia. Armed with hammers they smashed two missile shields for nuclear bombs, then poured blood onto blueprints and equipment! Priests breaking the law, using violence, subverting the national defence! Even close friends like Thomas Merton found this a reckless action.

The title page of the book shows Dan Berrigan grinning broadly, his manacled hands making a jaunty sign of peace. His whole life was reckless! He dodged bail on one occasion and lived underground for months, pursued by a horde of Hoover's FBI agents. He was



last arrested in New York in April 2011 — by then in his 90s — for demonstrating against the Intrepid War Museum.

What fired this thoughtful, sophisticated, disciplined Jesuit to such extreme acts? Without doubt the heart of his life was the Mass, his communities of friends, including the redoubtable Jesuit Order, his life of prayer, his marvellous poetry:

*I pray you, make new this hireling heart/ O turn  
your face to me / winged, majestic, angelic/ tireless, a tide,  
my prayer goes up . . .*

Written by his friend, Jim Forest, this richly illustrated book reminds us of Berrigan's rigorous, 16-year training as a Jesuit, his international experience, his late awareness of peace issues. Vietnam caught him by the throat. He was imprisoned countless times, his health compromised as a result. He was neither saint nor hero, being anxious before each new sacrificial action.

Perhaps, though, with his quest for a new language for discipleship, for an ethics of resistance, he was a true *doctor ecclesiae*. An inspired teacher, his students loved him. Like Dorothy Day of Catholic Workers, a life of poverty, of care for the poor, was for him the hermeneutical clue to all peacemaking. It is to the vulnerable that an alternative to the "creeping miasma" of war is revealed, that the Kingdom is disclosed. Humour kept him grounded; and with this book we can grin along with him. ■

## Creation and the Cross: The Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril

By Elizabeth A Johnson

Published by Orbis Books, 2018

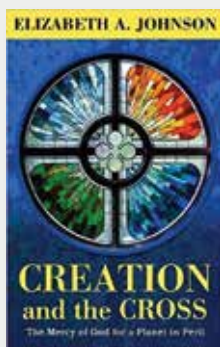
Reviewed by Mary Thorne

BOOK

**R**eading this book, pencil in hand, my excitement mounts and I want to underline nearly every syllable! Contemporary Christian theological thought wrestles with the theology of salvation as atonement for human sin and the difficult image of God it evokes. In *Creation and the Cross*, Elizabeth Johnson closely examines the meaning of this central matter of faith and explores what the cross says to us in this time of advancing ecological devastation.

Elizabeth Johnson is a respected theologian and author of many ground-breaking books. She skilfully re-expresses understandings of faith in fresh and relevant ways, soundly based in scholarship and comprehensive knowledge of the scriptures. Here, she also refers to Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which insists on ecological care as an essential part of a faith-filled life.

The eleventh century theologian Anselm devised the satisfaction theory of atonement. It reflects the way a feudal system of justice ordered society. The theory, outside its cultural context, distorted and eventually became a central tenet of a theological system focused on fall and redemption.



Anselm's theological proposition is set out as a dialogue with a questioning student. Elizabeth Johnson has made use of this literary device, bringing us her re-envisioned theology in the form of an engaging and accessible conversation between Elizabeth and Clara, who seeks a more holistic understanding of salvation. "We are not shackled to the thought forms of any particular culture," says Elizabeth.

Abundantly plain in Christian Old Testament writing is the infinitely good creator God, who moves to save and to make new futures possible. God does not change between the testaments so the nature of God remains faithful, merciful and kind. There is no betrayed honour which must be mollified.

In Jesus of Nazareth, God is present in the flesh of all creation. The same gracious mercy is expressed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The cross did not begin the outpouring of divine mercy to the world. The satisfaction theory is not only inadequate but erroneous.

The conversation culminates in brilliantly drawn, fresh insights into ancient images. We can rethink the significance of incarnation in an ecological direction and stretch our prayer, "bless US", to include the whole community of creation.

This wonderful book deserves to be widely read and widely discussed. Together with science, Christian theology is repositioning the human species more closely within the vulnerable, mortal condition of all the creatures whom God loves. We learn new language with which to speak to our children about the presence of God in our world. ■



## The Heavenly Habit

by Daniel O'Leary

Published by Columba Press, 2017

Reviewed by Judith Anne O'Sullivan

BOOK

Without doubt Daniel O'Leary is a great favourite among those seeking to live a deeper and more integrated life. The centrespread of the May issue of *Tui Motu* featured some beautiful art together with the poem "The Quilt" by Daniel O'Leary. This poem was written to help the author understand the complexity of our lives, especially how the light and darkness of our experiences are intertwined. I have to say when I was first given this book Daniel's poem stole my heart. These words, especially, touched my soul: "my darkest times were now the brightest patches and the 'sinful' pieces held them all together". Like all good poetry, "The Quilt" is contemplative and it reminds me of something I read recently by Dr Barbara Holmes that art and contemplation lead us to wonder, but first they perplex us.

In *The Heavenly Habit* Daniel has invited 10 author-artists to share with us their experience of how grace that finds light in darkness leads us to transformation. This book is not one to be read but rather one to be dipped into like a well full of refreshing water. As we ponder the sentiments we are not reading for information but for transformation. This is where God works best because we are not in control. Grace and



healing are happening in secret.

In his Introduction, Daniel says he hopes this book will brighten the lives of his readers by enabling us to look at what we see as unpleasant or negative in such a way that it will reveal the hidden goodness it carries. Thus, to acquire the "Heavenly Habit" we need to find the gold in our shadow. This same wisdom was expressed by the songwriter Leonard Cohen: "there is a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in". The paradox of life is that we need the darkness to discover the light. *The Heavenly Habit* encourages us to use our imagination and our senses and to let go of the negative — to let go of all those emotions that keep us imprisoned. In letting go or befriending the negative we create a space for the positive.

Having prayed with this book I would strongly recommend it to anyone who desires to grow and longs to choose life. You will feel challenged to put into practice what is written by each author before moving on to the next chapter. I believe it will be especially helpful for people who companion others on the journey towards growth and the fullness of life. Don't read it unless you are aware that as Leonard Boff says: "within every heart abide angels and devils ... they will always dance together within us." If our energy is consumed in negativity, how can our creativity blossom? Develop a habit of encouragement, practise praise, express gratitude, acknowledge gifts and all will be well. Befriending our shadow side and integrating our negative emotions enables us to be awake to the *Heavenly Habit* and allows us to be surprised to discover all that is beautiful in the most unexpected places. ■

## Moemoeā: Māori Counselling Journeys

Edited by: B Swann, E Kotzé, E Davis ,

H Swann, K Crocket

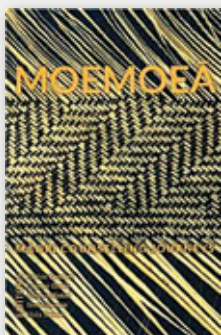
Published by Dunmore Publishing, 2017

Reviewed by Shona Waterhouse

BOOK

Take a breath and turn the pages of *Moemoeā: Māori Counselling Journeys*, a beautifully crafted book, written by people connected to the University of Waikato counsellor education programme. The writers welcome me, regardless of my ethnicity (Pākehā), and invite me in to their space, a Māori space. It is with manaakitanga, which encompasses caring, respect, hospitality, nurturing and support, that I feel that I am being guided through each of the sections and chapters. My small knowledge of te reo is not a handicap: there is a glossary of Māori words and phrases, and so with one finger on this page I am drawn into each chapter.

The book is divided into five sections, which cover different aspects of how the writers work with their clients; all underpinned by Kaupapa Māori. Their model of practice is also woven with a Narrative model of practice, a model that weaves in well with "waewae



tapu in treading gently when we enter others' lives". There is an honouring of being Māori and a desire to restore mana. The writers gently highlight the effects of colonisation on Māori. I feel the weight of how my forbears, and myself in turn, have profited by colonisation. However, this does not seem to be the intention of the writers — rather, they aim to inform and to create a space to understand.

Professor Sir Mason Durie commended the skill of the writers of showing how to weave Māori traditional values and protocols with how Māori live today. Theory is shown through practice. I found the many provided composite case studies helpful as a counsellor and also deeply moving. The writers tell about how they mitigate potential power imbalances; how to use traditional knowledge to find new insights in current situations; how they build on clients' strengths to produce positive change; and how they work as cultural supervisors.

This book gently nudged me to ask myself how safe was I, as a Pākehā counsellor, for my Māori clients? The writers' ability to give a gentle wero, or challenge, makes this book very relevant to all those practitioners who work in the caring professions, and in particular with those who have the privilege to work with Māori, tangata whenua, the first people of Aotearoa. ■

## Hit & Run: The New Zealand SAS in Afghanistan and the Meaning of Honour

by Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson  
Published by Pottan & Burton, 2017  
Reviewed by Dennis Horton

BOOK

If ever there were questions in the public interest that deserve an answer, they are the ones raised by this pair of investigative journalists — Nicky Hager focussing on sources at home and Jon Stephenson tracking down contacts in Afghanistan. In the Preface, the pair write that no one will read the book without wondering about war crimes.

They conclude “that there are reasonable grounds to suspect that New Zealanders and their United States allies were indeed involved in war crimes and other serious breaches of the laws of war. They call for an independent investigation. It is just such a process that Attorney-General David Parker has called for, in announcing in April that an inquiry will be led by Sir Geoffrey Palmer and Supreme Court Judge Sir Terence Arnold.

The events explored in this 160-page book followed the death of a New Zealand soldier in August 2010. Lieutenant Tim O'Donnell was killed in a roadside bomb attack when the patrol he was commanding came under fire from Taliban forces. The book argues that, in retaliation, the New Zealand Special Air Service led a raid on two isolated villages, in search of the fighters they suspected were responsible.



Those involved would have known the rules, which had been freshly issued by the US commander in Afghanistan, in a bid to reduce civilian deaths. Before firing weapons, “the commander approving the strike must determine that no civilians are present.” If there was uncertainty about whether civilians were present, firing was prohibited. “But it all went horribly wrong,” notes the back cover blurb.

“None of the fighters were found but, by the end of the raid, 21 civilians were dead or wounded. Most were children or women, including a three-year-old girl who was killed. A dozen houses had been burnt or blown up. The operation was personally approved by the prime minister via phone from New Zealand.”

A second raid was made, when more houses were extensively damaged, and a suspected insurgent was assaulted after capture, before being handed over to known torturers. “Afterwards no one took responsibility. The New Zealand military denied the facts and went to great lengths to cover things up. This book is the story of these events. It is, at heart, about the meaning of honour; about who we want to be and what we believe in as New Zealanders.”

Here is a book that needs to be read by anyone interested in exploring how New Zealand is involved in troublespots overseas, how and to whom its defence forces are accountable, and how well the population at large is kept informed about such involvement. We shall have to wait for the outcome of the Government's inquiry to see how the questions raised in this book stand up, and to see how future episodes of this kind may be avoided. ■

## Walking on the Pastures of Wonder

by John O'Donohue  
Published by Veritas  
Reviewed by Julie Randall

BOOK

So — there were two Irishmen chatting in a pub (no wait — it's not what you think) or a studio, or up a “holy mountain” in Connemara, Ireland.

John O'Donohue, author, poet and philosopher (and former priest) has written several bestselling books. John Quinn, a former radio broadcaster for RTE Ireland's national radio, is the compiler of this work and a close friend of O'Donohue's.

The chapters of this book were originally recordings of John O'Donohue made for various radio programmes over a period of years prior to his death, and which John Quinn has collated for print. The result of Quinn's skilled editing of these recordings is a natural flow of ideas, a conversational sharing, a distillation of personal experience, wisdom, wonder and imagination.

The chapter on “Absence” caught my eye with the opening phrase: “While we are here in the world, where is it that we are absent from?” Absence, the sister of presence (not the opposite) — defined as “to be elsewhere”, “an echo of some fractured intimacy”, “infused with longing”. O'Donohue

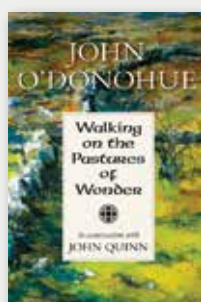
proceeds to describe various states of absence — some perhaps that we seldom think about. Under the heading of Media: “media are always involved in selectivity — who appears on the news and how the news is structured. And who are the people in our society we never see ... the absent ones we never hear from?” Naturally the discourse proceeds to the subject of death, “the ultimate absence”. O'Donohue

mourns the loss of our ability to be aware of and to converse with the dead as “part of the sadness of contemporary society that has lost its mystical and mythological webbing”. The chapter ends with a poem that expresses the desire to know a loved one in their changed state after death — “with your new eyes can you see from within?”

O'Donohue's final complete work, *Benedictus: A Book of Blessings* was published in 2007. Quinn has selected a particular blessing from this work to place at the end of each chapter (which reminds me of *Tui Motu*: “And as is our custom our last word is of blessing”). Other snippets of O'Donohue's poetry are also interspersed throughout offering further imaginative reflection.

*Walking on the Pastures of Wonder* holds a wealth of wisdom and would make a wonderful personal resource for dipping into.

In 2008 John O'Donohue died suddenly in his 53rd year. It is worth checking out John's other works of prose and poetry and his website [www.johndonohue.com](http://www.johndonohue.com) ■







## The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

Directed by Mike Newell  
Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

FILM

I approached this film with interest, as I had previously read the book of the same name and I was keen to see how the filmmakers would translate the novel, which takes the form of a series of letters, into visual terms. Abandoning the epistolary format, director Mike Newell has created an equally compelling story by cutting back and forth between London and Guernsey, the two locales, and between 1946 – which acts as an anchor point for the action – and the earlier wartime years.

At first, I thought this might be a glossy, superficial film, with its immaculate period recreation of wartime London, finely detailed interiors and sweeping vistas of Guernsey. The prospect of a beautiful (and slightly ditz) young protagonist (Lily James) and a complex romantic entanglement did nothing to counter my expectations.

But the film is saved by the many good things it contains – a sobering tale of heroism, cruelty and betrayal in Nazi-occupied Guernsey, well-observed contrasts between metropolitan culture and island life and, most of all, the well-drawn characters that populate the film. In London, there is the trio of up-

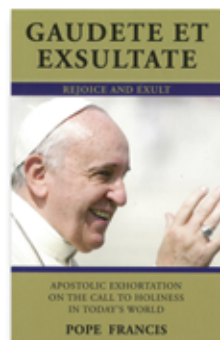
and-coming writer Juliet Ashton, her publisher, Sidney Stark, and her relentless American suitor. The Guernsey cast are equally firmly drawn, especially the literary society members. Juliet's landlady on the island, the priggish and judgmental Charlotte Stimple, provides a foil to these generous-hearted folk.

When Juliet receives a letter out of the blue from Guernsey pig farmer Dawsey Adams, wanting to source a copy of *Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare*, it sets off a chain of events that leads her to the island, still recovering from the privations and barbarity of the Nazi occupation. What she discovers there is a heartbreaking secret that this traumatised community is scarcely ready to deal with, let alone disclose to outsiders.

Like any crisis, especially in

wartime, the occupation has revealed the best and worst in people, and Juliet is instantly pulled into the islanders' story, shaking her loose from her London moorings. Alongside these events runs the parallel tale of the two men vying for Juliet's favour. Her American suitor, an army officer stationed in the capital, is kind-hearted and attentive, but sees her as a trophy, much like the oversized engagement ring he gives her. His rival, by contrast, is so wary of revealing his feelings that he almost leaves his bid too late.

And then there is the love of books and reading that runs through the film like a golden thread. Perhaps books are the real, enduring link between Juliet and her new island family. And hopefully with the audience, too. ■



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# CROSS CURRENTS



by Susan Smith

## Tourism: Blessing or Curse?

The third anniversary of Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'* has just passed, and so it is time to reflect on another aspect of environmental degradation that is currently receiving attention. At the end of May I arrived back in Aotearoa from a month overseas working with Sisters from our African and Asian provinces at our renewal centre in France, and visiting family in Ireland. I was overwhelmed by the length of time airport security checks required, by the AK-armed soldiers in Lyon, and by the sheer volume of peoples, mainly tourists, from almost every nation.

Since the 1980s tourism has increased dramatically. Reasons for this increase include the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the opening of borders in the European Union and the growth of middle classes across the developing world, particularly in China and India, where almost three billion of the world's population live.

Tourism is touted as a great source of revenue and, indeed, is our biggest export earner today, overtaking the dairy industry. Like the dairy industry, it contributes significantly to air, water and land pollution. The same tourism-generated concerns that worry numbers of New Zealanders face other countries anxious about the impact of tourism on fragile eco-systems, on infrastructure and on their way of life.

Venice, for example, has just limited drastically the number of cruise liners that can disgorge passengers into that wonderful city. Spain is considering making tourism more expensive, hoping to maintain income from tourism while reducing tourist numbers. Bhutan insists on only high-quality, high-paying tourists entering their country. This

is preferable to allowing freedom campers with the associated problems they bring – problems that are offloaded onto the local population and local councils.



In 2008 John Key named himself Minister of Tourism. He recognised that tourism was a grand way of making of lots of money in a very short time. That is certainly true, but now some New Zealanders are waking up to the fact that while the bonanza offered by tourism might benefit owners and operators, the associated environmental concerns

become the problem of national and local governments, while the financial benefits are not evenly spread. Of the almost 10 per cent of our population employed in the tourist industry many are in the service industry – receiving notoriously low wages. The biggest rental car operators in Aotearoa are foreign-owned, as are the major hotel franchises and iconic tourist hotels. All this suggests profits soon make their way off-shore. Many of our famous walks and national parks are no longer able to cope with the numbers. But no worries – tourism is basically about making as much money as possible in the shortest possible time.

*The New Zealand Listener* ran a wonderful story recently on how the New Zealand Historical Society was raising money to establish a museum in Le Quesnoy, a small French village close to the Belgian border. It is dedicated to the memory of the almost 12,500 men who lost their lives on the Western Front during World War I. The museum is at the site where 135 soldiers were killed liberating the town.

I was touched by this article and then wondered what to make of the fact that “in 2014, revenue from *battlefield tourism* (my italics) in northern France was worth more than \$12,000,000”? (*NZ Listener* 26 May -1 June, 2018: 25). ■



**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.

## RUGBY'S OTHER STORY

I am deeply disappointed by Susan Smith's opinion in *Crosscurrents*, TM May 2018. I am a mother of a Hurricanes player who is an aspiring All Black and having supported my son and his friends from across the spectrum of New Zealand society I have been humbled by their compassion, love and care for each other and their communities. Many of the players carry the huge responsibility of the welfare of their extended families on their shoulders. For many their deeply rooted Christian faith is the Guiding Light that helps them with the demands of a very short-lived career that can end in a second with an injury or loss of form. It may come as a surprise that violence is not tolerated and does not go unpunished and this is very clearly conveyed by the NZRU and the coaches at all levels. Rugby is a high contact sport and this does not necessarily equate to being a violent sport. The reference to the Blues name is insensitive and could trivialise and stigmatise depression and mental illness as being about "losers" in sport.

*Gail Riccitelli*

## PRAY FOR DANIEL O'LEARY

My news is I've just been diagnosed with colon cancer. My life is already deeply changing at many levels. (With great difficulty!) Say a few prayers please. So glad our paths crossed...

*Fr Daniel O'Leary*

## i am through you so i

by Brother David Steindl-Rast OSB  
Published by Paulist Press, 2017  
Reviewed by Lyndall Brown

BOOK



The title of this book expresses the essence of David Steindl-Rast's life as revealed through every page of the book. His life is steeped in his thirst to encounter the Mystery of God in every experience of life. The book reveals a man who knows the depth of the words: "In him I live and move and have my being" (Acts 17-28).

The book tells the story of David's life through nine themes beginning with "Becoming Human" and ending with "Double Realm". After David has explored each theme it is enlarged upon through an interview with Johannes Kaup. Each theme is explored through personal stories which continue to give glimpses of his humanity, his depth of spirituality and his vision for life. He often quotes from his favourite poets especially Rainer Maria Rilke and these quotes heighten the readers' awareness of David's capacity to live contemplatively.

As I delved into the book it became obvious that David's spirituality is one that reflects the gift of living in the now and that joy and gratitude flow from the discovery of the Mystery of God in and through every event. I felt challenged as I read of his attitude towards those who caused him and his

people suffering during the World War II. His openness to interfaith dialogue is written with appreciation for his own faith and the realisation that those of other faiths, too, are all in search of Mystery. While David's life is deeply contemplative the book reveals the fullness of his active life. We read of how he set up the Centre for Spiritual Studies in 1968 together with Jews, Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims. He realised his own vulnerability was heightened during his time as a hermit when he was confronted with his own self as well as the "tears of the world".

Anyone searching to lead a contemplative life will find this book both inspiring and challenging. David Steindl-Rast shows us how to live contemplatively while being immersed in the issues and realities of life. ■

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## Looking OUT and IN

**A**s I walk down the street to the bazaar in our hometown in India, I see children the size of my nine-year old Jalori, who have been out from pre-dawn collecting discarded Coke and Sprite bottles on the street. They drag huge sacks of plastic bottles up the hill for their family business of recycling. As I walk Jalori to school in Christchurch on a Tuesday morning, I see large yellow bins labelled “recycling” – sentinels along the curb waiting for the City Council truck to collect. It is clean, orderly and seems that it doesn’t lead to exploitation and injustice. Yet, although our Kiwi brand is “clean and green”, I remind myself that New Zealanders actually pollute the planet in a much more significant way on a per capita basis than my neighbours in India.

Each visit back to NZ I notice that council-issued recycle bins are slowly getting bigger to deal with the growing waste packaging each household generates. Recycling is a good thing to do, but not generating the waste in the first place is actually much better for the planet. So that means all of us could be trying to buy less stuff and particularly less new stuff, minimising ordering things online (which arrive with excessive packaging), buying second-hand, borrowing rather than buying and trying to repair rather than replace.

There are other ways our Kiwi lifestyle damages the planet. The most significant of these is probably the (invisible) clouds of carbon dioxide and methane that we produce through our consumption of dairy products, the

cars on our roads and our use of air travel.

A recent article in the journal of *Science* shows that all forms of animal and dairy farming are more harmful to the living world than growing plant protein. Animal farming was found to take up 83 per cent of the world’s agricultural land, but to deliver only 18 per cent of our calories. A plant-based diet reduces the use of land by 76 per cent and halves the greenhouse gases and other pollution caused by food production. (See George Monbiot, “Butchery of the Planet” *Science* June 2018.)

Flying for holidays and travel is something I have loved to do in the past but its time to re-think this. Many of us from New Zealand, a high carbon economy, have “used up” our fair share of the global carbon footprint per capita many times over. Money we spend on an air ticket is eventually a vote for more flights and airports and planes. It puts more carbon into the atmosphere. Some people seek to mitigate their carbon emission by paying for carbon offsets (a practice that has been compared the selling of indulgences) – but then paying for carbon offsets is probably better than not paying for carbon offsets. But best of all is to decide not to fly, and to travel less than we would like to.

Climate change and thinking about the ways we all produce greenhouse gases is often overwhelming. Seeing the negative impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable populations in India (seasonal migration due to drought, flooding, growing inequality) requires me to change my own lifestyle and to encourage all of us to review the ways that we live. If we need motivation from the Scriptures, there are hundreds of Bible verses showing the priority of God’s people acting against social injustice (which is the consequence of global warming). If I am a teacher, I could run a unit on greenhouse gases in science or social studies. If I am a mother at home maybe I do cloth nappies and meet my local member of parliament to discuss the environmental impacts of dairy farming in Canterbury. If I am a retired person investing money I should ensure the funds are not supporting tobacco, military, arms or fossil fuel extraction industries. There are as many ways to do environmental justice as there are people on this planet but we actually have to do it. There will be no stopover in a warm Pacific island as we head back to India this month. Sigh. ■



**Kaaren Mathias** works in community mental health in India where she lives with husband Jeph and two of her four children.



Living Spirit  
may courage  
like startling sunshine  
warm our resolutions  
and encourage our practice

From the *Tui Motu* team