

TUI MOTU

InterIslands

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS 1997-2017



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**Catholic Social Teaching
Solidarity**

The Reformation

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Cover photo by Catherine McLaughlin Bursell. Her daughter, Josephine (11) carrying a sign made by Aurora (13), "To the women who walked before us and those who will march after", at the Women's March on London, January 2017.



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EDITORIAL

Harnessing Community Spirit

Welcome to the new year — and to the 20th year of *Tui Motu* magazine! Over the magazine's lifetime many have ensured that it has thrived through editing, writing, subscribing and promoting. One giant, Elizabeth Mackie OP, has been involved with the magazine and the *Tui Motu* Foundation from the beginning. Now she has retired from assistant editorship and already we are missing her gifts of language and grammar, her well of knowledge, ideas and contacts and her generous presence in our office. We know Elizabeth is stepping away from just the editorial role and not her other contributions to the *Tui Motu* endeavour, and we let her go with gratitude and love.

This issue introduces Catholic Social Teachings for we're all challenged in the political climate overtaking the world. Not long ago, about 20 men and a few women crowded into a corrugated iron shed, the Catholic favela community called their church. They'd built their dwellings along the track to the church and now an opencast mine was eating its way to their doorsteps. The mine owner had approached a few offering to buy their plots so he could expand the mine. The people were anxious and conflicted. They knew how tempting the money was, how easily their refusal to sell could be disregarded, how meagre their legal right to the land if contested and how impossible to find somewhere else. Their gathering aimed to strategise an approach to the local authority to stop the mine's expansion. They called on an educated "Protestant" to facilitate their meeting supported by the Austrian priest and New Zealand parish sister. Finally they agreed about the contents of a letter. Just a few months earlier these adults had learnt to write their names at a church workshop, and now they took it in turn to sign their names on the petition, concentrating hard and checking their identity cards for accuracy. After sending their letter, quite unexpectedly in this case of the poor versus power, the mine owner stopped pressurising for their land and later still, abandoned the mine.

That experience illustrates the context addressed by Catholic Social Teaching and particularly the solidarity of standing together for the common good. The Brazilian case ended well but as Jan Barnett writes, most attempts to change the political path fall on deaf ears. However the efforts themselves strengthen the sense of personal and communal solidarity and ongoing conversion. As our cover photo and Teresa McNamara and Shana Llorando reflect, being in solidarity means tapping into a community spirit of hope and energy for the long haul. This is just one content thread in this issue. You'll find more.

We thank all our contributors, who in sharing their ideas, experience, scholarship, art, craft and spirituality, provide a thought-provoking read. And as is our custom our last word is of blessing. ■

CREATING A VISION FOR *te Tiriti o Waitangi*

During the last 30 years I have delivered Treaty of Waitangi workshops throughout Aotearoa in more than 200 institutions and NGOs to over 50,000 participants, as part of a national Treaty network. Each workshop generated a wide raft of questions – sometimes up to 40. The goal of the workshops was to give participants the information they needed to answer their own questions, or to help them recognise that sometimes there are no easy answers. I found that different groups had their specialist questions.

The list of questions/statements which emerge in a typical workshop sometimes seems simple but is often quite complex. The information presented has to take into account the consequences of broken Treaty commitments made by the Crown from 1840, assimilation, land confiscations, the wars of Sovereignty, the exclusion of Māori language, the banning of the *Tohunga* (spiritual leaders), the imposition of Sovereignty by the Crown, the mono-cultural (*Pākehā*) structure imposed on all our institutions and organisations, more than 150 years of broken Government promises to Māori and all this underpinned by the racism of the majority culture.

However, there was one underlying question which emerged in every workshop. Where/when will it end? What is the Māori vision for *te Tiriti o Waitangi* in Aotearoa?

We have now reached a point in the modern evolution of the *Tiriti* relationship where a constitutional discussion is the next necessary step.

The 2014 Waitangi Tribunal report entitled *The Declaration (of Independence) and the Treaty* concludes with some fundamental statements which would inform this discussion.

- The *rangatira* who signed *te Tiriti o Waitangi* in February 1840 did not cede their sovereignty to Britain. That is, they did not cede authority to make and enforce law over their people or their territories.
- The *rangatira* agreed to share power

and authority with Britain. They agreed to the Governor having authority to control British subjects in New Zealand, and thereby keep the peace and protect Māori interests.

- The *rangatira* consented to the Treaty on the basis that they and the Governor were to be equals . . . with different roles.

In 2016 after six years of national discussion among Māori facilitated by a distinguished working group appointed by *iwi* chairs, *iwi* and *hapū* throughout Aotearoa, a proposal for a process concerning constitutional transformation emerged entitled, *He Whakaaro Here Whakaumu Mō Aotearoa*. (*The Report of Matike Mai Aotearoa – The Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation*.) It offers an inspiring process for moving towards a comprehensive engagement strategy promoting formal and informal discussions across the country.

It is important to note that the sovereignty sought by Māori does not have to be in opposition to the Crown. To date various constitutional propositions and models have been suggested for discussion which open up a range of possibilities for the future. Questions such as: Should New Zealand have a written constitution? Do we need a Māori parliament? Would a *Tiriti*-based Upper House be the way for the *Tiriti* partners to work together?

The recommendations for the next five years include extensive national discussions with *hapū* and *iwi* merging into dialogue with the Crown and Local Government culminating in a *Tiriti* convention in 2021. The focus will be on the need for, and possibilities of, constitutional transformation.

The obvious challenge to non-Māori citizens is to carry out the same informed, thoughtful preparation. It is incumbent on all of us to join our Treaty partners and be informed about this fundamental discussion concerning our national identity.

I would encourage everyone to participate in this debate at every opportunity and at all levels of Aotearoa. ■



Pou Whenua by Aidan, Wellington, NZ.
<https://commons.wikimedia.org>



Robert Consedine: "My Irish revolutionary ancestors and my Catholic experience taught me justice. I have always been surrounded by love and wisdom and trust the invisible world."

Catholic Social Teaching



ANNE TUOHY outlines the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and addresses the three papal encyclicals which promote these teachings.

Catholic Social Teaching emerges from the very heart of our faith tradition. It is the name given to the body of Church teaching that outlines the social and communal rights and obligations of the Catholic community. The United States Catholic Bishops Conference describes Catholic Social Teaching as a central and essential element of our faith. Its roots are in the Hebrew prophets who announced God's special love for the poor and called God's people to a covenant of love and justice. It is a teaching founded on the life and words of Jesus Christ, who came "to bring glad tidings to the poor . . . liberty to captives . . .

recovery of sight to the blind" (Lk 4:18–19), and who identified himself with "the least of these," the hungry and the stranger (See Mt 25:45).

Ten Core Principles

Catholic Social Teaching is built around 10 core principles and is fundamentally concerned with the well-being or flourishing of communities. These principles seek to shape our social and communal relationships in ways that more clearly reflect the love and justice of God.

The central principle of Catholic Social Teaching is the affirmation of the dignity of the human person. This is woven throughout all the Church's

teachings and grounded in the intimate relationship between God, humanity and the world outlined in the first chapters of Genesis. The creation of the human person in the "image and likeness of God" as the final gift of creation makes human life both sacred and relational. So human persons are valuable in and of themselves and flourish when they live in "right relationship" with God, one another and creation.

The other core Catholic Social Teaching principles of the preferential option for the poor; the common good; human rights and responsibilities; responsibilities of Governments; participation; economic

justice; the stewardship of creation; the promotion of peace; and global solidarity, are understood within the framework of human dignity.

These principles are not exclusive nor do they stand in isolation from each other. For example, the preferential option for the poor requires us to honour the dignity of all human persons and advocate for economically just systems. Similarly, a key focus for the principle of the role of government is the protection of human dignity and promotion of the common good. And the pursuit of the common good demands the stewardship of creation and economic justice be taken seriously. The interconnection of these principles and the way they work together can be seen in the following brief exploration of three Social Teaching documents.

Of Revolutionary Change

The first official teaching on social issues in modern times was *Rerum Novarum* (1891) which dealt with the conditions of labour and the rights of workers. Published by Pope Leo XIII this was a ground-breaking document that critiqued the unequal distribution of wealth and the wretched social conditions that accompanied the industrial revolution. *Rerum Novarum* insisted all workers had the right to legal protection from exploitation and argued human dignity and equality of persons was the basic starting point for a moral vision for society. At a time when many believed some people were intrinsically more valuable than others *Rerum Novarum's* claim to a common human dignity was quite radical. Although it is 125 years since the publication of this document the exploitation of vulnerable workers is still happening. The high levels of global migration and increasingly unequal distribution of wealth has created a new group of vulnerable workers and working poor whose plight, like those in the industrial revolution, we are obliged to address.

The Social Concern

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987) engaged the social and ethical concerns of global development in the late twentieth century. It is one of many

Church documents written to draw attention to the dehumanising effects poverty and the unequal distribution of goods has on communities. However, this encyclical was unique as it was the first time Pope John Paul II formally addressed the reality of structural or social sin. If the dignity of the human person is the starting point for a moral vision for society, the way society treats its poorest and most vulnerable members is the moral measure of that society. Accordingly, this document condemned social structures that did not work to reduce poverty or promote a more equitable access to goods and services as inherently unjust.

John Paul II noted the global cooperation so hopefully anticipated in *Populorum Progressio* (1967) had failed to protect the poor.

Global solidarity was seriously weakened as global communities were marked by isolationism, imperialism and exaggerated concerns for security.

Thirty years after *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, the “super-development” of wealthy nations and the lack of practical concern for the poorest and most marginalised groups has been a major factor in widening the gap between the rich and poor. Isolationism and the national security concerns of the 1980s have grown and the commitment to global solidarity has deteriorated to the extent that many countries are unwilling to respond humanely to the plight of the world's refugees.

Praised Be

The latest document in the body of Catholic Social Teaching is *Laudato Si'* (2015). *Laudato Si'* engages the current ecological crisis as an issue of social justice that has urgent social, spiritual, cultural, political, geographic, scientific and economic implications for the entire planet. This wide-ranging

document explores the fracturing of the relationship between humanity and creation, critiquing the inherently unjust social, economic and political attitudes and structures that have allowed the exploitation of creation for the benefit of the powerful.

Pope Francis highlights the deep and essential connections between the health of our human communities and

the health of our planet, emphasising we have ethical responsibilities that extend beyond our personal interests or national borders.

Like *Rerum Novarum* and *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, *Laudato Si'* highlights the reality that it is the poorest communities and the poorest nations who are the first and most deeply affected by unjust systems. So how we organise our societies in economics and politics through policy and law, and how

we treat creation in our access to and use of our common resources, impacts not only on the humanity of others but on the integrity of our own humanity.

The Social Teachings of the Church are not pious or personal demands but concrete and communal expressions of the justice, mercy and compassion of God. And while their key focus is on the flourishing and well-being of communities, they start with the dignity of each and every human person and extend to the well-being of creation itself.

In challenging us to reflect the nature of the God who created us, Catholic Social Teaching clearly reminds us we are ethically obligated to structure our social and communal relationships so that “whatsoever we do for one of the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for God” (Mt 25:40). ■

While the key focus of the Social Teachings of the Church is on the flourishing and well-being of communities, they start with the dignity of each and every human person and extend to the well-being of creation itself.



Professor Anne Tuohy is the Director of The Catholic Institute, a theologian and Head of TCI's Learning and Teaching unit.

SOLIDARITY is COMMITTING OURSELVES to the COMMON GOOD

PETER CULLINANE explains how by practising solidarity we are working towards a more just and equitable society and participating in the care of the planet.

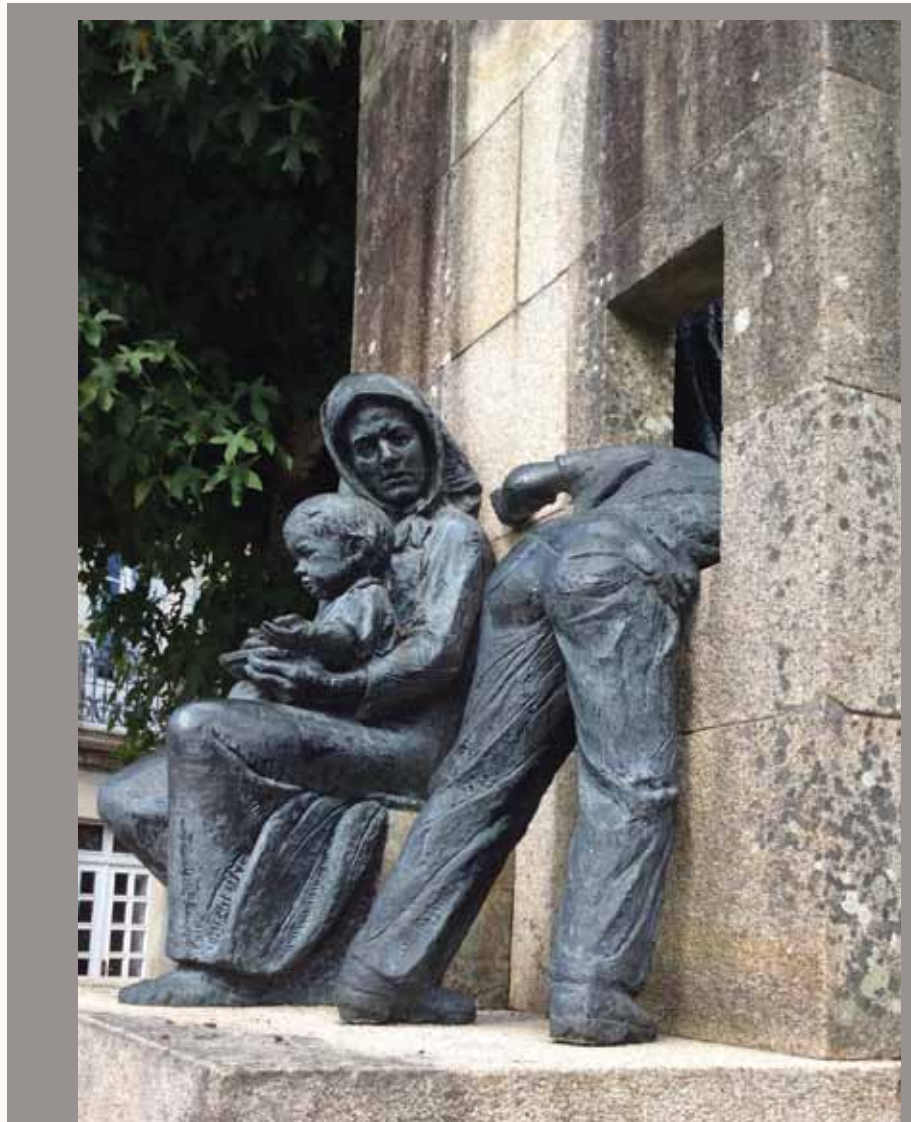
In Catholic Social Teaching (CST) the term “solidarity” makes explicit what is implicit in the Gospel sayings about losing ourselves for the sake of others — and in this way finding our true selves. It is about what it means to be fully human. We cannot be our own true selves outside of right relationships with others and with our environment. But the Gospel saying is not just an anthropological statement. It is a moral requirement. It leads to having life, or losing it; and it is a requirement of Christian discipleship (See Lk 9:23,24).

Pope John Paul II was being consistent with this when he spoke about the social consequences of sin. When sin alienates us from God it also alienates us from ourselves, from others and from the world around us. “By virtue of human solidarity” the sins of individuals can create “structures of sin” that condition others’ conduct. (See *On Reconciliation and Penance*, 1985: 16; *On the Social Teaching of the Church*, 1987: 36)

Called to Social Responsibility

Social responsibility has been the theme of CST since the late 19th century. Modern communications and new technologies have made us more and more aware of our interdependence — with other people and with our environment. Recent Popes have called for these developments to be paralleled by solidarity in the moral sphere.

There are numerous human needs and human rights that are in practice unattainable except through human collaboration. This puts solidarity under the heading of “justice”. It is not a “feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortune of so many people, both near and far ... it is a *firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good*” (*On the Social Teaching of the Church*: 565-66). In other words, it is a moral virtue.



Four Aspects of Social Life

CST brackets four key aspects of social life: *the dignity of the human person*, on which everything else is premised; *the common good*, which is the social conditions needed so that people, as individuals and as communities, can more easily and more fully attain their fulfillment; *solidarity*, which ensures that individuals and smaller communities are not left without the help they need from stronger or more central authorities; and *subsidiarity*, which

insists on the right of individuals and smaller communities to have the scope they need to “participate”, i.e. not be pre-empted or have all their decisions made for them.

These four “permanent principles” are the constants within all life’s changes. But they are not inert. They move according to changing needs. They revolve around each other and support each other — rather like the steps in a dance.

Through a general election, we have an opportunity to fan the embers of our

“firm and persevering commitment to the common good” within our nation and even in our international relationships and across generations. This is because social, political and economic programmes impact on how human beings and human lives are being respected, both within our nation and off-shore; how equitably the goods of the earth and fruits of human labour are being distributed and how the

lofty ideals seem out of reach. At the end of the day, human relationships cannot be governed by the standards of justice. Love will take us further than justice. It was out of love that God entered into relationship with us. If, in turn, our love for others resembles God’s love for ourselves, it will be a love that goes beyond what was ever owed to us, or deserved. It

others that the Council so memorably claimed on our behalf:

“The joys and the sorrows, the griefs and anxieties, of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.” (Vat II, *The Church in the Modern World*: 1).

It all comes back to what God’s love for us is like — and who is included. God’s life is ecstatic love. Eastern Christians from earliest times liked to picture this as dancing (*perichoresis* — dancing around). Creation only came about because God wanted to share the divine life and the joy that it gives. God, as it were, looked outwards — and we came to be and were invited into the dance.

Solidarity — “The joys and the sorrows, the griefs and anxieties, of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.”

We are true to these origins when we also look outwards. Commenting on Seamus Heaney’s poetry, Australian poet, Peter Steele, says: “Celebration, I take it, is an act of solidarity; the dancers in its ring face outwards.”

God stepped right out when “taking on human nature, Christ bound the whole human family to himself as a family” (Vat II, *Decree on Laity*: 8). Our solidarity with Christ is so real that Christ’s destiny becomes ours. Along the way, what we do or fail to do for others, we do or fail to do, for Christ (Mt 25:31–46; Acts 9:3–4). For Christians there could hardly be a more cogent reason for taking very seriously our increasing interdependence and the moral responsibilities that flow from it. ■



Bishop **Peter Cullinane** is a theologian and the former bishop of Palmerston North. In “retirement” he continues his pastoral ministry.



Sculpture in Plaza del Cotón, Negreira, Galicia, Spain.

planet is being cared for. All these pertain to the common good, i.e. to the social conditions needed for people to attain their fulfillment more easily and more fully.

“Citizens should develop a generous and loyal devotion to their country, but without any narrowing of the mind. In other words, they must always look simultaneously to the welfare of the whole human family.” (Vat II, *The Church in the Modern World*: 75)

Love Flavours Justice

But there is a sense in which these

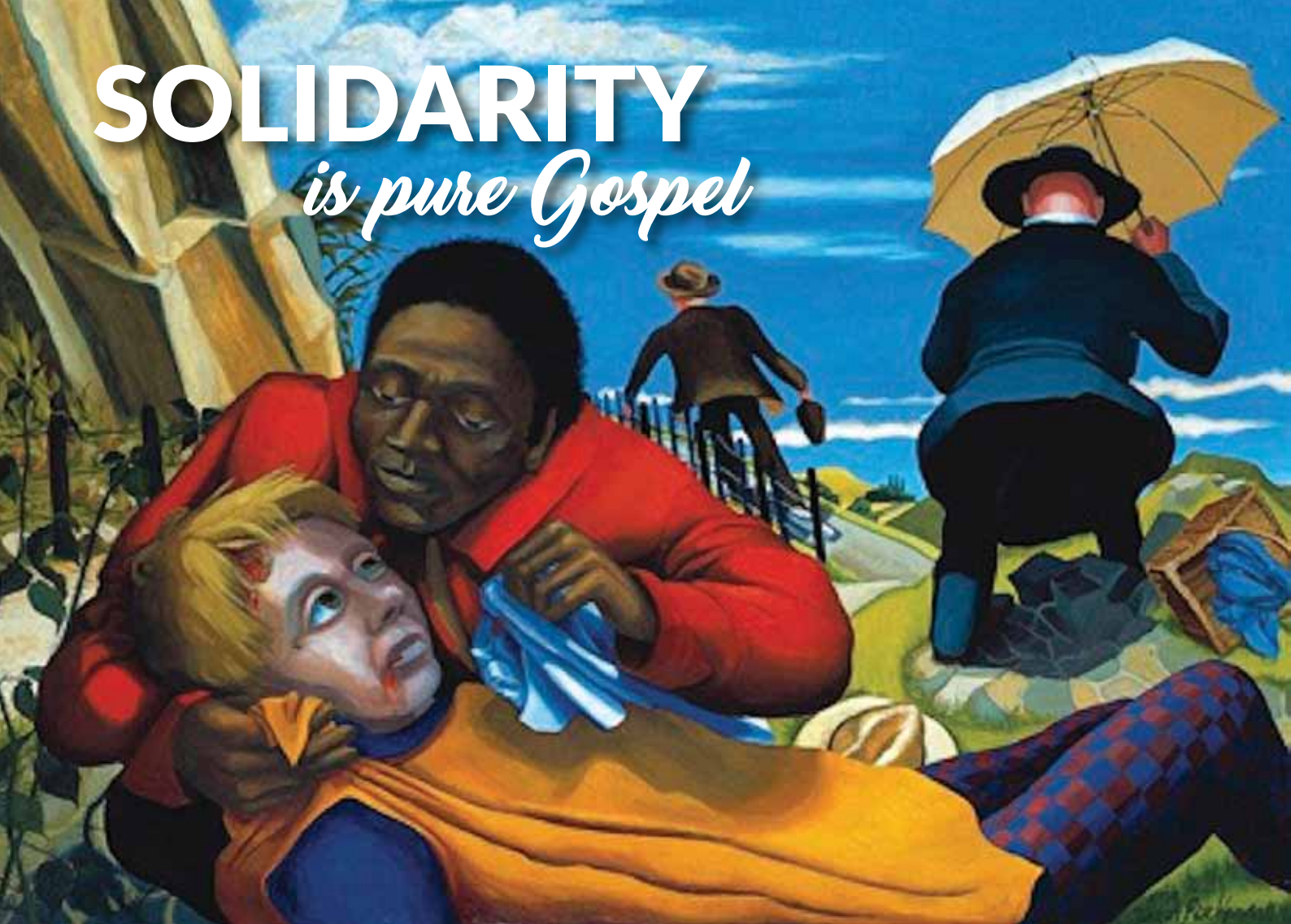
will not easily excuse itself and it will not be carefully measured. God loved us “while we were still sinners.” (Rom 5:8). This kind of love makes new starts possible; it changes everything.

Compassion Motivates Justice

This is where the discussion on solidarity needs to go. It cannot be separated from compassion. Anything less will not be sufficient to motivate us for a “firm and persevering commitment to the common good.” It will not bring us to that deep identification with

SOLIDARITY

is pure Gospel



JAN BARNETT writes of how the values and heritage of solidarity are kept alive with new strategies and expressions in this time.

The very mention of solidarity reminds me of the Solidarity Movement in Poland, the Civil Rights in the USA, the Parihaka resistance in New Zealand, the Salt March of Mahatma Gandhi and the Freedom Bus Rides in Australia. All of these movements — broad, non-violent, social and political — demonstrate the power and immense importance of solidarity as a way of changing attitudes, culture and structures.

During the Communist rule in Poland we're told it was common practice to arrest people randomly after which they could be imprisoned, tortured, "disappeared". In such cases family and friends often felt powerless to take action. However, on the night of a "disappearance", neighbours would light a candle and place it in their front window as a symbol of solidarity.

As I've reflected on this custom I've been struck over and over by the thought of those tiny candles flickering across cities, towns and villages, giving hope, strength and consolation to the families of the "disappeared". Perhaps it was in such support that the Solidarity Movement was strengthened.

Pope Francis Promotes Solidarity

Solidarity is a strong theme in Pope Francis's message on the 50th World Day of Peace. In it he urges all leaders across the world "to choose solidarity as a way of making history and building friendship in society". He believes that we are in the midst of a piecemeal World War III, characterised by violence, the poisonous effects of globalisation, individualism and a culture of indifference where we have

"forgotten how to weep". He speaks of the ethical urgency of treating refugees, the environment and the economy, with respect and compassion. He calls us to live in solidarity with a fragile earth and with our brothers and sisters who suffer. What apposite encouragement for this time!

If the past year has taught us anything, it is that we are in for a turbulent 2017. As we prepare to face the almost overwhelming effects of the new American presidency, the impact of Brexit, and the rise of populist and extremist leaders, Francis has modelled three very helpful ways of moving forward.

In the first place, he speaks his truth courageously as he sees it. Secondly, he witnesses to his beliefs in the way he lives his life. Thirdly, he uses every means in his power to influence people and structures.

Francis has often used the parable of the Good Samaritan to reflect on current realities. His grief at levels of poverty, global indifference and the way that refugees have been treated

across the world encapsulates the call to each of us.

Dinah Roe Kendall's painting picks up the "pure gospel" described by the pope — the compassion and solidarity that "raises up" — as well as the cold disregard and shamefaced walking away that is also part of the parable and which is named and condemned by Francis. He calls us to "weep for those who are suffering", to be people of "healing and hope".

Called to Act in Solidarity

As we begin 2017 we are called again to commit to "solidarity in action" with those who are suffering now. These include individuals and asylum seeker families unjustly imprisoned in detention centres; Indigenous peoples struggling for their rights; people who are poor and pushed to the edges of society by unjust structures and taxes that favour the wealthy; our broken and fragile earth at the mercy of humanity's rape.

All of these needs are urgent calls and will form our agenda for this year. It is the issue of asylum seekers and refugees, however, that is of increasing urgency at this time.

Australia's treatment of asylum seekers has been reprehensible. It has treated as criminals desperate people fleeing from violence, torture and death in their own countries and seeking protection in Australia. The detention and imprisonment of innocent people, especially on Nauru and Manus Island, and the measures taken to conceal the realities of their suffering have been condemned by religious and community leaders, by doctors, lawyers and human rights groups, by teachers and social workers who have accompanied them and by the Human Rights Commission and the United Nations. None of this has had any impact on the Government. It has used asylum seekers as scapegoats for its own political ends.

It seems to us that the call to solidarity in action is clear, if undoubtedly daunting. It follows the action we have previously taken to stand with asylum seekers and refugees.

Offering Sanctuary

In 2016 the Sisters of St Joseph joined

other religious and community groups to offer sanctuary to asylum seekers currently in Australia. We were aware that the right to sanctuary, while not now recognised under common law, is a biblical concept that had legal basis during the middle ages, and we believed that it provided an unequivocal opportunity for us to express our opposition to the Government's stance. The Sisters had offered sanctuary before, to the Timorese in the 1990s, and this initiative stated very clearly that we were deeply concerned about the treatment of asylum seekers in this country.

We were particularly challenged by the faces of the 37 babies born in



Accompanying the people like the Good Samaritan, who washes, cleans and raises up his neighbour – this is pure gospel. – Pope Francis

Australia and the 267 other asylum seekers who were in danger of being sent to Nauru.

We knew that these tiny babies and their families could be from our own families, our own friends as it was only an accident of birth that had led to their plight and possible danger.

Individual and Group Action

Throughout the year we worked on a number of strategies in schools and local communities which supported individuals and families in detention centres and in community detention, and at the same time, advocated for change.

Some accompanied young people and families on their difficult journeys. Some joined with "Love makes a Way" and were involved in prayer protests in politicians' offices and in the foyer of Parliament House, Canberra, claiming that "love could make a way". We phoned and spoke with political leaders. We used our networks of "Writing Rings for Righting Wrongs" to encourage those with similar concerns to join us in letter-writing, phone calls, protests, rallies and prayer.

Mostly, we felt that our attempts fell on deaf ears politically, but our efforts towards "healing and hope" strengthened the sense of personal and communal solidarity and the ongoing conversion that became part

of the process.

There is little doubt that the Australian Government has increased its harshness, not just with asylum seekers but also towards other residents in this country. It has escalated the visa cancellation of those who have spent more than 12 months in prison. Last year it deported more than 1,200 people from Australia — almost 700 to New Zealand. Many had been in Australia since childhood, seen themselves as Australians and have family here.

The New Zealand Prime Minister raised the concerns of the New Zealand Government with the Australian Prime Minister, citing the

cases of hundreds of New Zealanders currently held in detention centres and facing deportation. In spite of that representation, however, the number has simply increased.

In this highly charged area, we're supporting the recommendations of the Commonwealth Ombudsman and are urging the Australian Government to introduce more just policies.

Continuing to Choose Solidarity

At a time when political leaders dismiss the demands for greater justice as little more than "bleeding heart rhetoric", we continue to believe we are called to offer solidarity in action and to stand with those who are being demonised. In Francis's words, this involves "choosing solidarity and making history and building the sense of sisterhood and brotherhood in society a clear priority". Without doubt it is an ongoing challenge to us all. ■

Painting: *The Good Samaritan*, © 1994 by Dinah Roe Kendall, Used by permission of ACTA Publications www.actapublications.com All rights reserved.



Jan Barnett RSJ is the co-ordinator of the Josephite Justice Network in Australia and serves with a number of social justice groups.



ACTING WITH PASSION, EMPATHY AND CREATIVE COURAGE

Diocesan leaders TERESA MCNAMARA and SHANA LLORANDO share the challenges and joy of engaging young people in solidarity.

This generation of young people have many naysayers. Scores of articles describe “millennials” as apathetic, individualistic and callow and swapping out “solidarity” for “self-fulfillment” in their vocabulary. Yet the young adults of our diocese paint a different picture — one of passion, empathy and creative courage.

Through our work as members of the Auckland Catholic Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team we have been privileged to establish a young adults group which focuses on advocacy, called Pope Francis One (PF1). It’s named after our current pope for his own advocacy efforts on world issues, such as climate change and the refugee crisis. The New Zealand Bishops Framework for Catholic Ministry with youth and young adults calls us to advocacy, as well as justice and service. Many regard these focuses as the harder end of ministry. As leaders, our role is to walk with the young people, supporting the decisions and actions they take and being available as mentors.

Getting Involved

In 2016, PF1 participated in a number of advocacy events, including the *HopeWalk* (to raise awareness of suicide and suicide prevention) and *Park Up for Homes* (spending the night in cars in support of homeless families). These issues hit our young adults close to home. Most, if not all of our young adults, were affected by suicide and/or homelessness, or knew of people who were touched by them. Without any prompting from us, they took the initiative to participate in these activities.

Solidarity calls us to walk with one another, hand in hand, not at arms length.

This means being authentic, empathetic and compassionate, to seek to understand the needs of our brothers and sisters and be real with them.

This highlighted that by choosing issues they were passionate about, our young adults took ownership of their roles as mouthpieces and embraced the responsibility of not only making decisions but of acting on the political stances and causes they wanted to support.

Advocating Alongside

Solidarity calls us to be passionate about the problems our brothers and sisters face and to call them our own. It is “his”, “her” or “their” problem no longer — it is “ours” too. Our young adults were passionate about the issues their community faced and instead of being apathetic or swaying to popular opinion and political tides, they chose to rise above and make advocacy their own and in turn, stood in solidarity with those in need.

PF1 was also involved in the 2015 *Hikoi for Homes* which raised awareness of the lack of affordable, safe and decent housing in Auckland. At a debrief session after the *Hikoi* they voiced their opinions about the integrity of the politicians who took part. They found that some politicians were there for the

wrong reasons — looking only to make an appearance and to push their political agendas. The young people thought they should have been speaking to the people affected so as to understand their situations and seek genuine solutions to their problems.

Walking Alongside

Our young adults showed us that they can spot inauthenticity a mile away and that they care about people and issues; not just about “being present”. Solidarity calls us to walk with one another, hand in hand, not at arms length. This means being authentic, empathetic and compassionate, to seek to understand the needs of our brothers and sisters and be real with them.

Taking Risks for Justice

We were very blessed to have the opportunity to present to the Auckland Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission. Our tall task was to share the issues youth are concerned about with that group of people who have been heavily involved in advocacy for years. Some may have thought our group's lack of experience was a disadvantage. However they pooled their talents and injected creativity into their presentations with talks, props and audience participation.

The response was staggering. We were encouraged, relieved and simultaneously overwhelmed seeing the Commission give our young ones a standing ovation for their emotional testimony on the Living Wage. The group asked the Commission to print pamphlets about the Living Wage to distribute in parishes for people to read, and to invite priests all over the diocese to preach about the issue. The Commission heeded their call to action.

Solidarity Calls for Courage

Solidarity beckons us to use our voices courageously, no matter how incapable or insignificant we may feel. When our group stood up with courage for what they believed in, it rallied others to action and is making a difference.

If other millennials are anything like the young adults of PF1, then they are definitely disproving their media label and are living out solidarity. They are getting their hands dirty, standing up for and with their afflicted brothers and sisters. This means owning issues as their own, getting in proximity to problems and people and stepping out of their comfort zones and speaking out.

Pope Francis once described the ideal Church as one “which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than . . . clinging to its own security”. He may very well be describing the youth of today better than the disparagement of the naysayers. ■

Photo: PF1 members at *HopeWalk* raising awareness for suicide [photo supplied].



Shana Llorando (left) and **Teresa McNamara** (right) are members of the Auckland Diocesan Catholic Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team.

BOOK REVIEW

Ring Around Rosie

By Emily Pattullo

Published by New Age

Publishers, 2014

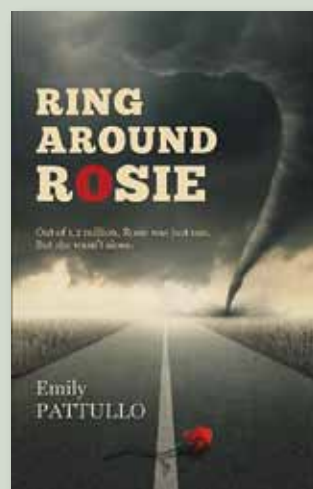
Reviewed by Claire McGivern

Emily Pattullo's young adult novel confronts the issue of child trafficking in London. With strong teenage protagonists it is sure to appeal to young adults who will enjoy the fast-paced almost-thriller style.

Rosie, an inquisitive teenager with a troubled past, is kidnapped by human traffickers and finds herself facing prostitution along with other helpless teens and young children. While she realises that her own curiosity and hunger for adventure led to her plight she is horrified by the stories of the other victims. Children who have been accused of witchcraft, and would face certain death in Nigeria, are offered an escape to a new life. Desperate parents with too many children to feed succumb to the offer of money for one or more of their family. The promised new life turns out to include imprisonment, hunger, physical abuse, drugging and often prolonged and repeated sexual assault.

Rosie's brother Ted, and Martha, a student journalist, are determined to find Rosie and to bring some light to bear on trafficking which is the second largest source of illegal income worldwide — exceeded only by drugs. Given the target audience, the author is careful not to describe the sexual content but rather to suggest the abuse and violence that occurs. The traumatising effects of the abuse are obvious in the lack of fight or will to escape in the characters who have been worn down by the continued degradation meted out to them. The book highlights how we take so many of our freedoms for granted with scant thought for those whose choices in life are virtually non-existent.

A self-published work which was initially released as an e-book, *Ring Around Rosie* was a finalist in the 2014 Best Kindle Book Awards. This novel draws the reader's attention to a challenging issue which it is easy to overlook. However, the convenient and often far-fetched coincidences that are woven through the plot, left this reader disappointed that the author had not taken more time to develop the plot and the characters further. ■



The SPIRITUAL IMPACT of SEXUAL ABUSES

ROCÍO FIGUEROA ALVEAR and DAVID TOMBS report on how sexual abuse was disclosed and is being handled in a Society of Apostolic Life in Peru.

Church sexual abuse crimes, and the institutional cover-ups that often accompany them, have been widely reported in Canada, the United States, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Australia and elsewhere. Until recently Latin America has received relatively little international publicity, but this is now changing. A number of lay movements and Catholic communities have faced allegations and their leaders have been publicly denounced.

Three cases have received particular attention: the Legionaries of Christ in Mexico, the Karadima group in Chile, and *Sodalitium Christianae Vitae* in Peru. These three communities are part of the birth and growth of new movements that occurred in Latin America following Vatican II. Each of these three new movements was initially heralded for its success and growth in attracting new members, and yet the founder of each has subsequently been accused of serious sexual abuses. While all the members of the Legionaries of Christ and Karadima community are priests, the members of *Sodalitium Christianae Vitae* (henceforth known as *Sodalicio*) are mostly lay Catholics, and the founder is a layperson, which makes it particularly noteworthy.

Foundation of Sodalicio

Luis Fernando Figari, founded *Sodalicio* in 1971 as a Society of Apostolic Life within the Catholic Church. *Sodalicio* has a presence in schools and churches, and runs retreat facilities and Youth Centres with communities in Peru, Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Italy and the United States. Although the members are mostly lay Catholics the Society also includes clergy.

Abuse Disclosed

In 2010 the journalist Pedro Salinas, a former *Sodalicio* member, accused Figari of physical, psychological and sexual abuse. In late 2010, Figari resigned as superior of *Sodalicio* "for health reasons" and was sent to Rome. This was the same year that the cause of beatification of Germán Doig, Vicar General and number two within the organisation, was suspended. Doig himself had died in 2001.

The following year, the Peruvian newspaper *Diario 16* published testimonies of sexual abuse accusing Germán Doig. Despite these allegations in February 2011, *Sodalicio* took years before they offered reasonable support to the victims, and this was only initiated after strong criticism of *Sodalicio* in the press.

In October 2015, Salinas

published the book *Mitad Monjes, Mitad soldados. Lo que el Sodalicio no Quiere que Sepas* (Half Soldiers, Half Monks: What the Fellowship Does Not Want You to Know), which he had written with the journalist Paola Ugaz. The book gathers 30 testimonies of abuse committed by the founder, Luis Fernando Figari, and other leaders of the organisation over an almost 30-year period. Of these testimonies, five narrate episodes of sexual abuse and three accuse the founder Figari as the perpetrator. According to his book, three men lodged complaints in 2011 with the Peruvian Church Tribunal alleging Figari sexually abused them when they were minors. The three presented their cases to the Vatican and the Court of Lima in 2011, but were still waiting for a response.

Sodalicio Response

In response to the book, *Sodalicio* announced that the Vatican had launched an investigation into Figari six months earlier in April 2015 and admitted that the sexual abuse allegations against its founder and other senior members were "plausible".

In an online video *Sodalicio's* current leader, Alessandro Moroni, apologised to victims acknowledging that they had "received no satisfactory reply" from the group for years and



declared that they considered Figari guilty of the allegations of abuse against him and therefore a *persona non grata* in the Society.

At this point *Sodalicio* hired experts to offer psychological assistance to victims and initiate a review. It appointed a special commission that included lawyers, a psychiatrist and a Peruvian bishop. They interviewed more than 50 former members of *Sodalicio* who denounced physical, psychological and sexual abuse. On the 16th April 2016 the Commission published a ten-page report in which they explained the abuses and the factors that enabled the sexual abuse within *Sodalicio*.

Report Findings

The Commission affirms that “the damage was perpetrated in a situation in which the superiors assumed a ‘dominant position’ asking for perfect and absolute obedience achieved by the practice of extreme discipline. ... This way of exercising power was an attempt to destroy their individual will”. Although there were complaints and denunciations, says the report, the leaders failed to act, covering up the abuses in a “complicit silence” over many years.

Because the abuse was perpetrated over 25 years ago, the statute of limitations makes it impossible for Figari to be prosecuted by civil authorities today. Meanwhile the Vatican investigation of Figari is still ongoing.

Tasks Now Necessary

At least six interrelated tasks are necessary in the aftermath of cases of this sort. They include: investigating what happened to establish the truth about both the original events and any subsequent cover-up; an acknowledgement of institutional failings and individual misdeeds; holding perpetrators to account in law for any crimes committed; establishing new structures and policies that make future abuses more difficult; attention to reparations; the offer of effective

psychological support and pastoral care for survivors.

To help inform this sixth task, the Centre for Theology and Public Issues at the University of Otago has just published a report drawing on interviews with eight survivors from the *Sodalicio* case. The interviewees are now all middle-aged but had been involved with *Sodalicio* when they were younger. Many, but not all, of the interviewees

The spiritual impact of abuse should be included in any full understanding of impact and consequences. This appreciation is particularly relevant in instances of church-related sexual abuse but also extends to all forms of sexual abuse.

had featured in the Salinas book. The new interviews provided the opportunity to explore the psychological impact of the abuse further and investigate the consequences for their sense of faith and their relationship with God.

As one of the authors, Dr Figueroa, has a particularly close knowledge of the case and many of those involved. She was previously a member of the Marian Community of Reconciliation (MCR), a Catholic Association of lay consecrated women, which is the female branch of *Sodalicio*. Figueroa served as the MCR General Superior for 9 years (1991-1998). Since 2006 various male victims from *Sodalicio* have contacted her to denounce sexual abuse perpetrated by members of *Sodalicio*.

In 2006 she began an investigation that continued over a six-year period and during this time she found more victims. She helped these victims to present accusations against the founder, Luis Fernando Figari, to the ecclesiastical court in Lima and also to the Vatican in 2011. During this time Dr. Figueroa developed a relationship of trust with the victims and this was a crucial factor in making the interviews possible. What they have disclosed needs to be known more widely within the churches.

Abuse Impacts on Person's Spirit

One described the impact as “catastrophic”. When he was asked about his faith in God he answered: “It

gives me too much pain and sadness to feel that he abandoned me and just to ponder the possibility that he failed me is unbearable.”

In cases where participants did not consider themselves religious the spiritual impact was less dramatic and primarily served to confirm their aversion to religion. One of the interviewees affirmed: “I am not religious because of the abuse. And not only because of the abuse but also because of the cover-up and the corruption of the Church. It has had a huge impact on my religious life.”

Revelations of the prevalence of sexual abuses in a wide range of institutional contexts, both Church and secular, are continuing to emerge. However, the spiritual impacts of sexual abuse are a largely neglected topic. This neglect ignores the way that physical, psychological and spiritual impacts often occur together and can magnify one another. One lesson from this report is that the spiritual impact of abuse should be included in any full understanding of impact and consequences. This appreciation is particularly relevant in instances of church-related sexual abuse but also extends to all forms of sexual abuse. This is especially important when survivors have a strong sense of personal faith and/or communal religious identity. ■

Note: In January 2017 *Sodalicio* offered over \$2 million to 66 victims for counselling and getting into work. The Superior General said: “For us, the main responsibility lies not with the Vatican, nor with the Public Ministry. The primary responsibility for repairing the damage is ours.” However, the General Attorney in Peru has halted the investigation in the case which created a public furore and press coverage.



Dr Rocío Figueroa Alvear is Lecturer in Theology at Good Shepherd College, Auckland.



Professor David Tombs is Howard Paterson Professor of Theology and Public Issues at the University of Otago.

“**T**he hidden God, the mysterious God, is not distant and absent: he is always the God who is near.”

This is one of the many aphorisms or short sayings that the great French Jesuit, Henri de Lubac, wrote about theology in his later years. Henri de Lubac was one of the significant forerunners of Vatican II and was elected a Cardinal under Pope John Paul II in 1983. However, this was only after years of suffering criticism and censure by those who promoted the official Neo-Thomist theology that was favoured exclusively before Vatican II. He later wrote, perhaps in response to this: “The coating of hypocrisy is never so thick as round the idea of God.”

Early Life

Henri de Lubac was born in Cambrai, France on 20 February 1896 and joined the Society of Jesus in 1913 at Lyon.

An experience that changed him deeply was being badly wounded in the head during World War I when he was a conscript soldier in the French army. His experience in the trenches haunted him for the rest of his life and drew him to address the questions of contemporary people, believers and unbelievers, like those he had fought alongside. This formative encounter would later lead him to reflect in his book *The Discovery of God*: “God is the pole that draws humanity, and even those who deny him in spite of feeling that attraction, bear witness to God.”

Nazi Resistance

Lubac was ordained in 1927 and completed further post-doctoral studies in Rome from 1927-1929. He had a long teaching ministry in the Catholic University of Lyon from 1929-1961 which was interrupted only by his activities with the Resistance during the WW II Nazi occupation of France. He was hunted and forced to leave Lyon and hide in Vals, near Puy. Throughout this time he assisted with the publication of *Témoignage Chretien* (*Christian Testimony*) an underground journal of Nazi resistance. He was convinced that Christianity was incompatible with the philosophy and activities

GOD IS ALWAYS NEAR



JANETTE GRAY gives a glimpse into the life of the French theologian **Henri de Lubac (1896-1991)** whose writings and research played a key role in shaping the Second Vatican Council.

Henri de Lubac SJ by Ellen Reilly
Image used with permission
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of the Nazi regime and the Vichy government in southern France. His close friend and fellow theologian, Yves de Montcheuil SJ, was ambushed and shot while ministering to the Resistance fighters.

Thinking a Bigger God

Lubac spoke out and wrote against the anti-Jewish and anti-Christian paganism of the Nazis. He was certainly not a secluded academic out of touch with the challenges of the twentieth century. Lubac's concerns were about recovering a more lively theological response to contemporary issues than that provided by the official Catholic theology and teaching of the time.

He reflected: "To some people God is the one who lets them sleep in peace, a reassuring word which dispenses them from the fatigue of inquiry. To others God is the one who tears them from the 'false security' in which, according to Pascal, the world lived before the coming of Christ." His work in *The Drama of Atheistic Humanism* (1944) was a sympathetic yet rigorous dialogue with atheism.

His earliest interests were in recovering the theologies of the Early Church Fathers to demonstrate the diversity that is Catholic theology. This began the *Ressourcement* (return to the sources) initiative in 1942 where with Jean Daniélou SJ he began publishing early Greek and Latin texts with commentaries. As Susan Wood explained in her book on De Lubac's work: "De Lubac's fundamental conviction is that in order for Christianity to be adaptable to a modern generation it must first discover its essence through a return to the originating creative thought of its doctrines and institutions."

Offering a New Theology

Lubac published the ground-breaking book *Catholicism* in 1937 but its full impact only came after WW II. *Catholicism*, through its presentation of a broader idea of the Catholic faith, and *Supernatural* (1946), offered a "new theology". A summary of his teaching in both books is found in his following words: "Thus the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ,

a supernatural unity, supposes a previous natural unity, the unity of the human race. So the Fathers of the Church, in their treatment of grace and salvation, kept constantly before them this Body of Christ, and in dealing with creation were not content only to mention the formation of individuals, the first man and the first woman, but delighted to contemplate God creating humanity as a whole."

These ideas of the emerging school of thought called the *Nouvelle Théologie* were indirectly condemned by Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Humani Generis* in 1949.

"The mystical impulse is not a luxury. Without it the moral life would run the risk of becoming a form of repression, asceticism a withering dryness, docility a form of sleep and religious practices a routine, a matter of display if not fear."

There followed for Lubac what he called "the dark years" which lasted nearly a decade. Throughout this time he was prevented from teaching and publishing further theology. So he turned his interest to the study of Buddhism writing the first of three books, *Aspects of Buddhism* in 1951. And he promoted the works of his Jesuit palaeontologist friend, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Eventually he was rehabilitated as an expert theologian at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) working alongside other significant theologians of the day, Karl Rahner SJ, Hans Urs von Balthasar and Yves Congar.

Drawing from the Deepest Source

In *The Discovery of God*, English readers can find his most accessible and continuing relevant writing. Lubac's reflection on contemporary atheism shows an openness to objections to Catholic faith that even speak to more recent abuses and

controversies: "To reject God because humanity has corrupted the idea of God, and religion because of the abuse of it, is the effect of a sort of clear-sightedness which is yet blind. For surely the holiest of things are inevitably destined to be the victims of the worst abuses. Religion, which is its own source and origin, must continue to purify itself."

The German theologian Cardinal Josef Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, wrote in the preface of the 1988 edition of *Catholicism*: "De Lubac makes visible to us in a new way the fundamental intuition of Christian Faith so that from this inner core all the particular elements appear in a new light . . . Whoever reads de Lubac's book will see how much more relevant theology is the more it returns to its centre and draws from its deepest resources."

De Lubac is concerned to emphasise the centrality of love and God's love for us as manifested in all loves, but he also cautions: "But do not rush to the conclusion that you know what love is."

Lubac was a theologian who always integrated his insights with his spirituality. He believed that all people are called to a mystical relationship with God: a universal experience of union with God that goes beyond just living moral lives. He said: "The mystical impulse is not a luxury. Without it the moral life would run the risk of becoming a form of repression, asceticism a withering dryness, docility a form of sleep and religious practices a routine, a matter of display if not fear."

Like all true theologians searching for understanding of God, de Lubac was moved to humility before the generous reach of God towards us, as he puts it: "Sometimes we think we are looking for God. But it is always God who is looking for us and he often allows himself to be found by those who are not looking for him." ■



Janette Gray RSM died on Christmas Eve 2016. RIP. She had a PhD in Theology (Cambridge) and taught at Yarra Theological Union within the University of Divinity, Melbourne.





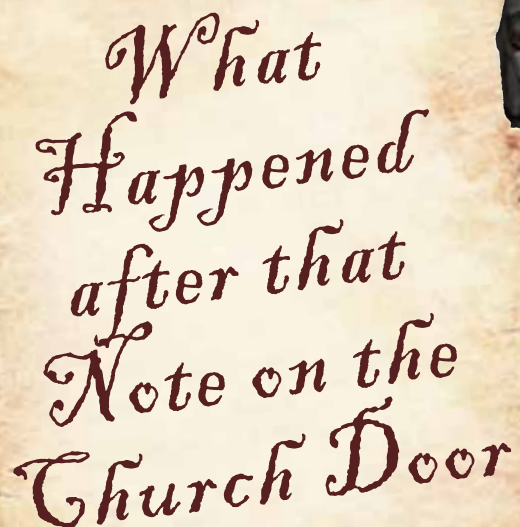
Dawn in a Gum Tree Forest

High in the tree-tops, restive, you wait, primed for
sun's first peep over the hills. Suddenly,
all your alarms go off together: chirping, chortling,
squealing, squawking, joyous pandemonium.
On sunlit wings gliding, swirling – colours cascading –
in and out; or in mid-air hanging
for a bird's-eye view
of me and the morning's menu.

You are many, you are one;
you are the planet awakening:
so many bits cutting loose, lifting off,
flitting about, having your fling.
As the sun climbs higher you'll go quieter
wherever you fill in your day.
In fields or forest, "birds of the air bless the Lord" –
your song, my song – this we do together.

When shadows grow longer you'll know it's time
to gather again, loud in your chatter,
where trees hold their arms high, awaiting you
and whispering leaves bring on your dreams.
Do it, do it again, do it until gently you fall
to the forest floor, whence others will spring
to dance and sing to the Day
when night will be no more.

— Peter Cullinane



What Happened after that Note on the Church Door

As we enter the 500th year of the Protestant Reformation TIM COOPER provides a broad summary of the issues, characters and political situations involved at the start.

October 31 this year will mark 500 years since Martin Luther picked up his hammer and nailed his 95 Theses to the church door in his German parish of Wittenberg. Thus began the Protestant Reformation, not that Luther had any idea he was doing that at the time. This was merely a public — and detailed — objection to the practice of indulgences that had by then become a crass exchange of money in return for the forgiveness of sin and time remitted in Purgatory. So what turned this into something so much bigger than Luther ever imagined?

Impact of Technology

Printing was a relatively new invention. Someone took Luther's 95 Theses and printed them in vast quantities. As events escalated Luther enjoyed his notoriety. Within just a few years copies of his books numbered in the millions. The point is that once his ideas were released into the environment no one could call them back, not even him. Before long he was chastened as he watched people take up his own ideas in ways he never expected or intended.

Impact of Personality

Luther was hardly one to back down when challenged. And he

was challenged. Perhaps there was another universe in which the Church responded with understanding, acknowledgement and compromise but that is not what happened in this one. In 1519 in the city of Leipzig Luther came face to face with Johann Eck, the premier theologian of the Holy Roman Empire. Eck dramatically raised the stakes by moving to the issue of authority. If authority did not lie with the Pope or with a church council, where did it lie?

Impact of the Bible

When Eck backed him into a corner, Luther asserted that authority in matters of faith lay in the Bible alone. On 17 April 1521 he appeared before the Emperor where he insisted on this. "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures or by evident reason — for I can believe neither pope nor councils alone, as it is clear that they have erred repeatedly and contradicted themselves — I consider myself convicted by the testimony of Holy Scripture, which is my basis; my conscience is captive to the Word of God." In this way Luther located authority in the Bible mediated by the individual conscience. It was a portentous move pregnant with unintended consequences. A great deal of the

mental furniture of the modern world would be rearranged around Luther's famous declaration. Once again, he never saw that coming.

Impact of Vernacular Bible

The Reformation unleashed the Bible. Until then it was available only in Latin, only to priests and scholars, and parcelled out to the laity in carefully managed instalments. Now Luther translated it into everyday German. Once people got their hands on their own copy of the Bible in their own language, or heard it read by others, their eyes were opened to a world they never knew. The difference between the Church of the book of Acts and the Church they saw around them was startling. Their anger was palpable. Priests felt that they had betrayed their own people with doctrines that did not stand up to the scrutiny of Scripture. Eck and others had raised the debate with Luther to the issue of authority; now they reaped the whirlwind.

Luther's actions triggered the Reformation and his personality dominated it but he was not alone. Powerful technological, cultural, social and economic changes were underway. It is impossible to disentangle merely religious strands from these other forces. And that means that this movement could

never be confined only to Luther, Wittenberg and Germany. It spread to other places.

Spread of Reformation

Many of the independent city states within the Swiss Confederation went over to reform. In Zurich, Huldreich Zwingli abandoned the lectionary to preach through the book of Matthew and then through Acts. He persuaded the city authorities to remove from church worship and architecture any elements not explicitly sanctioned in Scripture. Other cities followed suit. A generation later, John Calvin led a thorough reformation of the

responsibilities the Anabaptists and the many other groups within the Radical Reformation faced decades of persecution.

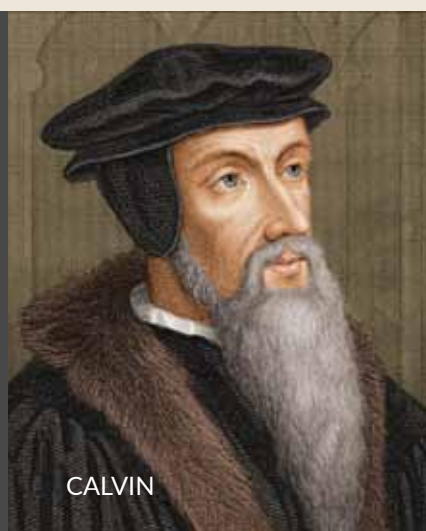
France came very close to going over to Protestantism but political dynamics among the ruling family finally worked against it. Scotland, the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries all went Protestant. Reformers gained ground in Poland, Bohemia, Hungary and many other places. In England, King Henry VIII was no natural reformer but he did want an annulment to his marriage to Catherine of Aragon which had failed to produce a male heir. When

we can talk of a “Roman Catholic” Church. With the loss of most northern territories to the Protestants it had less geographical spread, but it was much more effective, more disciplined and more centred on the authority of the papacy.

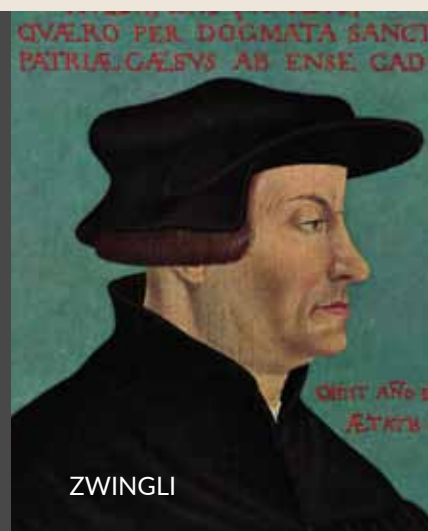
All of this unleashed a century of violence called the “wars of religion”. But we need to be careful here. Tied up in all this is the rise of the modern, centralised, bureaucratic, unified state. These wars were as much about that as anything else, which is why we see Protestant fighting against Protestant, Roman Catholic against Roman Catholic.



LUTHER



CALVIN



ZWINGLI

city of Geneva. This Swiss brand is called “Reformed Protestantism”, as opposed to German Lutheranism. For all that they had in common the two camps did not get on, disagreeing mainly over the nature of the Eucharist. The Bible was their sole authority but agreeing on what the Bible said proved no easy matter.

Others took Luther and Zwingli literally. They pointed out that there was no biblical warrant for either infant baptism or the alliance of Church and state. They were the Anabaptists: this is called the “Radical Reformation”. They restored the practice of adult baptism. In doing so they challenged the very foundations of a society in which all infants were born both as citizens and as Christians. Even if Scripture was on their side, that was intolerable. In disavowing the alliance with the state and in seeming to opt out of their civil

the Pope refused to grant one, Henry made himself head of the Church of England. The Reformation progressed under his son, Edward (1547-53), reversed under Mary (1553-58), then consolidated under Elizabeth (1558-1603).

Counter-Reformation

Even in the early 1540s there was the real possibility that the rift between the Lutherans and the Catholics might have been healed but it was not to be. The moderates within the Catholic Church were discredited; the hardliners won the day. So when the Council of Trent convened in 1545 and continued to sit in three long sessions over nearly 20 years, the outcome was a complete repudiation of Protestant Theology. But a number of practices were reformed in what is known as the “Catholic Reformation” or the “Counter-Reformation”. From the middle of the sixteenth century

The initial period of genuine reform moved into a longer period of “confessionalisation” in which these emerging states took on one religious identity or the other. What had been one broad church broke down into a set of rigid boxes in which identities hardened and all sorts of border walls proliferated.

What did it all mean? How are we to evaluate those changes? It amazes me how the implications of this are still being worked out here on the other side of the world 500 years after the event. All this is well worth pondering as we move closer to October 31 later this year. ■



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An Ecological Reading of Matthew's Gospel

ELAINE WAINWRIGHT explains how the opening verses of the Gospel of Matthew situate Jesus in the Earth and cosmological community.

The turning of the liturgical cycle and the turning of the calendar year draws our attention to the Gospel of Matthew which we shall hear, read and ponder during 2017. This column each month will engage with the gospel ecologically providing the opportunity to read our sacred text through the lens of and in dialogue with not just text but also con-text, both ancient and contemporary. The con-text is all that surrounds and is imbued in the text itself. As we read with fresh eyes the materiality of con-text will come alive in our imagination and our very being. It will give new life to the scripture and to us as a community reading our sacred text. In the language of the Matthean gospel, this is where and how God is with us (Mt 1:23).

Clues Within Text

The Gospel's opening verse begins with the book of the genealogy/*biblos geneseōs* of Jesus Christos. The verse vibrates, as it were, with what we call intertexts. They are texts that occur elsewhere in the bible and which are evoked either explicitly or implicitly in a new text. In Mt 1:1 we find the words of Genesis 2:4a, the book of the generations/the *biblos geneseōs* of the heavens and the earth when they were created, evoked in the *geneseōs*, the genesis of the heavens/sky and the earth together with all Earth's constituents, as they echo through the first words of the Matthean gospel. The intertexture with Gen 5:1-2, the *biblos geneseōs* of the human community/the *anthrōpōn* (the human)

male and female, functions to place the human story within the story of Earth and of the heavens/the sky.

It is significant that the con-text for the human community is the Earth community. While the human community has always known this, in recent centuries we have come to think of ourselves as having power over the Earth rather than of living in harmony, in right relationship, with it. This mindset has led us to limit our reading of scripture to see only the relationship between the human and the Holy.

The evocation of both Gen 2:4a and 5:1-2 in the opening phrase of Mt 1:1 challenges this narrow reading. Gen 2:4a evokes the first genealogy of the heavens/skies and the earth. It is only later in that genealogy that the human community appears, placing humanity within the unfolding of the universe and so giving us a cosmic genealogy. The Genesis genealogy is encoded in Matthew's opening phrase of the story of Jesus. It invites us to read the story with a cosmological and ecological lens. It is a new story. Justice, or right relationship, calls us to this reading. And justice is woven through the Matthean gospel.

Tied to Earth and Sky

Justice takes our attention to the maleness dominating the opening verse of the gospel: "Jesus *Christos*, son of David, son of Abraham". Recognising this we turn back to the genealogy of Gen 2:4. Divine creativity characterises the Genesis narrative and this creativity is shared by the human community, male and female, in the image of the Divine (Gen 1:27). However, this community was given dominion over the Earth in Gen 1:28. We need to critique this perspective in the narrative as we have seen dominion borne out destructively in relation to the Earth and to the vulnerable in the human community, many of them women. Such dominion cannot be allowed to permeate our ecological reading of the Matthean text and its intertexts despite the dominant androcentrism of the gospel opening verse and of the entire genealogy. (We read that a male was the father of another male

repeated 39 times, broken only by the naming of five women.)

The inter-con/textuality in Mt 1:1 alerts readers to a range of indigenous cosmologies evoked by the intertext of Gen 2:4a. By way of example, for New Zealand Māori, *whakapapa*/genealogy is a key to their identity and it is conceived cosmically. The poet, Apirana Taylor, captures this:

*Whakapapa whakapapa ties you to the land . . .
this is your inheritance
the sky and earth and all that lies between.*

Each generation of Matthew's genealogy (Mt 1:2-16) is "tied" to a habitat and land, the Earth, while also belonging to the genealogy of the heavens/sky.



The Gospel is suggesting that God is with "us" — Earth and all Earth's constituents. It is not just as a particular geographical, historical, political and economic community but as all who participate in the biotic and abiotic Earth community.

New Story

The opening word of the gospel — *biblos* — and its rich inter-con/textuality signals a new narrative, a new story of the heavens/sky and the Earth, a new story of Earth held together within the woven tapestry of text, the *biblos*. Before it became known as "book" or "narrative", *biblos* named the bark, the inner bark of the papyrus plant from which sheets of papyrus were made to be used as the carrier of writing and story. The original gospel texts were most likely written on papyrus.

Biblos functions within the web of life of the Earth community. The giving up of the inner bark for writing material evokes the giving up of the life of Jesus *Christos*, the central human character in the narrative.

Jesus, Child of Earth and Sky

The *biblos* *geneseōs* becomes very specific in the second half of the verse and provides the focus of a particular human genealogy — it is of the one who is designated *lēsou Christou*. Jesus' name frames the genealogy (Mt 1:1 and 1:17) and provides a textual link between Mt 1:16 and 1:18. In Mt 1:16, the name Jesus is followed by the phrase "who is called the Messiah (the anointed, the *Christos*)", whereas in Mt 1:17 *Christos* stands alone in designating Jesus. Mt 1:18 parallels Mt 1:1 in that *Christos* follows immediately after the name Jesus. It seems that by the time of the compilation of the Gospel, *Christos*, or anointed one, had become synonymous with the name Jesus.

Another naming of Jesus occurs in Mt 1:23 and can rebound back to the *Christos* designation in Mt 1:1. Jesus is identified metaphorically as *Emmanu-el*, God with us. The gospel is suggesting that God is with "us" — Earth and all Earth's constituents (Mt 1:23). It is not just as a particular geographical, historical, political and economic community but as all who participate in the biotic and abiotic Earth community within the context of a new ecological perspective.

God has been "with us" from the beginning as indicated in the genealogy's opening and unfolding. God is with us now, the contemporary Earth community, in the birth of this particular child Jesus in all his materiality and his con-textuality replete with the web of multiple interrelationships that constitute him. It is into this that the opening verse of Matthew's gospel invites contemporary readers. ■



Elaine Wainwright RSM is a biblical scholar and the Executive Director of Mission and Ministry for the Mercy Sisters in Australia and Papua New Guinea.

GIVE YOUR CLOAK AS WELL

In her interpretation of Matthew 5:38–48 KATHLEEN RUSHTON shows how Jesus calls disciples to engage in non-violent resistance of evil.

The motivation for the all-embracing love of neighbour and enemy which disciples are called to in Matthew 5:38–44, is “so that you may be called children of your Father in the heavens” who makes God’s “sun rise/dawn on the evil and the good, sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Mt 5:45) God’s control of sun and rain is part of Jewish thought (Gen 1:14–19; 2:4–5, Job 38). In ongoing creation, God’s life-giving action embraces all persons — “evil,” “good,” righteous,” or “unrighteous”. Affinity exists between nature and humans because God is creator and sustainer of both. By observing God in creation, one learns how God acts with humans. As God makes the “sun rise/dawn” so disciples urged by Jesus are to “let your light shine/dawn (same verb) before others” (Mt 5:16).

Only Matthew uses the term, “*basileia* of the heavens/sky” to evoke God’s saving presence. Heaven is the abode of God (Is 66:1) and origin of God’s reign. The heavens/sky refers to that part of the universe which along with Earth comprises the universe. *Basileia* (empire/reign) is used of the Roman Empire which the alternative *basileia* of the heavens/sky critiques. The challenge facing Christians is for the language of *basileia*/empire to function prophetically so as not to become complicit with the injustices of their context.

Probably, Matthew’s gospel arose in the densely populated city of Antioch in Syria where there was a significant Jewish population, which like the rest of first-century Judaism, was diverse in beliefs, practices and responses to the destruction of Jerusalem (70 CE). Tension with a synagogue was not just religious but resulted in estrangement from one’s people which had social, political

and economic dimensions. Antioch was a Roman military centre and administered taxes, tolls and levies on goods and labour. In this context Matthew’s community was a minority and had a marginal existence.

Sermon on the Mount

The gospel readings for the 4th–9th Sundays of Ordinary Time are from



the Sermon on the Mount which Jesus taught on a mountainside near the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is committed to the old and new. The enduring validity of the Old Testament is presupposed in his explanation in Mt 5:17–20 of how he interprets Scripture which is his preface to six “for examples” which follow (anger, relationships Mt 5:21–26; adultery, male lust Mt 5:27–30; divorce, male mistreatment of women Mt 5:31–32; oath-taking, integrity Mt 5:33–37; non-violent resistance to evil Mt 5:38–42; and love for enemies Mt 5:43–48).

Jesus’ sermon is poetic, dramatic and pictorial and is not to be interpreted literally. Rather it tells a

story to inspire the imagination to resist the values of Rome’s *basileia*. It is not a complete rule book but offers disruptive, transformative “for examples” to give general directions to inform and form disciples more deeply in the way of life to which they have committed themselves (Mt 4:18–22).

Non-violent Resistance to Evil

Matthean scholar, Warren Carter, explains that the fifth “for example” (Mt 5:38–42) is about active non-violent resistance to the domination and violence of the oppressive imperial context. In Mt 5:38 Jesus

summarises the *lex talionis*, the law of equal retribution, which limits revenge in proportion to the offence of the offender: “You have heard that it was said, ‘an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’” (Ex 21:22–25). The *lex talionis* was practised within a court process.

Carter translates Jesus’ words: “But I say to you” as “Do not violently resist (*antistēnai*) an evildoer” (Mt 5:39). This verb indicates “armed resistance in military encounters” or “violent struggle”. A translation like “Do not resist an evildoer (or evil)”

7th Sunday Ordinary Time
19 February

does not permit self-protection and promotes submission. Further, not resisting and opposing evil, which God seems to sanction, goes against Jesus' words and actions (Mt 4:1-11; 4:23-25; 5:3-16). The "for examples" which follow Mt 5:38 show resistance to power.

The issue is not whether to resist evil or not, that is, submission or fight back, but *how* evil is to be resisted. Jesus offers four serious yet rather witty examples of active non-violence to illustrate this principle and to inspire the moral imagination to see God's *basileia* at work and to understand both oppression and liberation.

Four Examples of Response

The first example (Mt 5:39b)

experience of indebtedness in loan collection proceedings in court: "If anyone wants to sue you and take your coat" (Mt 5:40). A poor person had to pledge their cloak which must be returned by night to keep that person warm (Deut 24:10-13). Jesus' response: "Give your cloak as well" is astonishing, for handing over one's outer and inner garments meant being naked in court. Why? Enacted is the stripping of property and land by the creditor who would have both garments in his hands. Standing naked, shames and dishonours the creditor, exposes the greed of his action and the unjust system which he represents.

After examples of social (Mt 5:39b) and economic inequalities

enabled the prosperous and powerful to bind others in dependent relationships. "Give to everyone who begs from you" (Mt 5:42) presumes there is poverty and exploitation from taxes and debt. Almsgiving (*eleēmosunē*) which was assumed of all disciples (Mt 5:7; 43-48) comes from the word *eleos*/mercy which signifies the presence of God's *basileia*. "Do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you" is not new (cf. Ex 22:25) but is an alternative to dominant practices by creating a system which ensures adequate support for all.

Scripture scholar and pastor, Walter Wink, describes this third way of Jesus in phrases like: seize the moral initiative, find a creative alternative to violence, assert your humanity and dignity as a person, meet force with ridicule or humour, break the cycle of humiliation, refuse the inferior position, shame the oppressor, be willing to suffer. While change is not guaranteed, God's *basileia* presents and illustrates what an alternative might look like in several situations while exposing unjust systems.

The ideal may be beyond human grasp. Yet it offers hope and the call for non-violence and resistance to become an attitude in responding to others, oneself and the Earth. This call inspired the 2016 Vatican conference on just war theory hosted by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Pax Christi. Around 80 experts who are engaged in non-violent struggles gathered in Rome to discuss a new moral framework which rejects ethical justifications for war. Pope Francis gave it his support in his 2017 World Peace Day Message: "Non-violence: A Style of Politics for Peace." ■

Painting: *Non-Violent Resistance* by Judy Baca. © SPARC www.sparcinla.org
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presents a scene in which physical violence exerts control and enforces inequalities: "But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek". This refers to a slap in the face with an open right hand. This insulting gesture acts out the power differential of a superior who despises an inferior — a master with a slave, or a Roman with a subject, or when Jesus is slapped (Mt 26:67). The inferior is dishonoured and humiliated because no response except submission is expected. Rather than submission or a violent response, Jesus teaches a third response: "Turn the other also".

The second example relates to the

(Mt 5:40), the third example relates to a practice of Roman power: "If anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile" (Mt 5:41). The verb "forces" meaning to requisition labour, ships or animals for transport and lodgings is used when Roman soldiers force Simon of Cyrene to carry the cross of a convicted criminal (Mt 27:32). "To go one mile" most likely meant to carry a soldier's pack for a mile.

The fourth example suggests alternative economic practice because giving benefited the giver by enhancing their reputation and status. Patron-client almsgiving



Kathleen Rushton RSM tends her vegetable garden, walks in the hope her feet will allow her to tramp again and delights in learning about Scripture.

SUPPLYING ARMS UNDER THE RADAR

We like to think of New Zealand as a peace-loving nation, championing a nuclear-free and independent Pacific, using our professional skills as peace-keepers. In the Solomons, for example, after communal hostilities in 1998-2003 had seen 100 deaths and some 40,000 people driven from their homes, we moved in successfully at the request of the Solomon Island government. Together with Australian police and military forces peace was restored. We have also put our name to various international agreements to limit the arms trade.

It comes, therefore, as a shock to learn that our government is now actively engaged in promoting a growing New Zealand arms industry; that we are busily expanding our exports of arms to countries such as Saudi Arabia, currently waging a deadly campaign in Yemen. How many of us know that more than 250 New Zealand companies are currently involved in the provision of weapons, other military hardware and services and that all this comes with the active involvement of Government? Many of the NZ firms involved, such as Lockheed Martin, Babcock, Rakon, SAAB and Tactical Solutions, are NZ subsidiaries of overseas armaments manufacturers.

The November 2016 Arms Conference in Auckland highlighted these developments. At the so-called NZ Defence Industry Forum Gerry Brownlee was one of the main speakers. The Conference which was basically an Arms Fair, was co-sponsored by the Government and giant overseas armaments companies such as Lockheed Martin, which were there to lobby for government contracts. (Currently Lockheed Martin is carrying out a \$446 million upgrade of our frigates.)

The Arms Fair focused on exhibiting arms and exchanging information about new technological advances. Admission to the Conference was restricted to registered delegates each paying \$480. It coincided with Operation Neptune, the celebration of the NZ Navy's 75th

anniversary. Some 30 Navies were invited to participate, including a US warship, culminating in their crews marching through Auckland streets. This gaudy Arms Fair seemed an odd way to celebrate Remembrance Day.



It certainly raises some serious questions. Have we just drifted into this? Is the trade and exporting the tail of Government wagging the political dog? Is our foreign policy, our commitment to world peace and justice, compromised by chasing the dollar in this fashion? As Stuart Vogel, an Auckland Presbyterian minister, commented, is there not something obscene about this promotion of arms sales as we read each day of the carnage in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere? He was certainly not alone in protesting as the inner-city Auckland Churches took part in a peace walk to protest at this Arms Fair and the Dunedin Churches held a peace service in Knox Church.

But most New Zealanders have no idea of what is going on. No wonder. It is difficult to get full information about the extent of arms exports and requests through the Official Information Act tend to fall on deaf ears. The respected Stockholm International

Peace Research Institute provides some accurate information.

Government involvement is ongoing. Annual awards are made to the best defence contractor. NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) send staff overseas to meet with arms manufacturers and encourage NZ exports. NZTE also sponsors trade stalls overseas. Tait Electronics in Christchurch receives very substantial grants — well over \$10 million dollars — through the Callaghan Innovation Fund; Cubic Defence, a subsidiary of the US Cubic Corporation which supplies US and Israeli armed forces, also receives substantial grants.

Our arms exports go to a variety of countries including the USA, Australia, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. They include computers to control artillery and mortar fire, radio equipment, components for missile guidance and drones, transport vehicles, HamiltonJet engines and ammunition.

It is not possible to put a figure on all this, though \$200 million has been mentioned. If so, this is still pretty small beer and one wonders if we have thought this through politically — not to mention morally? Is the game worth the candle? How have we got into touting for exports in the deadly business of arms? What does it do for our international image? How does the close collaboration of our government with these massive multinational arms manufacturers square with our commitment to a Free and Independent Pacific and to our role in the UN? Was the gaudy Arms Fair, plus a triumphalist march through Auckland, an appropriate way of remembering the sickening horror of two world wars? ■

Photo: *The Tree of Life and Creatures* was a project in Mozambique to collect military hardware and transform it into sculptures. British Museum. <https://commons.wikimedia.org>



Peter Matheson is a retired principal of Knox Theological College living and writing in Blueskin Bay, Waitati, Dunedin.



LIFT OUR FEET FROM OTHERS' BACKS

For many of us Christmas serves as a season of reflection and perhaps this year more than ever, a moment of reprieve. In gathering with family, friends and loved ones we find a sense of community, of solidarity. As we met at the close of 2016, we hoped the coming year would be better.

What were our reactions as we lamented the year that was? We saw the further unfolding of the refugee crisis, Syria, Yemen and demagogues on every news channel.

When faced with these crises, despair seems a reasonable initial response. What can we do when the problems of the world seem so titanic and we so small? Often we find ourselves feeling like helpless spectators watching in horror and fright.

Take for example the hot topic of 2016, the USA Presidential elections. While many found the support for Donald Trump alarming, I refuse to believe that bigotry was the motivator for the 63 million people who voted for him. Instead I think the vast majority of these were let down by a system that left them feeling insecure and scared, with poor wages, unemployment and broken healthcare. They responded to the loudest voice in the room.

They were disenfranchised with a candidate who represented a broken political system and they were turned off a corrupt Democratic Party. Clearly their only real alternative on the ballot did little to fill them with confidence in change. Despite Hillary Clinton receiving almost 3 million more votes than Trump they ultimately came up with a victor oft compared with Hitler.

The silver lining to this will perhaps be the realisation that rhetoric must be matched with action. Just as the Democratic Party in the USA must work harder to provide real alternatives for those desperate for change, so too must all of us practise what we preach.

The antidote to feeling helpless is of course the realisation that we are indeed capable of change, of difference, of positive reaction no matter how small, rather than merely curling up in the fetal position and wishing it all away.

Henry David Thoreau, American writer and essayist, said while it is not our individual obligation to right every wrong, first and foremost it is our responsibility to ensure we are not standing on the backs of others while we live our lives. Put simply, if our own actions directly disadvantage others or harm the causes we claim to champion then we should correct this imbalance.

While we may not be able directly to stop the bombing in the Yemen, we are not powerless. New Zealanders can, as many already have, rally the New Zealand government to stop the country's arms sales to Saudi Arabia and other governments and groups.

I may not be able to stop Australia's illegal, indefinite detainment of refugees, but I can protest and rally support against such immorality. I can ensure I never use one of the countless car parks owned by Wilson Security, who also service the Nauru and Manus Island Centres where atrocities routinely occur.

It is not enough to decry injustice. It is not sufficient to complain about one's government, or the state of the world, as we kick back. In part at least, I believe inaction has its roots in this feeling of despair. The only way out of this mindset is to be proactive and lift our feet collectively from the backs of others. Equally we should look to our own backyards and communities to find strength to do so.

I admit at times efforts to combat issues such as these may seem a Herculean task and it is easy to become discouraged. But it is up to all of us to do what is possible to achieve a solution. For every earthquake in New Zealand, we saw an outpouring of disaster relief as people banded together. While quakes physically divide towns and city many hands are working hard to rebuild them again and many are labouring to reconnect Picton-Kaikoura-Christchurch by road and rail again.

Together, in solidarity, we can achieve what individuals cannot. ■



Jack Derwin is a journalist, freelance writer and pending graduate plotting his return to Latin America.

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Turning to the Heavens and the Earth

Theological Reflections on a Cosmological Conversion

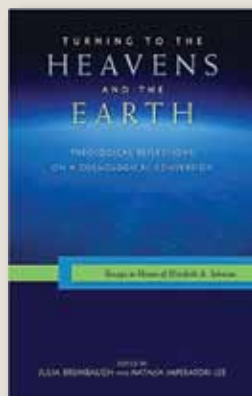
Edited by Julia Brumbaugh and Natalia Imperatori-Lee
Published by Liturgical Press, 2016
Reviewed by Jo Bell

Elizabeth A. Johnson is a theological “rock-star” and her work bursts open stale ideas of God to offer a God whose spirit is present in ALL things. *Turning to the Heavens and the Earth* is a collection of essays by prominent theologians in honour of Johnson’s pioneering work in this area. They break open ways in which we can connect to the divine through encountering the cosmos as a whole, by acknowledging our vulnerabilities and by being open to the hope of God’s ongoing creation story. By allowing us to access a fuller vision of the Divine, there emerges an unwritten hope that once our minds have turned, our beliefs and our actions will also realign to become more akin to God’s action.

The essays challenge us to re-evaluate our unchecked individualism and our extreme culture of consumption. They ask us to recommit ourselves to life and dare us to turn toward a sustainable way of living that nourishes us while protecting the world and all things in it.

The book is divided into three sections each offering a new direction beginning with *To the Wild(erness)*, then *To Ethical Action* and finally *To a New Creation*. They are flavoured with each writer’s obvious gratitude towards Johnson and her *avant-garde* theology. They encourage us to slow down, reconnect and fall in love with our world again. They ask us questions of how we measure success, what sacrifices we are willing to make for the sake of the common good and what type of lifestyle we are actually seeking.

Many of the essays are easy to access and read without too much effort,



but there are some that require more sustained concentration and a familiarity with some slightly more complicated theological terminology.

This collection does not shy from our violent and destructive relationship with Earth but it does offer us hope that healing is available and that even in the presence of pain, God is present.

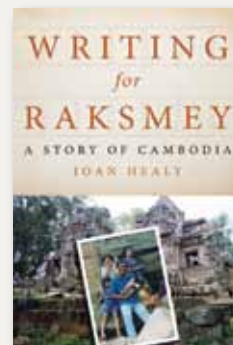
If you love Elizabeth Johnson and her work on cosmic theology then you will gain wonderful insights and inspiration from this book. If you are passionate about Earth and nurturing this gift, then this book will give you added encouragement and a sense of hope.

As I finish reading these essays I am left wondering just how different and plentiful our world would be if we all took a moment to turn to the heavens and Earth in quiet reflection. ■

Writing for Raksmei

A Story of Cambodia

By Joan Healy
Published by Monash University, 2016
Reviewed by Susan Smith



We have heard, seen and read many stories about Cambodia since this small Asian nation’s proximity to Vietnam led to horrific American bombing raids on its infrastructure and people from 1965 onwards. The suffering subsequently experienced by the majority of Cambodians encouraged growing support for the Communist Party of Kampuchea, more commonly known as the Khmer Rouge, who seized power in 1975. Khmer Rouge persecution of anyone who did not accept their particular interpretation of Marxism caused the death and displacement of millions, realities that did not cease when Vietnam’s Communist government “liberated” Cambodia in 1979 and installed a Cambodian puppet regime.

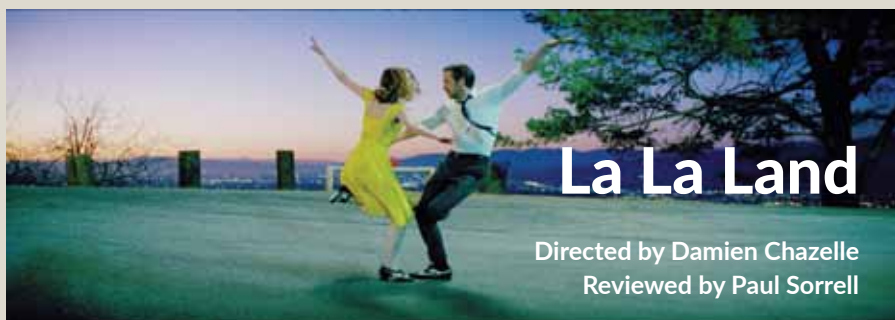
The new government did virtually nothing to resolve the problems of thousands and thousands of displaced, malnourished, sick and wounded people. In 1980, the recently founded Jesuit Refugee Service began working with displaced Cambodians along the Thai border. The sheer scale of displacement and movements of peoples looking for family members was not helped by the civil war that continued to wage between government forces and Khmer Rouge militia groups.

In 1989, Josephite Sister, Joan Healy went to work in Cambodia with the Jesuit Refugee Service at Site 2, a

Widely hailed as a homage to the old-time Hollywood musical, *La La Land* diverges from the genre insofar as the plot is more than a vehicle for a string of song-and-dance routines. Focused on an attractive young couple based in Los Angeles — Mia (Emma Stone), an aspiring actress, and Sebastian (Ryan Gosling), a struggling jazz pianist — the film charts the pair's progress from testy sparring to a full-blown relationship, followed by professional success for both.

Despite this strong storyline — which itself draws heavily on genre conventions — the film has all the trimmings of the traditional movie musical including toe-tapping dance numbers, ravishing urban backdrops and the interweaving of realism and fantasy. At the film's romantic high point, set in a planetarium, the couple are literally dancing with the stars.

Unsurprisingly, this is a young person's film in many ways, not just because of its focus on romantic love, but in its exploration of the theme of finding one's way in the world — here, carving out a path to success in the



unforgiving world of Hollywood, the *La La Land* of the title. If there is a serious theme in the movie, it is the struggle to reconcile vocational aspirations with a functional personal life.

However, what the film shows us, wittingly or not, is that the determination to fight one's way to the top requires — and produces — a superfluity of ego. Ultimately, this makes the two leads an unattractive pair. I don't recall a single scene in which either offers help to another character (although both receive plenty of assistance from others to advance their own ambitions). Mia and Sebastian are both trapped in their own self-made bubbles.

In the final sequence, set in Sebastian's brilliantly successful

jazz club five years after the main action, Mia fantasises about how their lives would have turned out had things gone differently for them. But, in the end, I couldn't bring myself to care about this privileged pair who had already achieved what most of us would consider perfect careers. After all, they had each fulfilled their ultimate professional dream, becoming wealthy and famous to boot.

If *La La Land* is a story about people fulfilling their dreams, it also shows what it has cost them. What I am still unsure about is whether this is the message that the director intended audiences to take home with them. ■

huge sprawling refugee camp on the Thai border close to Battambang. She was well suited for such work because, after teaching in Catholic schools in Australia, she had qualified as a social worker and had worked in community projects with Aboriginal communities.

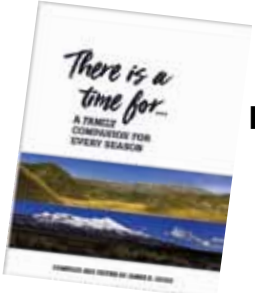
There have been many books, academic articles, NGO and government reports on the horror inflicted on the Cambodian people by the Pol Pot regime. *Writing for Ramskey* offers something very different. Healy's ministry among the thousands of people at Site 2 meant she again saw how important community building was for those traumatised by war and suffering. Some of the people she encountered had experienced extraordinary trauma and suffering but were still determined to be the agents of their own empowerment; through their efforts to create life-giving and life-sustaining communities. This book invites the reader to enter into the stories of six Cambodian families who although unable to forget the many traumas that brutalised warfare had meant for them, were nevertheless keen to create a life-

giving world for themselves.

Readers looking for statistical detail, for scholarly insights and for extensive and lengthy notes will not find these in *Writing for Ramskey*. What they will find are the reflections of a woman who understands and lives what the expression "being in solidarity with the poor and oppressed" means. Because Healy emerges as neither controlling, maternalistic, nor

authoritarian in the exercise of her ministry among the displaced, she is able to capture the despair that so many Cambodians in Site 2 felt. More importantly she describes for us the means whereby they could create new life for themselves and for others. Her ability to capture in such an intimate and compassionate manner something of the story of Cambodian suffering is a gift for us all. ■

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From Monk to Modernity: The Challenge of Modern Thinking

By Dominic Kirkham

Published by Sea of Faith Network, 2015

Reviewed by Beverley M Smith

Dominic Kirkham belongs to the Sea of Faith Network, UK. After spending years in a religious order, he describes how he was driven to meet the challenge of modern thinking, an exercise which has proved both freeing and frightening. The book offers a broad historical sweep outlining the human quest for meaning and a good life, then and today.

Dominic's hope is that readers will respond in the sort of dialogue envisaged by John XXIII over 50 years ago, writing: "One of the things of which I am most aware in looking back over my life is that virtually everything

I have been taught or believed of any importance I have now found to be wrong. As an example I quoted how the discovery of the ancient megalith 'temples' at Göbekli Tepe had totally changed our understanding of the origins of civilization."

He describes the making of the biblical creation myth and why it is no longer scientifically credible.

I found the chapter, *Changing Time*, about how clocks changed our lives and created a secular world, important. Kirkham writes: "One of my favourite pieces of spiritual reading has long been the opening passage of Jean-Pierre de Caussade's treatise, *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*, also known as *The Sacrament of the Present Moment*. This classic text of 18th century Quietism urges not only an acceptance of what life throws at us — seen then from the perspective of a divinely preordained purpose — but also of our 'duty' to grasp the

opportunities in the present moment."

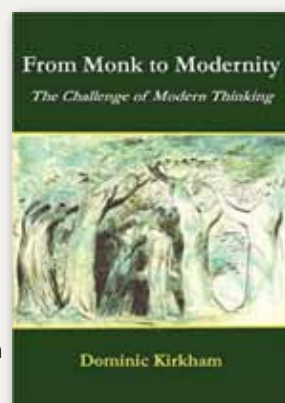
Kirkham suggests "the hand of a clock which marks each moment of the hour" is the model for fixing our attention on "each successive moment".

Clocks appeared first in England in the 14th century. By 1350 Richard of Wallingford was constructing a complex astronomical clock at St Albans monastery and a clock tower

was installed in Norwich Cathedral. Soon this useful spiritual accessory was moving from the cloister to the market place. Our understanding of space and time was transformed and with it our understanding of ourselves.

The last chapter, *Life's Mystery* about how modern thought

is challenging our understanding of life, is Kirkham's gift of wisdom. I think that those preparing services, ordained and lay, would find this book particularly useful. ■



Wharenui: House of Hope

By Raymond Pelly

Published by Steel Roberts Aotearoa New Zealand, 2016

Reviewed by Katene Eruera

This is a readable well-designed book that brings into conversation ideas of Christian hope with ideas drawn from *Māoritanga*. It is a book devoted to exploring the Christian life in its Aotearoa New Zealand expression.

The author, Raymond Pelly, is an Anglican priest who moved to New Zealand from the United Kingdom in the 1980s. He has an MA in theology from Oxford University and a Doctorate in Ecumenical Theology from the University of Geneva. He has taught at Wescott House, Cambridge; St John's College Auckland; and the University of Massachusetts (Boston Campus). He has, therefore, drawn on his academic background in a way that seeks to place theology in a local context and has the maturity of theological thought to produce a book of importance.

The contents of the book are basically theological. Successive chapters consider the *Wharenui*, the traditional Māori meeting house as a metaphor for framing Christian community. The conclusion focuses on the idea that

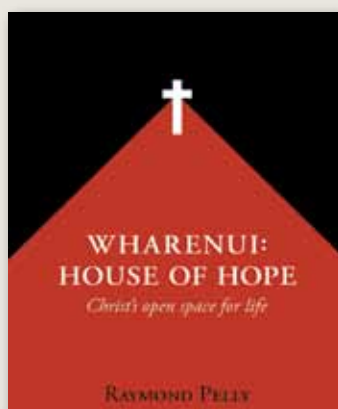
authentic theology is prophetic; in the sense that God speaks through Christian communities to effect hope through personal and social transformation. Helpful and explanatory endnotes are provided.

There is a logical style to the author's writing, grounded in his own academic background; drawing on sources as wide ranging as scripture, *Māoritanga*, Greek mythology, and theologians such as Kierkegaard and Brueggemann. The end result is a theological essay with positive assumptions about *Māoritanga* as a source for theological insight, using a method that speaks to the particular contexts and social locations Christian communities in different parts of Aotearoa New Zealand may find themselves in. This is perhaps important when compared to perspectives that may ignore or devalue the importance of sources other than the Bible for doing theology.

Coming at a time of theological diversity, ranging from orthodox to progressive theologies, Raymond Pelly's book is a welcome addition to the conversation and for Christian communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

I hope this book will be read by many people engaged in contextual theology. It is

an example of how theology and *Māoritanga* can be brought into conversation. And it will be of importance to those interested in exploring this way of doing theology and the theological insights it can produce. ■



Habitat, Human, and Holy

An Eco-Rhetorical Reading of the Gospel of Matthew

By Elaine M Wainwright

Published by Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2016

Reviewed by Damian Wynn-Williams

With the Sunday gospel texts this year coming from *Matthew*, a new reading of the First Gospel is to be welcomed. Furthermore, given Pope Francis's call in *Laudato Si'* for a greater awareness of the environmental crisis facing our planet, a reading which explores ecological issues would seem most timely.

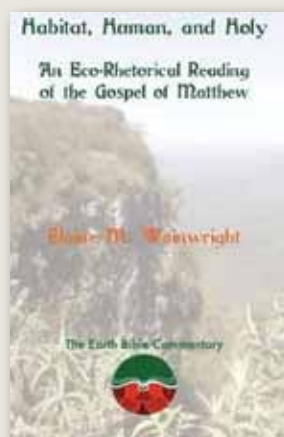
The approach to Matthew's Gospel adopted in this scholarly study will already be familiar to readers of *Tui Motu* who have followed Elaine Wainwright's monthly reflections on *Luke* during the past year. In *Habitat, Human, and Holy* her concern is not to provide a traditional verse by verse commentary. Her sweep is much broader, incorporating both the world of first century CE Palestine and Rome and contemporary concerns. She insists that in reading the gospel due attention be given to all the participants of what she calls "the Earth community", both human and "more-than-human". From this perspective the heavens, earth, seeds,

water etc. are considered to have a role to play as "actants", contributing to the gospel's rhetorical effect.

Personally, I feel that Wainwright's focus on ecological issues sometimes seems a bit forced, as though the text is being squeezed into a rigid and pre-determined frame. For example, when commenting on the slaughter of the innocents in Mt 2:13-18, she notes that divine compassion is absent from the narrative, with only the voice of Rachel weeping for her children intervening. She then remarks that: "In an ecological reading of these verses, the loud lamentations of the mothers and sons of Bethlehem must be allowed to rise up. Attention to these voices in pain may turn readers to the erased voice of Earth; the erased pain and cry of Earth, destroyed by the rampages of human power; erased by hierarchical and dualistic consciousness, and annihilated from memory" (p. 53).

The book is no easy read. It employs a tightly defined set of abstract and technical terms, some of which are explained in a short glossary which is itself densely written and not without obscurity. In addition, the text includes numerous references to scholarly articles to which the general reader would not have access.

Nevertheless, this ecological reading of the text does provide a wealth of material for further reflection and Wainwright encourages the reader to make an effort to engage with Matthew's Gospel. ■



Divine Dance:

The Trinity and Your Transformation

By Richard Rohr

Published by Whitaker House, 2016

Reviewed by Sande Ramage

Reading *Divine Dance: the Trinity and Your Transformation* reconnected me with the insightful 20th century Trinity of *The Matrix* movie when she announced to the chosen, but reluctant Neo that: "It's the question driving us". Like everyone he faced the choice of awakening to reality or believing others' certainties.

Reality, says author Richard Rohr, is absolutely relational. While wondering whether Christianity needs to die, he promotes a Trinitarian Revolution that reveals God as the divine dance of interconnectedness. There is no Critical Spectator here, instead, a participatory, interdependent relational experience.

Rohr's ideas aren't revolutionary. Indeed, he states his case drawing

wisdom from Jewish texts, Hindu theology, Christian mystics and more. He dances us from exhausted theology to a lush garden where mystic possibilities tempt, only to trip us up by stating that we need great love and suffering to keep dancing. It's incongruous but perhaps that's the point.

Discordant notes and broken heartedness are not what humans yearn for. Being broken and vulnerable irritates. However, limping and suffering is essential to Richard Rohr's theology of the divine dance that he says is God and "not only stranger than we thought, but stranger than we're capable of thinking!" It is like science telling us that empty space has its own energy.

Rohr's theology connects with my work as a spiritual care practitioner. Sitting alongside people trying to make sense of suffering and death in a public hospital can be messy, noisy, interrupted and fragmented. But sometimes all of that chaos falls away and the space between

becomes strangely quiet, almost pregnant with an indefinable energy.

That no-thing space appears in a compassionate healthcare model developed by Canadian researchers.

Patients interviewed said that compassion relied on virtues embodied in the character of healthcare professionals and that one of those virtues was love. What's more, health care providers need to engage and relate to suffering from a place of shared humanity. Drawn like the heart of a seed, the practice model highlights the space where there is no-thing but mutual

human vulnerability of staggering power.

Is this vulnerable, no-thing space how we will speak of the Trinity in the future? Sometimes it seems like that but as Rohr says with his usual deft turn of phrase: "Metaphors by necessity walk with a limp!" He's relentless in the pursuit of change required for Christianity to have any hope of reinvention. Read him for change, not for stability ■





Angel Flight

"A writer once said that angels can fly because they don't take themselves too seriously. Maybe we could also fly a bit if we didn't think we were so important." (Pope Benedict XVI)

Self importance can lead to arrogance, intransigence and limitations to one's self development, conflict and discouragement to others. In order to help bring about positive change one needs the ability to listen to people and then accompany them step by gradual step. Discernment is essential for effectiveness.

Leadership

Listening to Kim Hill interviewing David Shearer about his time as opposition leader and his new job in South Sudan, I remembered a scene from a western I saw when I was a boy. The scene depicted two outlaws stranded in the desert with one water bottle. They agreed to take turns drinking but fought over who went first. Lack of trust led to all the water being spilt.

Shearer was voted parliamentary leader of a party riven by factionalism. Some members seemed to prefer electoral oblivion to compromise and began undermining him. So he quit and both the party and the country lost a potentially great leader.

Southern Sudan has two intransigent factions intent on destroying each other. Shearer's aim is to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the various humanitarian groups, arrange assistance where feasible, try to listen to the warring leaders and outside players and gradually work to heal the innumerable divisions.

Collateral Damage

The 1949 film *The Third Man* had a memorable scene depicting an argument on top of Vienna's

giant ferris wheel between former childhood friends, Holly Martins and Harry Lime. The latter, an opportunistic racketeer, sold diluted penicillin to hospitals. The police had recently shown Harry Lime's victims — brain damaged children — to Martins.

Lime explained his philosophy, likening the people far below to tiny dots so "no-one would miss a few". He also claimed, as justification, that for 30 years under the Borgias there was warfare, terror, murder and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland there was brotherly love and 500 years of democracy and peace. "And what did that produce? The cuckoo clock."

Economic systems enriching the well-off by exploiting the weak also treat them as justifiable collateral damage.

Belonging

The option to work from home, provided by the internet, promises a more relaxed working day. But there is a catch.

In 2015, research by *The Financial*

Times indicated increasing numbers of such workers were dissatisfied with their lot. Five reasons were proffered: the need for evidence their work has some purpose, to feel human, to help the worker learn, to feel work is distinct from home and to facilitate the flow of gossip. Some who disliked working from home nevertheless did so because others were doing it, or they didn't like finding that half their colleagues weren't at the office.

Motivations

Small businesses make up 97 per cent of all NZ businesses, contributing around 25 per cent of our total gross domestic product. Respondents to a study by software firm Xero revealed people started or bought a business because they wanted to be their own boss (57 per cent), hoped for more freedom and a better lifestyle (48 per cent), wanted to make more money (33 per cent). Six per cent said they were having trouble finding full-time work due to language, age, disability and skill barriers. ■



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.

We do not publish anonymous letters except in exceptional circumstances.

APOLOGY TO VICTIMS OF FORCED ADOPTION

Cecily McNeill's excellent article on adoption notes that "until the early 1970s, NZ with its strong religious influences had the highest number of adoptions in the western world". Interestingly in Australia on 21 March 2013, Prime Minister Julia Gillard offered an apology to all Australians in the adoption triangle for a practice that is now seen as having many unjust and shameful elements. Her apology (in full on YouTube) came after years of submissions — by adoptees, original mothers and fathers, and adoptive parents — to have the life-long ramifications aired and addressed. Issued to a packed room of predominately white middle aged and elderly women and men the apology evoked sobs and tears throughout. She used the word "forced" because of the morality pressures from inside Churches and families, and Government complicity in providing the structures to make it happen. The apology, an impressive 20 minutes, extended to all members of the families involved, allocated funds for an exhibition telling the story at the national museum in

Canberra; promised funds to improve access to previously closed files and counselling. Asked for a similar response in 2014, Judith Collins Justice Minister in NZ, refused.

Adrienne Gallie RSJ, Auckland

EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

During the 1980s I often listened to Father Felix Donnelly during his evening talk-back program on Radio Pacific. One night he was asked for his opinion on women priests and if ever there would be a woman pope. His reply was that that time was 50 years away. He misjudged that one!

In 1995 I was awarded Lay Preacher's Certification after completing a three year theological course under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Over the years I have officiated at many Church Services in Epsom, Auckland and Gisborne. Along with my position as a funeral celebrant, I have found obtaining this qualification, along with Religious Studies undertaken at Massey University, very rewarding.

My concern is that this opportunity is not afforded Catholic women. In fact Church teaching appears in no way to have relaxed its views, or even contemplated ordaining women. A very sad state of affairs.

Beverley M. Smith, Gisborne

INVITATION TO ALL
to attend Workshops and
Retreats by Srs Margaret
Galiardi OP and Sharon Zaya OP
from the USA on the theme

TURNING TOWARDS LIFE

AUCKLAND

4 March Mary MacKillop Hall, Mission Bay,

9 March Pompallier Centre, Ponsonby

WHANGAREI

8 March St Francis Xavier Church

PALMERSTON NORTH

11 March Catholic Diocesan Centre

OAMARU

18 March Teschemakers Convention Centre, Kakanui

INVERCARGILL

Korimako Farm. Contact Judith Robinson OP

DUNEDIN

24 March University of Otago – Centre for Theology & Public Issues

25 March Burns Lodge, Holy Cross Centre, Mosgiel

ARROWTOWN

27 March Venue to be decided.

For more information:

Dates, times, venues, enrolment and contact details see *Tui Motu* Facebook or the Dominican Sisters website: www.dominicans.org.nz



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Looking OUT and IN



“Where I’m from is complex. Both my parents were born in India, but both hold New Zealand passports. One has European ancestors and the other has Indian ones. I have a New Zealand passport but I also have an Overseas Citizen of India card. I basically spent the first half of my life in New Zealand — but the second in India (an oversimplification, muddled by various switches in between). English is my first language — but Hindi is my second. Whichever way you define belonging — culture, colour, language, citizenship — I’m lost between the borders, belonging to both places and neither.

Where I feel I belong is fluid, varying with who I’m with, where I am and who’s asking. When strangers in either place ask me where I’m from, I say “New Zealand” or “India” or “it’s a long story” and leave it at that. I’m not being dishonest; just not telling them everything. Because the whole truth is too complex, too involved and long to tell a stranger. Maybe I just don’t know the answer myself.”

My 17-year-old daughter penned the above lines as part of a school project probing complexity and identity. It converged with some great lectures I’ve listened to this month about identity — the 2016 BBC *Reith*

Lectures, by Kwame Anthony Appiah, a man who has his own complex and diverse identities.

In this lecture series titled “*Mistaken Identities*” Appiah addresses Colour, Creed, Country and Culture as each contributing to the multiple axes of how others assess another person’s belonging and identity. He suggests these categories are often over-simplistic and proposes that binary or perhaps any categories can be damaging.

I reflect back to the murmurings in the Mathias and Wood households in the early days when Jeph and I started hanging out together. Both of our grandmothers found it much more confronting that we had diverse Catholic and Baptist roots (identities related to creed) than the fact that we had different skin colours.

The concept of skin colour as signifying a group of belonging/race, however, is another one that Appiah and many others now discredit. The idea that genes coding for a certain skin/hair colour carry with them a baggage of other traits which are shared with others of the same skin colour seems quite absurd to me now and is really a 19th century construct with no basis in science. However, I have had or overheard

numerous conversations in New Zealand and India where people have made assumptions around racial characteristics that are nothing short of prejudiced and discriminatory:

“Your English is really very good for someone who lives in India,” says a church member to one of my daughters.

“I was seen by a terribly nice young doctor. He had very white teeth and spoke surprisingly good English.”

“He can’t swim well — Indians never are very good at swimming.”

After having been born in India and having chosen to live here as an adult for nearly 12 years, I feel put out when people press me to ask where I’m from, presumably because of my white skin.

“Ok, so now you live in Uttarakhand but where are you really from?”

Such questions suggest to me that I can perhaps never belong in India. I know that my mother-in-law gets the same question in New Zealand where she has lived for nearly 50 years now, also because of her skin colour.

As I move into 2017 I am keen to give myself more room to be myself — to embrace my love of adventure, and Baroque choral music. To spend more time with my family in wild, alpine locations and singing with my ukulele. I also want to be better at creating generous space for the people I live with and work with to flourish as the diverse, complex and uncategorisable individuals that we each are. *Vive la différence!* ■



Kaaren Mathias lives in north India and works in community mental health in Uttarakhand state and for the NGO Emmanuel Hospital Association.



Blessing

Bless us with companions
to walk with us
committed to spilling
kindness
inclusion
and peace
in our world.

From the Tui Motu team