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EDITORIAL

New Year Starting in the Dark

he jonquils at our back door are nearly bursting their sheaths. They'll be flowering by the time Matariki appears this month. They're little harbingers of the Māori new year so in sync in our part of the world with the slow climb from winter darkness to summer light.

We are in a dark season. Warnings echo in the darkness: about waves of illness, COVID and flu among them; irremediable damage to Earth's atmosphere signalled by the fury of storms, fires, floods and droughts; global recession and food shortages brought on by the pandemic and wars; credibility of the Church wounded by abuse, secrecy and clericalism; neglect of our vulnerable people because we're compassion fatigued; currents of misinformation and disinformation developing anti-authority and community divisions; helplessness and depression because it all feels overwhelming. We hear the the ringing challenge to do our bit — and we're not alone.

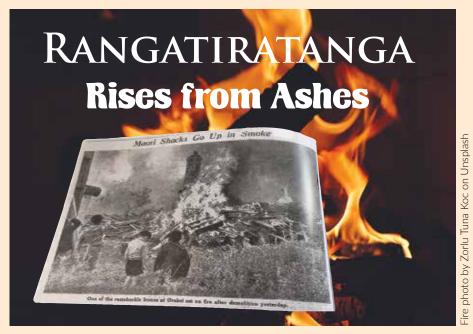
In the darkness we have one another, we have health advice and support, we have governments and industries adjusting emissions, we have the seeds of synodality in the Church, we have more support for vulnerable people and we have an increased consciousness of seeking for the truth.

Although this is all heartening, in many areas we're still in deficit. We can't become so comfortable in the darkness that we resist moving into the light. We can't claim: We've got food banks so we don't need to advocate for sustainable incomes. Or: We've planted a forest so we've fixed climate change. Or: We've put parishes together so we don't need to sustain local communities. Or: We've done Treaty settlements so we don't need to listen to Māori ideas. Or: We've ordained a Vietnamese priest so we don't have to reform ordination.

So the new year celebrations of Matariki and Pentecost at this time can re-energise us for the long haul to the light. Pentecost reminds us of the Spirit of imagination, possibility and participation inspiring the whole world. And the appearance of the cluster of stars making up Matariki reminds us we're not alone. It is the season for planning, for participating and for planting seeds of hope. We can imagine the Spirit active everywhere in our global darkness and enthusing us with courage, responsibility, generosity and kindness for now and for the weeks ahead.

Many have contributed to this June issue. The first articles address questions and attitudes about food accessibility — thought-provoking reading in this season. And there's much more including Ann Hassan's story of coming into the Church. We are grateful to every contributor whose scholarship, reflection, sharing, art and craft helps to reassure us that the Spirit is with us in the darkness and the light is coming.

As is our custom, our last words are of blessing and encouragement.



he year was 1952. The NZ Weekly News headline told the story: "Maori Shacks Go Up in Smoke." The caption beneath the photo was equally derisive: "One of the ramshackle houses at Orakei set on fire after demolition yesterday."

I had been a Pākehā working with Ngāti Whātua o Ōrākei from 1982 and I had heard about the burning of their houses on the papakāinga/home base in 1952, but by chance in 2020 I came across the photo in a cafe. The shock of it was extraordinary.

This could have been the end of the story for Ngāti Whātua. Comprehensive defeat. Reduced to urupā/cemetery on Tāmaki Drive as its only land holdings. But that's not how it worked out.

Sitting in a tree in 1952 watching the carnage was 12-year-old Joe Hawke. In 1975 Joe joined thousands to support Dame Whina Cooper leading the land march from Te Hāpua in the Far North to Parliament. Her wero was clear: "not one acre more" of Māori land was to be taken. In 1977 Prime Minister Muldoon moved to sell the land at Takaparawhau/Bastion Point and Joe and his whānau/family and some of the Ngāti Whātua hāpu/kinship group moved on the land to occupy and stop the sale.

This occupation riveted the nation and for 577 days they remained before their removal was gained by the greatest use of state force against a civilian population since the 1951 waterfront strike. All looked lost again, but they were not to be diminished. They had recovered their rangatiratanga, their right to make their own decisions and accept the consequences about shaping their future and they weren't about to let the Crown thwart them again.

In 1987 they launched a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal (newly expanded in 1985 to look at claims going back to 1840 and the signing of Te Tiriti). In 1990 the tribunal ruled in their favour, famously describing Crown action as having made Ngāti Whātua "refugees in their own land". In 1992, 40 years after the burning of the houses, Takaparawhau returned to Ngāti Whātua.

Now, 30 years later, Ngāti Whātua holds its own mana whenua/power from the land over central Auckland. The hāpu base has now expanded from the quarter-acre urupa to a \$2 billion enterprise of land and assets. There is widespread fluency in te reo Māori/language with their own kura/school and they have kaumātua and kuia/elders to populate the paepae/front seats and confidently offer hospitality and kōrero/oratory where previously they were at times without speakers of te reo.

Less than \$30 million of their newfound financial security has come from the Crown through Te Tiriti settlements. It has come from their judicious use of landholding and other investment they have secured in their rohe/region since the treaty settlements. During the COVID pandemic Ngāti Whātua played a central role in providing vaccinations to Māori and the rest of us. They are a force to be reckoned with in business, education and health and their people are competent and confident as Māori and as citizens. They could have disappeared. Instead they are recovering and prospering.

This will be the future trajectory of the Māori Health Authority. The Government has now clearly heard the Māori clamour that says staying sick for longer because the health system is not designed well enough to meet their needs is no longer acceptable. Māori need the ability to chart their own journey to healthy outcomes and clearly have the ability to manage, provide and supply all that is required, provided they are treated fairly with the pūtea, the Crown money available to support Māori Health.

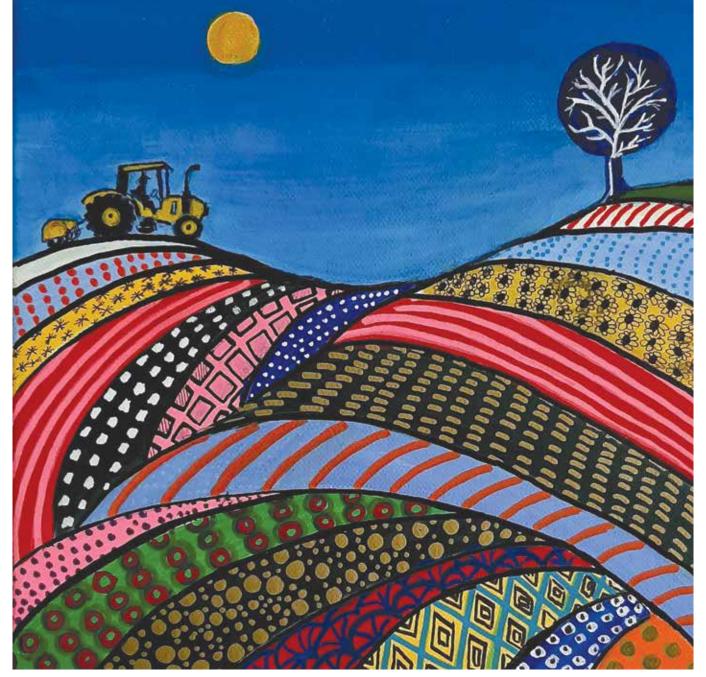
The recent budget announcements have supported Māori aspirations and the Māori Health Authority is underway with substantial levels of financial support. Those running this new authority will work hand in glove with Health New Zealand, commissioning care for Māori from the mothership.

This is a defining moment for our health system. It is akin to the explicit action taken by Ngāti Whātua to recover its whenua and prosper on its own terms in pursuit of its own rangatiratanga. As we have seen for Ngāti Whātua, taking control of your future, accepting the risks of failure, triumphing over difficulty and staying faithful to the kaupapa of self-determination has worked magnificently. It will do the same with the Māori Health Authority. Let's pray that it does so.

I remember Joe Hawke, courageous Ngāti Whātua kaumātua and my friend, who died on 22 May 2022.

Patrick Snedden is Chair of Auckland District Health Board and Manaiakalani Education Trust. He is the author of Pākehā and the Treaty.





Food and Eucharist

NEIL DARRAGH writes that Eucharist is inescapably linked to how we produce, distribute, consume and waste food.

Eucharist and Economics

Sometimes we, or I at least, miss what's most obvious in the things we commonly do. I had been taking part in Eucharists for years before someone pointed out to me how much the Eucharist is tied in to our economics. The Eucharist is a sacrament. That is to say, it is a major and repeated statement of what the Christian community believes in. And every time we take part in it, it nudges us along in the direction of putting those beliefs into practice. We used to say that a sacrament is a sign, an

efficacious sign, of divine grace. We probably should be content to say it "nudges" us along to put into practice what we say we believe in because, it seems, it is really hard to move us. And divine power is essentially non-coercive. It doesn't force us, it doesn't threaten us, but it does encourage us in some directions rather than others.

So what has the sacrament of the Eucharist to do with economics? Economics, at its core, is about food and shelter.

Food and shelter are also the most basic ways human beings

interact with the rest of the planet Earth — we kill and use other living beings within the planet for the sake of our own food and shelter, mainly for survival but sometimes just for comfort and pleasure.

Yet we have managed this so badly that our systems of food distribution in the contemporary world have created extreme inequalities among human beings such that some will survive while others will perish. (We could say the same about shelter, but let us restrict ourselves here to the issue of food.)

The Sign of Food

So what has this to do with the Eucharist? I used to think, along with many others, that the Eucharist was about a close personal relationship between me and God and about the divine life in a community of people. I still do, but the most obvious thing about Eucharist is rather that it is about food — bread and wine. Hardly anyone, as far as I know, disagrees with this.

The central sign which makes Eucharist different from other sacraments, the most obvious thing about it, is that it is about eating — the consumption of food. For this reason, if for no other, Eucharist is inescapably connected with economics. It has to do with how we produce, distribute, consume, and waste food.

A central feature, then, of the Eucharist, one which distinguishes it from other major Christian liturgies, is that it is not just about human beings and their relationship to God. It involves non-human beings, those living beings, that thread of creation that was wheat and grapevine. In becoming food, these living beings of ancient ancestry, much older than humans, are destroyed and processed by the work of human hands and teeth.

Eucharist alerts us, and reminds us, and encourages us to recognise the divine in the living beings around us, especially and perhaps even shamefully in those beings that we kill and process for our consumption. In the sacrament of Eucharist they have become not only food, but the presence of Christ among us.

Early Christian Eucharists

The Eucharist draws its symbolism specifically from those elements of creation that have been processed and distributed as human food.

The fair distribution of food for human beings is an issue that clearly concerned the writers of the New Testament.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 11:17-22, 33-34), the letter of James (Jas 2:1-9), the practice of the early Church in Acts (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35), and the close connection the Gospel writers make between the stories of Jesus feeding the multitude and the stories of Jesus's last supper on the night before his death (eg, Jn 6; Lk 9:10-17; 22:14-23) make the relationship between Eucharist and the equitable sharing of food a key principle of Christian community.

The early Christian community was aware of this when from the very first days they recognised that the most economically vulnerable among them (in those days, the widows and orphans) had to be fed.

The liturgy of Eucharist is intended to remind us of this, to such an extent that, as Paul points out to the Corinthians, we eat and drink the body and blood of Christ unworthily if we allow economic inequalities to exist within our own communities.

The implication that sharing God's gifts of bread and wine in Eucharist commits us to equitable sharing of food among all God's people is one that was widely recognised in the early Church and is still so, though perhaps less fervently, in the Church today.

Do This in Memory of Me

I have already noted the strong connection between the stories of Jesus's multiplication of loaves and fishes and the stories of the "Last Supper" of Jesus with his disciples. The disciples' memory of Jesus ("Do this in memory of me") is, in a fundamental way, the memory of his feeding of the people — one of Christ's most important actionstatements of what the reign of God is (or will be) like.

The memory of Jesus is not about what he looked like, or what he sounded like, but about what he did. He demonstrated what the fully lived reign of God is like. It is at least this: that everyone has enough to eat and with food left over. The same person who said: "This is my body" also said: "I was hungry and you gave me food."

The thankful sharing of the bread and wine is an evolving (not yet fulfilled) celebration of the (still partial) life of Christ among us that nudges us forward to the reign of God in which there is a just production and distribution of food.

Eucharist Today

Corporate industrial agriculture has made food available today in many parts of the world, but the larger impact of this corporatised and industrialised production and distribution of food is overconsumption for some, starvation for others, enormous waste and the destruction of Earth's basic life systems.

The liturgy of Eucharist, in contrast, proposes a different attitude towards the production, distribution, and consumption of food. It invites communities into a larger and more responsible relationship towards the living beings of the Earth and especially towards other human beings, most especially to those who hunger and suffer deprivation.

The fair distribution of food is a feature of the new realm of God that Jesus was proclaiming. There are all sorts of ways of frustrating this purpose, of restricting that distribution, of making it good for some and insufficient for others, but our participation in the Eucharist commits us to a just distribution of food. This is its fundamental economics.

It is easy to miss this connection between food and Eucharist. Yet this connection is an important principle on which we can revitalise and reground our liturgies today so that their impact reaches out beyond personal devotion and good community spirit.

Readers interested in following this theme further will find it carefully and helpfully expanded in Mary E McGann's *The Meal that Reconnects: Eucharistic Eating and the Global Food Crisis.* Liturgical Press, 2020. See review: TM Issue 267 February 2022.

Painting: **Rural New Zealand** by Sue Hull © Used with permission FB: www.facebook.com/656whero

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





Meditations on Food

BARBARA GRANT reflects on how food signifies the love that connects us with one another and the Source of all life in creation.

Feasting Together

On Holy Thursday, a dozen or so people gather under a soft Easter moon in an inner-city garden for a Seder meal. The long tables, dressed in sweetly miscellaneous linens, are laid out in readiness with candles, bowls of water, tiny wine glasses, floral plates, matzos, green and bitter herbs, haroseth, a knuckle of lamb. Young and old together, we celebrate the ancient feast of the Passover. We sing and we pray, we wash each other's hands, we

mourn our dead. Mid-way, we feast on food prepared in kitchens all over the city and we rejoice in being together after another 12 months of jolting in and out of lockdowns. The moon shines gently, indifferently even, on our sorrow and our joy.

I think of Mike Riddell's final piece here in *Tui Motu*, where he writes about the pergolas he built to support climbing roses, hoping that in next year's summer they will bower a long lunch for his village. He knows he may not be there — and, indeed, even before we read his words, we have learned of his death. Despite his keen prescience of mortality, Mike's hope and his joy are entwined around the prospect of eating in community in a place of beauty and light made by his own hands.

A friend has similarly planted an olive grove with the dream of holding feasts in its shade, but life with its turns means we are unlikely to sit together under those branches.



Expired Food

In the week after Easter, I return to my university campus in preparation for its reopening in early May. After nine months of almost no occupation, everything feels run-down, dusty and sad. The air is stale, the light feels grey.

In the kitchen, a couple of unfamiliar staff members are crouching around open cupboard doors, adrift in a pile of large bags of coffee, boxes of tea, plastic bottles of fruit juice.

I wonder aloud what's happening and am told the food has all expired and so must be thrown out. What about offering it first to the doctoral students down the corridor, I suggest.

They look alarmed, don't I understand? It's expired. The spectre

of "health and safety" looms and I shut up. I consider taking some home but it seems weird, I'm too well paid.

Later in the day I see the kitchen rubbish bins piled high; the next day they are empty. A tiny casualty of COVID-19, but the waste of food in bulk is still unsettling. I am the daughter of a depression-raised mother, after all. And in so many places there is not enough: rubbishing edible food feels like an act of profound gracelessness.

Feeding Intimacies

Recently I fed our new grandbaby for the first time. (Heartfelt thanks to his parents for introducing him to a bottle and thereby generously opening up space for others to share in his feeding.)

Cuddling with a baby while they suckle is one of life's delights, kindling deep bonds of intimacy and belonging. This experience is layered with memories of breastfeeding my own two daughters, one of whom is the new mother. Come out, come out, they urge. They will feed from my hand if I let them, as does the blackbird although only in the chick-raising season when things foodwise are urgent.

As the seasons turn, I feed the soil of my garden with compost made from our kitchen scraps and smelly tea made from seaweed and manure.

I'm always hoping to produce a "bumper crop" from the small urban vegetable patch we have carved out of the cliff but I can't say I've got a green thumb. I wish I'd learned more from my croft-born grandfather who grew fine cabbages and golden delicious apples (and seeded the Catholic line in my family from 18th-century roots in a hidden seminary in the Braes of Glenlivet).

Bird-feeding and mulching the garden are prayers in action that bring me close to the weathery ways of the natural world just outside the walls of our house. The unpredictable mix of paltriness and abundance in the vegetable harvest is sobering, but the

In these moments of feeding someone who is profoundly dependent, I feel the awesomeness of our grace-filled interdependence ... that brings me back to thinking about the immense and mysterious love of God.

It's also traversed by the complicated grief-joy I feel when occasionally feeding my almost 98-year old mother who, thankfully, in the dreamtime of her life is as eager for food as the baby. Especially icecream.

In these moments of feeding someone who is profoundly dependent, I feel the awesomeness of our grace-filled interdependence. I consider the vulnerability I came from and to which I will no doubt return, and that brings me back to thinking about the immense and mysterious love of God.

Garden Feeding

Every morning I feed currants to the male blackbird that arrives and, through the kitchen windows and door, stares me in the eye until I look out and notice. The barbary doves, too, line up each morning on the same wooden rail, fussily cooing and scrapping over seed. They are lovely and fierce all at once.

daily insouciance of the birds makes my heart sing. All of this God-filled creation at the backdoor.

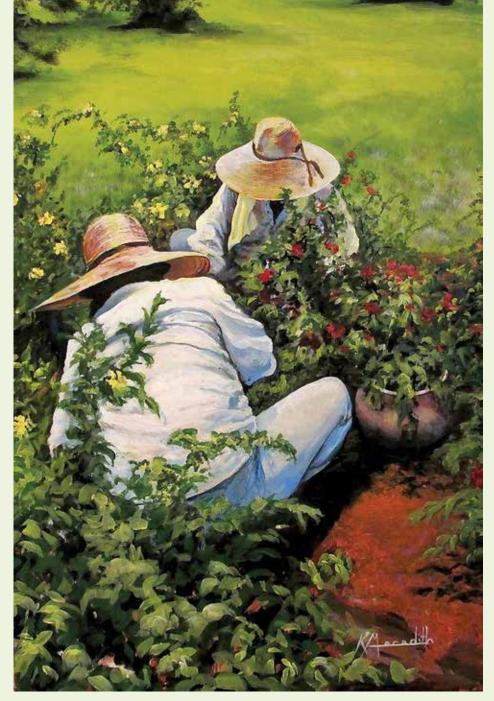
Holy Food

Eat my body. I am the bread of life. Jesus of Nazareth's abiding metaphor — no, his offering — for an ongoing relationship with his people is of being food for us. Such a powerful and uncommon offering: it reminds us that holiness lies in the ordinariness of food. That feeding each other, our birds and our gardens is a homely intimation of Christ's love for us. A form of prayer.

Painting: Still Life — Fruit Bowl and Browns Island by Jolanta Fontaine © Used with permission www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/jolanta-fontaine

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Enough Food Everyday

TRIC MALCOLM traces the link between Eucharist and our Christian challenge to see that everyone has enough food for every meal.

God of seed and growth and harvest, creator of need, creator of satisfaction; give us, we pray, our daily bread, sufficient and assured for all.

Give us also, we pray, the bread of life, and we shall have a care to feed the hungry, and to seek for peace and justice in the world. Help us, then, to remember and to know that you are our life today and every day; you are the food we need, now and for ever.

A New Zealand Prayer Book, page 125

like all acts of Divine love, the Eucharist is an act of social justice. This deeply personal act of intimacy, with and from our creator and redeemer, is also a deeply communal act, one that connects us to one another and to all things. We are bound up in the act of reconciliation — the bringing of fullness of life to and with all things.

But the act of breaking bread and sharing a cup, of sharing our divinity and our humanity, is incomplete as long as the work of justice is incomplete. Each of us has a part to play in the completion of that work of Eucharist or justice. None of us has justice until all of us have justice.

Justice Involves Access to Food

The work of food insecurity and food security is part of this work of justice. Across the globe it is estimated that around 800 million people are food insecure each day.

Despite the efforts of many to achieve Zero Hunger, the second United Nations Sustainable Development Goal, it is estimated that around 660 million people may still face ongoing hunger in 2030. This is in part due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic but also because we largely see food

as a commodity and not as a human right or a necessity to sustain life.

Hunger in Aotearoa

Here in Aotearoa approximately 1 million people — one fifth of our population — are moderately to severely food insecure each day. That is, they regularly skip a meal or reduce its size, remove meat or protein from their diet, do not include fresh fruit or vegetables, do not have food for lunch to take to school or work, or miss meals so their kids can eat — all because of affordability.

It is not about whether there is enough food in Aotearoa. We produce and import enough to feed our population multiple times over.

Food insecurity is about access. What restricts access can be physical — the supermarket being a long way away and not having good transport. Or it can be social and cultural — people may face language barriers or find only unfamiliar food in local food outlets.

Cost of Food Restricts Access

But what most restricts access to food is cost. The balance between the cost of living and lower incomes in Aotearoa sees many in the lower income bracket struggle regularly to access affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate, sustainably produced kai. It is our human right and our government's responsibility to ensure that all within Aotearoa have continuous access to affordable, healthy kai of their choosing.

Food Parcels Are No Solution

Access is NOT about more food charities or doing them better. Food aid, which is what food parcels are, restricts people's mana, their self-determination and autonomy. It is important to ensure no one goes hungry in the immediate term, so food parcels currently have a purpose. But they are not the answer.

Address Root Causes

The deeper challenge for us is to address the inequalities that are at the root cause, those things that allow this to



be how our society chooses to function. The impact of high housing costs, inadequate lower incomes, the high cost of food, the commodification of food, the loss of knowledge about growing kai and its nutrition, the impacts of colonisation. These all create ongoing food insecurity in Aotearoa.

Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective is one network advocating in this area. Part of our mahi is naming the current reality, witnessing to the incredible innovation and resilience of whānau doing it hard and amplifying their insights to those in power, as well as collaborating with others for solutions. Those solutions are needed at local levels and at the wider country and industry levels.

The act of breaking bread and sharing a cup, of sharing our divinity and our humanity, is incomplete as long as the work of justice is incomplete. Each of us has a part to play ... None of us has justice until all of us have justice.

Working Together Is Effective

It is a privilege to network across community food groups, across sectors, businesses, those in the primary sector, food rescue, local and central government, philanthropists and others to reimagine our communities as food secure and thriving. To be part of building the kind of Aotearoa founded on values that uphold people, prosperity and planet — manaaki taiao, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua.

Speak Up Now

So where is the hope and what can we do here and now? In Aotearoa New Zealand we have the opportunity to continue to reimagine how we are community and work together for solutions within our local spaces as well as also across business, government, community, faiths, iwi and hapū.

Within 16 months we will have had both our local body and national elections. This is a moment to tell our decision makers — who are there on our behalf — what kind of society we want, today and for our mokopuna. This is an opportunity to put our values first so that all can thrive. This is the Kore Hiakai vision for a Food Secure Aotearoa.

Nau te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.

With your basket and my basket, we will sustain everyone.

For further information: www.zerohunger.org.nz

Painting: *Gardening – a Passion* by Kevin Meredith © Used with permission www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/1-kevin-meredith

Tric Malcolm is Pou Ārahi of Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective — six faithbased social services organisations as foundation partners and collaborators from many sectors.





MATARIKI "ABC"

CLAIRE RYAN offers three areas for celebrating the appearance of Matariki in our early morning sky.

gā mihi o Matariki! (Happy Matariki)! So, another holiday! What does it mean, and how can we celebrate it? As an amateur astronomer who has lived in this nation for most of my life, I offer a few suggestions — not as the definitive answer because I have no right to claim that — but as a way to start some dialogue. Here are my thoughts on Matariki "ABC"— astronomy, biculturalism and community.

Astronomy

Matariki is a small cluster of stars, visible all over the world except from



Claire Ryan is an Auckland District Judge, a Scripture scholar, astronomer and coach, adjudicator and support of the World Schools Debating Championships. Antarctica, but it is virtually impossible to see in very southern latitudes, because it is very low in the sky there and hidden by hills and homes. It is the most obvious and famous of about 1,100 "open clusters" (stars held loosely together by a gravitational bond). The cluster is known also as the Pleiades or the Seven Sisters, Subaru (Japanese), Makali'i (Hawaiian), Matali'i (Samoan), and Matari'i (Tahitian).

Sharp eyes can see six or seven stars in the cluster but there are about 3,000. Binoculars are a great way to see them but the powerful magnitude of a telescope splits them too far apart. Many of the stars in Matariki are bluish, hot, young stars — only about 100 million years old! The glow or haze around them is a dust cloud through which they are passing.

These stars are about 444 light years away. The light we see from Matariki this June started on its way to us while Elizabeth I sat on the English throne. A light year is the distance a beam of light travels in one year — 9 trillion kilometres. The mathematicians among us will have already worked out that Matariki is therefore just under 4 quadrillion kilometres away. The mechanics among us will have already worked out that if we set off for Matariki in a car at 100 kmph, it would take us almost 5 billion years.

Back down on Earth, Matariki has been used for centuries as a navigational guide. Tohunga kōkōrangi or expert astronomers used these stars to help them travel across the Pacific. Aotearoa New Zealand has a proud history of contributions to navigation, astronomy and rocketry. Our Matariki holiday is a time to acknowledge this, to celebrate science, to look up and smile!

Biculturalism

It is also a time to acknowledge te Tiriti between tangata whenua and manuhiri and what we can learn from each other. Matariki is the name given to the cluster above this land by its people, who have for centuries planted crops, caught fish and charted life by the calendar known as Maramataka or the turning of the moon. Their traditional culture, fused with astronomical observation, calendrical knowledge and the delineation of seasons, has been passed down and retained first by oral tradition then transcription. We can learn a great deal from it.

Community

Matariki has historically been and now is again, a time for celebration, growth and renewal, a time to gather, to reflect on the past, acknowledge the present and plan for the year ahead. We mourn for those who have passed and rejoice with the living. It represents a synthesis of science and spirituality, challenge and comfort, death and life. The old whakataukī or proverb "Matariki



"Matariki" means "eyes of god" and may refer to the pūrakau or story of Tāwhirimātea, the god of wind and weather, who when he discovered that his siblings had separated his parents Ranginui and Papatūānuku, tore out his eyes and threw them in rage into the sky, landing on=his father's chest, where they remain, preserved and protected forever. Another pūrakau is that the brightest star in the cluster is the whaea or mother, surrounded by her family.

As agriculturalists, Māori have planned their years by the rising of stars in the morning. The "heliacal rising" (meaning "becoming visible just before sunrise") of Matariki heralds the New Year, just as it does in cultures across the southern hemisphere, as the time when the short wintry days will start to become longer. Not all iwi celebrate at the same time, some beginning on the first new moon or full moon after Matariki rises and some celebrating Puanga (the star Rigel in the constellation Orion) where that star is more visible than Matariki.

In the northern hemisphere, New Year comes six months later, which of course is winter there. Marking Matariki allows us to recapture and celebrate a New Year consistent with our seasons and is a time to learn about Maramataka and the kaupapa of the sky above us.

ahunga nui" (the great mounds of Matariki) refers to such food as kumara which has been stored before the frosts and is now shared.

However, the great mounds are not always full these days. Our homeless are cold and hungry. Winter rains bring regular floods to lands where flooding was once rare. Our safe pre-COVID world has been shattered. It is hard for many to put food on the table. There is an increase not just in petrol prices but in war.

Matariki is a time for us to do more than mouth platitudes but to feed hungry mouths and heed mouths calling for justice. The wero to those of us who have storehouses is to open them and share, whether our kumara be psychological, physical, spiritual or a combination of these. Of course we cannot do it alone. The God of Amos 5:8, Job 9:9 and 38:31 is with us as are those we love. Kua haehae ngā hihi o Matariki (the rays of Matariki are spread.) Let us spread those rays this winter. Happy Matariki to you all.

Diagram: *Finding Matariki* Supplied by Claire Ryan

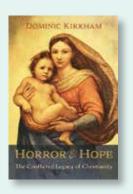
Painting: *Matariki* by Star Gossage © oil on board 800 x 1200 mm (2014/30/1) Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2014 Used with permission

REVIEW

Horror & Hope

The Conflicted Legacy of Christianity

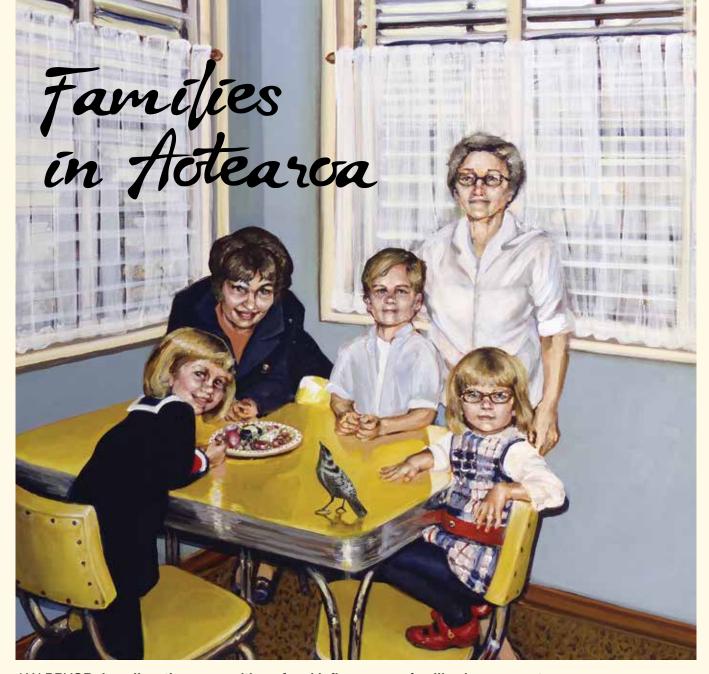
by Dominic Kirkham Published by Wipf and Stock, 2021. (USD 25.00) Reviewed by Beverley Smith



hristianity is a global phenomenon that has affected the lives of millions of people and expressed itself in many ways over the centuries. Sometimes these expressions such as imperialism, colonialism, anti-Semitism have been at odds with the core values of the Gospels. Kirkham examines the historical record of the past two millennia. He holds that how the Christian legacy is to be presented in a post-Christian world is crucial for the future particularly with the issues of our time.

He contrasts the two missions at the beginning of Christianity. The Pauline mission focused on reaching beyond Judaism to the Gentile world. The Petrine mission, led by Peter and James (brother of Jesus), continued a closer relationship with Judaism and explored the nature of Jesus's divinity. Over the millennia divisions developed between these missions, at times with outright hostility and enmity.

Kirkham sees that there is hope for the future: "One of the effects of COVID-19 is that it has challenged the long-standing hubris that we can manipulate nature for our benefit. It has reawakened an awareness of the significance of the natural world for many suffering under the restraints of lockdown."



JAN PRYOR describes the composition of and influences on families in our country.

e all know what a family is but defining "family" is not so straightforward. When I taught family studies at Victoria University I started by asking students to define a family. At first they would describe biological ties, then legal relationships. They began then to include flatmates and close friends. The three common criteria — biology, legal relationships and co-residency — predominated, but they also named people with whom they did not live.

Children Describe Family

In several studies I have asked children to tell me who were in their families. Most focused on people in their household, although many expanded this to include pets — dogs, cats, etc. Recently my eight-year-old granddaughter told me that her dog defended her cat because "they are both in the family".

It became even more interesting when I asked them to say what a family is. Some were endearingly direct: "Family are people who give you things." The majority defined families as people (and dogs!) who love you and whom you love.

Features of New Zealand Families

Nearly half our children are born outside legal marriage — which is the case for many other Western countries. Usually their parents are cohabiting, and often they marry after the children are born since about 12 per cent live in cohabiting households at any one time.

Lone-person households are the fastest growing. Widowhood, separation and the later age at which people marry or cohabit contribute to this. In contrast, the percentage of family households (two parents and children) is declining.

A major source of information about families is the *Growing Up in New Zealand* (GUINZ) longitudinal study based at Auckland University. It involves approximately 6,000 children and their families and started in 2009 and 2010 before the children were born. Both parents were interviewed at successive times and as soon as they were old enough the children were actively involved. The children are now entering their teens. The study broadly represents the population of Aotearoa, with an oversampling of Māori and Pasifika households.

At the start of the GUINZ study, Asian and Māori

mothers were most likely to be living in lone parent households. European and Middle Eastern mothers were most likely to live in a two-parents-alone household. Pasifika mothers were most likely to be living in a non-kin (unrelated to her) household.

It is notable that many children in Aotearoa have multiple ethnicities. One third of children in the GUINZ study had multiple ethnicities as identified by their parents and six per cent had three or more ethnicities.

A surprising proportion of families lived in households with other people. A third of lone parents with children under 18, and young couples without children, do so; a quarter of single parents with older children also live with others. These multi-family or multi-adult households are increasingly common. They may provide support for parents — in the GUINZ study, for example, pregnant parents living in extended family households anticipated comparatively high levels of parenting support.

It is estimated that about 10 per cent of families here are stepfamilies. This brings its own challenges as children and adults adapt to new and sometimes difficult relationships.

An increasing, though still small, number of children are being raised by two parents of the same sex. Typically this comes about when heterosexual parents separate and the mother forms a relationship with another woman. It is, too, becoming more common for two men to raise children. Although there is little research about male same-sex parents, experience with such families indicates that surrogate and donor women stay in contact with the children, enabling them to have female as well as male role models.

In a comprehensive review of research, mostly from overseas, I found that children with gay parents fare just as well and sometimes even better than children with heterosexual parents — perhaps because their parents have to face some challenges in having them and are highly committed to parenting.

Another family form that is becoming more common is that where the child is conceived by technology such as donor insemination. Research shows that children conceived this way benefit from knowing their beginnings as soon as they can understand. They accept the fact easily when they are young.

Other Influences on Families

It is well established that factors other than family structure — such as conflict, poverty, parenting and parental mental health — are better predictors of children's wellbeing than whether a child lives in a lone-parent, a two-parent, same-sex parent, or multi-generational household.

Family Environment

The family environment into which a child is born is most likely to have a significant impact on that child's development. Family cohesion, the climate of conflict and disagreement, the quality of the interparental relationship, stress on family members and the family as a whole, and the relationship between the family and the neighbourhood in which it resides, are factors that will have an impact on early and later development.

For example, it is widely documented that the quality of the relationship between parents is a major factor in how well children develop. Interparental conflict, whether parents are together or apart, has a negative impact on children's wellbeing. Interestingly, it is not just overt conflict such as verbal or physical aggression. Silent conflict, where parents stonewall each other and don't communicate, can be equally damaging. In those cases children cannot identify the source or reason for the conflict and are likely to blame themselves.

Stress in Families

Stress often underlies adverse family dynamics. A recent study of family stress during pregnancy showed that the stress was related to cognitive performance at three years of age. Stress is most often related to external factors such as not having enough money and having to make continuous decisions between basics such as food, rent and petrol.

Pākehā families are influenced by whānau culture in some interesting ways. For example, open adoption, which has been common in Aotearoa for a long time, is similar to the Māori practice of whāngai. And stepfamily formation in Māori whānau is often less fraught than it can be for Pākehā families because children's care is often shared by grandparents and aunts. It is said that it takes a village to raise a child and there is no doubt that having several adults to love a child unconditionally is an advantage. Children do, though, benefit from having one or two key people in their lives with whom they can form the closest attachments.

Support for Families

New Zealand families, then, are characterised by having fluid and diverse forms. No wonder they are hard to define. This is similar to African American family culture and is in contrast with many Asian cultures such as Japan and China. In the latter, divorce and stepfamilies are comparatively uncommon.

We know that too many families suffer from poverty, abuse and poor quality housing. These are social issues that need to be addressed by government policy. There is a dire need for educational, financial, emotional and health support especially for families that are struggling.

Many families, however, are flourishing. In these difficult times the generosity of whānau, community and friends shines through in many instances. Our families are precious — we all have and need them — and their wellbeing is crucial to each of us as individuals.

For further reading: Growing Up in New Zealand GUINZ website: www.growingup.co.nz

Painting: **Another Easter (Grandma's House)** by Stephanie J Ryan © Used with permission www.stephanie-j-ryan-artist.com

Jan Pryor taught developmental and family psychology at Auckland and Victoria Universities. She established the McKenzie Centre for Family Studies at Victoria University, and is now retired.





KEVIN CLEMENTS outlines four challenges pacifists face in response to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine.

President Putin's invasion of Ukraine is a challenge to peacemakers everywhere. Though the conflict has its triggers, there is no moral, political, or military justification for the invasion. How, then, should peacemakers respond?

Most modern pacifists are not passivists. Our position, while morally on the side of the angels, is untenable unless we can also demonstrate some capacity to respond to the suffering and destruction nonviolently. To do this in the middle of an armed conflict may seem ridiculously naïve but it's an issue that has to be engaged if pacifism is to have a future in the 21st century.

The invasion of Ukraine is an old 20th-century style war seeking to change national boundaries and depose the Ukrainian regime. But it is also a proxy war between Russia and the United States, with Russia trying to impose its will on Ukraine

and the US seeking to regain its global leadership by revitalising and strengthening NATO and other Cold War alliances. The point of this proxy war was enunciated very clearly by the US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin at a press conference in Poland when he said: "We want to see Russia weakened to the degree that it can't do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine."

I believe the challenges facing pacifists are fourfold. We must:
1) allievate suffering; 2) engage in nonviolent resistance; 3) find ripe moments for peace; and 4) expose the futility of "big power" rivalries.

Alleviate Suffering

Pacifist peacemakers need to join forces with intergovernmental and international non-governmental organisations delivering humanitarian and medical assistance to as many wounded and displaced people as possible. This means supporting the UNHCR, the International Organisation of Migration, The Red Cross, UNICEF, Médecins Sans Frontières and all the other organisations delivering humanitarian assistance to a suffering people. It's important in this process to remember that there is also suffering on the Russian side so such assistance should be given without fear or favour when and as necessary.

Nonviolent Resistance

Second, pacifist peacemakers need to explore multiple nonviolent responses to aggression. We have a vocational commitment to suffer violence rather than inflict it. It's a brave strategy and one that is as potentially risky as facing the enemy with weapons. It treats opponents as human beings rather than as "dehumanised enemies".

Those who are invading assume that their conquest will generate obedience on the part of the population. If that obedience is withdrawn, the powerful lose their power.

There are already many examples of nonviolent resistance to the Russian invasion. Cyber hacking, public concerts, community food distribution centres and community efforts to clear up destroyed houses and neighbourhoods all play an important role in communal nonviolent resistance.

During the opening phases of the war, brave individuals changed road signs to confuse the Russians. Many civil society actors stood in front of tanks, encouraged Russian soldiers to desert and challenged their right to be on Ukrainian soil. Building links to Russian peace actors (19,000 of whom have been imprisoned for their resistance to the war) maintains transnational solidarity between peace movements.

If the current invasion stalls, and/or there is a mutually hurting stalemate with the military on both sides unable to prevail, this is also an opportunity to reactivate peaceable connections across the Russian-Ukrainian divide and push for peaceful solutions to the invasion.

These micro and macro initiatives need to be supported both internally and externally and deserve as much support as military actions in terms of building robust civil society actors and institutions. These will be critical to the development of democratic and accountable institutions after the war is over.

Finding "Ripe Moments"

The third challenge for pacifists and peacebuilders is to identify resilient, influential actors and communities committed to negotiated and peaceful solutions to the conflict. They might be religious, educational, scientific or economic leaders but if they have political clout they should be able to generate conditions that will encourage political leaders to move to the negotiating table.

Some of these actors might already be engaging in quiet "unofficial diplomacy", utilising old connections

between Russia and the Ukraine.

These third-party interventions and communications have proven extremely useful in a wide variety of conflicts eg, the Sri Lankan Civil War, the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Nigerian Biafran Civil War, so there is every reason that they could be influential in the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

Expose the Futility

It is critical that pacifists and peace movements do all in their power to prevent a 21st-century imposition of old Cold War alliances and the global containment of China and Russia.

Increases in military expenditure over the past two years; a strengthening of extended deterrence doctrines and requests from nuclear umbrella states to have the US and other nuclear powers base nuclear weapons on their soil are all dangerous developments.

If they are to be stopped it's critical that we rediscover 20th-century principles of co-operative security in collaboration with those who might wish to harm us.

Unfortunately, instead of focusing on negotiated solutions to problems and a reinforcement rather than a subversion of the United Nations, the Western response has been to send billions of dollars' worth of military equipment and logistic support to Ukraine and to respond in exclusively military terms.

There is no doubt that Ukraine has a right to self-defence and equally no doubt that Western military support and the astonishing unity of the Ukrainian people seem to be blunting the invasion.

Peacemakers know, however, that wars are rarely resolved by escalating the military odds in favour of one side. In response to the unexpected Ukrainian resistance, President Putin has already mentioned the possibility of tactical nuclear weapons being used.

We are living in very dangerous times and the fog of war can only be pierced by pursuing "peace by peaceful means". If NATO and the development of old Cold War alliances are seen as the solution, then the world is asking the wrong question.

Peacemakers' Challenge

In response to these fourfold challenges, pacifists must declare their revulsion of aggression everywhere. War is never an answer to any problem.

Peacemakers everywhere — including the Secretary General of the United Nations and the UN General Assembly — have condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine as a particularly blatant example of transnational aggression aimed at changing borders and political direction.

It is important that those of us outside Ukraine do not lecture Ukrainians on how they should defend their country against aggression. Their embrace of military defence is entirely understandable given the gravity of the challenge.

Peacemakers have both a moral and political responsibility, however, to think of alternatives and to explore nonviolent options that do not depend on the demonisation and dehumanisation of the enemy and the perpetuation of cycles of revenge.

Building a more peaceful world is a lifetime's challenge but one that all peacemakers must engage.

In the first place we must end the intensified rearming of the West and rising levels of military expenditure worldwide.

Second, we must give more support to the United Nations as the one body capable of facilitating the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Third, we must make efforts to forge peaceful relationships with Ukrainians and Russians (known to us) so that neither side feels isolated or alone.

In all of this, optimism, hopefulness, courage and love are central to ensuring that peace becomes a viable option for the future.

Photo: **Street Art** in Paris, France by Seth Globepainter

Kevin Clements is Director of the Toda Peace Institute. His lifelong involvement has been in academic analysis and practice in the areas of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.



Litary on Love

Like a mountain

Standing solid against the skyline
Enduring the ravages of wind and snow
True love is strong and lasting
Giving security and stability now and for the
future

Grounding hope in the reality of faithfulness. Love is like a mountain.

Like a river

Flowing from the mountain spring Through gorge, refreshing plain and sea True love is always renewing life Bringing people into closer harmony Increasing and multiplying in others. Love is like a river.

Like the sky

Nurturing us with sun and rain
Pointing us to the stars in the far beyond
True love is boundless in its potential
Expanding through intimacy and affection
Into deeper trust and mutual dependence.
Love is like the sky.

Like the trees

Rooted deeply in the soil
Providing shelter against howling gales
True love is grounded at life's centre
Giving security and stability now and for the future
Grounding hope in the reality of faithfulness
Love is like the trees.



our Dream for the Church

THE RONGOPAI ST PAUL'S EUCHARISTIC COMMUNITY shares their hope for Church reform in preparation for the Synod on Synodality.

e are an ecclesial community affiliated with the Diocese of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. We meet weekly for Eucharist, characterised by shared leadership and inclusiveness in language and participation. During COVID restrictions we have continued with interactive online (Zoom) weekly sharing in a Liturgy of the Word.

We use the name Rongopai — Good News — because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is our foundation and our freedom. The Eucharist is at the heart of Rongopai. It is through Eucharist that we understand who we really are and the significance of our relationships with each other in the world we live in.

As an Aotearoa New Zealand community, we strive for a bicultural expression of our Catholic Christian identity and are concerned for social and environmental justice both at home and abroad. Our liturgy is shaped by Word and Eucharist, and we Gather and Send around these two elements.

Our Synodal Journey

Six separate groups of Rongopai people, approximately 40 in number, met mostly online over a number of months as part of the Church's synodal journey. This report is a distillation of our insights and dreams for the Catholic Church.

Our Conclusions

We believe that a transformative change of heart is needed within our Church.

We understand that a spiritual conversion of minds and hearts is



For a synodal Church

communion | participation | mission

the basis on which synodality must work. It is both personal and Churchbased. Spiritual conversion requires, especially of the official Church:

- acknowledgement of "sins" committed (especially sexual abuse and the misuse of power)
- a genuine expression of sorrow and atonement for wrongs committed
- a "conversion" a spiritual transformation, a deep change of heart
- stepping away from the clericalism that maintains inequalities within

- the Church and the protectionism that places the "good name" of the Church above its faithfulness to the Gospel
- living a new transformed life both in the way we think and the way we act.

Model of Church

We, the baptised, are responsible for our Church. Our Church functions best as smaller Christian faith communities rather than the current model of parish which we believe is not life-giving and fails so many of the baptised. Rongopai St Paul's is a well-established example of how such communities can function.

Along with prayer and Scripture sharing, these smaller groups must be centred on the Eucharist. We encourage mutual support which naturally leads to shared meals and other sharing, fulfilling some of the needs of those without enough resources.

The implication of a change towards smaller Eucharist-centred communities is that many more ordained are needed. A move away from a restrictive priesthood of men set apart, to a priesthood open to all, women and men, married and single is critical for the future of our Church.

all the baptised in Eucharist should occur. Language used should be fully inclusive. Artificial barriers to full participation need to be removed.

Governance

Leadership at all levels of these small faith communities and larger faith communities should be shared across all the baptised, female and male, young and old, and those of diverse cultural heritages.

Authentic governance should represent the breadth and depth of the People of God. The communities of believers of a diocese should be involved in the processes of appointment of people to governance roles, including that of bishop, and

We, the baptised, are responsible for our Church. Our Church functions best as smaller Christian faith communities rather than the current model of parish which we believe is not life-giving and fails so many of the baptised.

We believe that there are many baptised New Zealanders called to ordination who are excluded by reason of gender and marital status. It is both unnecessary and, in our view, morally wrong at many levels to import priests from less privileged countries to serve New Zealanders when so many of our people are prevented by outdated rules from fulfilling a priestly vocation.

Each community of believers can develop its own outreach to the poor and vulnerable in the wider world, including the vulnerable Earth we live in. They can seek ways to connect with people of other Christian faiths, and those who do not share our faith in Christ but, like us, are committed to helping the poor and vulnerable and our Earth environment. There is a need for an ecological conversion of all Catholics.

Inclusion and Participation

All members of the Church should be of equal status regardless of being lay, ordained or religious. Gender should not make any difference to full participation in the Church.

Full and active participation of

participate meaningfully in decisionmaking at every level.

As Church in Aotearoa New Zealand, partnerships based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles are essential at all levels of governance.

Spirituality

All Catholics must be supported to embrace prayer in its different forms and be helped to discover meditation and contemplation and other ways to meet God in their everyday lives.

Faith Education

Meaningful and accessible ongoing faith education must be available for all adults in areas including Scripture, theology, Catholic social teaching and ministry, to assist them to grow in their faith, understanding and practice. Faith communities should nominate those who will take on leadership roles.

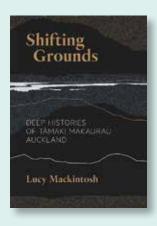
Seminary programmes should be broadened to facilitate this, not just for priests in training but for all those who will take leadership, pastoral care, social justice, sacramental and preaching roles in Catholic communities.

REVIEW

Shifting Grounds

Deep Histories of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

by Lucy Mackintosh Published by Bridget Williams Books, 2021. (NZD 59.99) Reviewed by Teresa McNamara

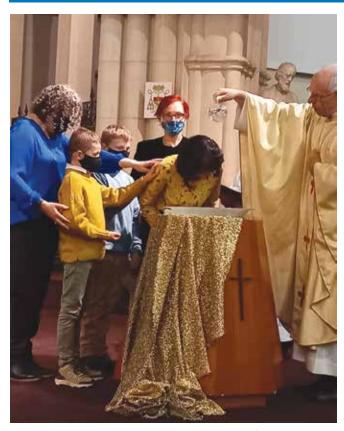


was walking at Pukekawa Auckland Domain and strayed off my usual track that passes by European landmarks such as the Auckland War Memorial Museum, glasshouses and a duck pond. I was intrigued to come across a tōtara tree protected by ancestral carvings. Where could I find the story? Shifting Grounds answered my questions.

This visually stunning book weaves together the multi-cultural histories of three significant locations in Tāmaki Makaurau: Pukekawa Auckland Domain, Maungakiekie One Tree Hill and Ōtuataua Stonefields at Ihumātao. Lucy Mackintosh digs deep to tell stories that many of us don't know. Who knew there was a Chinese market garden at Puekekawa or that John Logan Campbell produced olive oil from the olive trees on the slopes of Maungakiekie? A little like peeling back the layers of an onion, each time I pick up this book another layer of our rich and culturally diverse history is revealed.

Shifting Grounds will appeal to historians, to those who are interested in the places around them and would be a wonderful addition to any coffee table as it is a book well suited to repeated browsing.

I've Now Cast My Lot



n his book An Astonishing Secret, Daniel O'Leary writes about God sending out a continued invitation, like an extended thread or rope, hoping to tie in each of us. The way this invitation manifests itself — through music, literature, the outdoors etc. — is different depending on our particular predilections. But we first need to be susceptible, vulnerable to the call.

This counters conventional wisdom — we tend to think of vulnerability and susceptibility as bad things, signs of weak character. After many years' vulnerability of becoming my own family's religious nutter, I came into the Church this Easter at the Holy Saturday Vigil in Dunedin's St Joseph's Cathedral.

It was beautiful. I'm not used to the Cathedral — we're normally in the 70s-built parish church adjacent to my children's school, and so on Holy Saturday the setting felt big, old, dramatic: all stone, stained glass, unupholstered pews, with a choir in red, and gold lamé draped around the font.

My little party of sponsors and supporters sat right up the front — something my 8-year-old now recommends for all occasions: "You can see EVERYTHING!" And he's right, you *could* see everything: the fire, flame of each candle; smoke; whispered stage directions and nods of assent.



Ann Hassan is Assistant Editor and Administrator of *Tui Motu*. She has two young boys and loves reading and op shopping.

From up the front, you can see that pomp and circumstance is hard work and choreography: the high drama of ritual practised over centuries. When the bells rang out I felt a surge of something — the grandeur, obviously, but also a sense of pride and of fellow-feeling.

My preparation, with sponsors, priest and parish, was an example of the generosity of the Church. Sponsor 1 is a great force of evangelisation, a model of doing the right thing over and over in acts small and large, and of doing so not with dour determination but joyful perseverance. She answered questions and asked them, prepared and rehearsed rites, helped my children feel a part of things at every turn.

Sponsor 2, previously known to me only casually, and whom I approached as a friendly person of approximately my age and stage, has been revealed to me as an incredibly impressive, deep-thinking woman, with a profound and enviable faith. And so now, when we're sitting in our adjacent pews collectively wrangling our children, I find myself grateful for her presence and our connection.

My parish priest, eternally cheerful and optimistic, made things work in a COVID environment, attended latenight Zoom meetings because a post-kid-bedtime hour suited me best, and has been the reliable and familiar face of my journey this far. And my fellow parishioners have been patient, supportive and enthusiastic. My new Bible, bearing the names and well-wishes of the parish, is a treasure.

And now, in the aftermath, I've the Sunday joy of being like everybody else. Whereas I once shied from any public declaration — the sort that graduates *in absentia* and marries in a registry office — I see now the value of professing your belief publicly before a community of fellow believers. And I've realised that saying "I seek your approval to belong" is not going begging, but a mark of esteem for others.

So I've cast my lot with the Church. We think of casting lots as gambling — like the soldiers playing a game of chance for Jesus's clothes. While reading something entirely unrelated the other day, I discovered that the phrase "cast your lot" is related to *cleromancy* — divination by throwing dice — which comes from the Greek *kleros* ("lot", but from which we get "clerk" and also "cleric") and *manteia* meaning oracle or divination. So there is a sense of the intentional — the casting, the participation — and a sense of accepting that you are part of something larger than yourself and your own will.

"Do you feel different?" my 10-year-old asked. Well... I have that feeling you get when you've cleaned your house properly — not just a poke-it-about cleaning but moving sofas and sorting out that corner cupboard. Things are more in their right and proper place. I know they won't stay that way themselves — that it'll be a lifetime of thinking and doing — but, as they say, at least I'm in the game.

Photo: Ann Hassan's Baptism by Kathleen Currie Used with permission

Joseph Has His Own Story

he Sisters of St Joseph were a big part of artist Joseph Barber's early life and he said. "I was joined at the hip to my nanny Sister Makareta. I was always there in a corner taking it in. You really get to know that deeper aspect. So that helped a lot when I had to come up with a picture of St Joseph and the korero behind it. I did try to capture the essence of him in a Māori aspect."

Joseph is building his career as an artist. His is not a nine-to-five job. "Circumstances make art a side hustle for me but I take commissions and I'm consulting and building my career. My biggest aspiration is to get into editing concept art for projects and illustrating — I love illustrating."

He said he can work in many mediums but "my heart and soul is always

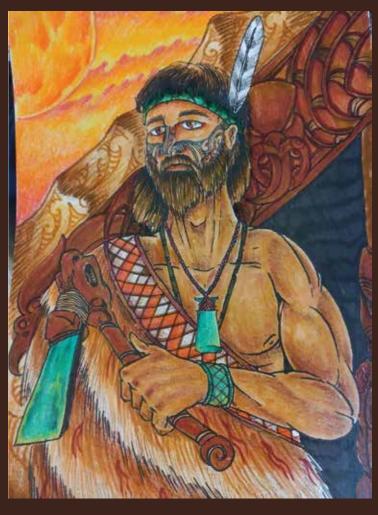
going to be in traditional art — pen and paper, markers, that kind of thing."

He spoke of St Joseph as a man who "would have had his own ambitions and aspirations during his life and his own story to tell." Joseph's korero on Hohepa follows:

I think of Hōhepa/Joseph as foremost a man of quiet, thoughtful actions and unwavering integrity. His loyalty and devotion to Jesus and Mary is made paramount in those few but important scenes we find in the Scriptures, so this made portraying him as Māori much easier.

The prominent focal points, the two toki or adze, represent Joseph's trade skills. Joseph by profession was a carpenter and very respected for his skills as such. Since the chisel and adze are the foundation tools of Māori used for both carving and house building, it is a fitting likeness for tools and probably not too dissimilar to what Joseph himself would have used in ancient times.

The hei toki or chisel worn around his neck denotes his vocation as carpenter, but it also holds a deeper meaning. For Māori it is taonga given to people who are well respected and, most of all, people who are trusted by their peers. Taonga are signs of the person's integrity and strength. The hei toki signifies Joseph's integrity and strength, character traits recognised by those who



knew him well like Mary and Jesus.

Höhepa's headband or tīpare alludes to his practical nature — it keeps his hair off his face and soaks up the sweat from his brow while he's working. This contrasts with the feather placed within the band, which stands out from the surroundings and represents Joseph's deep connection with te whai ngaro or the unseen world. As well as being a working carpenter, Joseph was also a dreamer who connected with and acted upon his spiritual sense, often leading him and his family from danger to safety.

Hōhepa's mata-ora or facial tattoos depict aspects of his life story and his genealogy or whakapapa.

The stance and

surroundings of Hōhepa add to the story of this man. His body is toned from his physical work. His stance is strong and humble as he holds the tools of his trade, visible for all to see.

The background locates Joseph in a physical setting. He is standing in front of the wharenui or house he has carved himself — a job which holds great respect and requires long commitment.

In the far background, the setting sun and sand hillocks are a small nod to the arid landscape of parts of Joseph's original homeland in the Middle East. Working in the heat and travelling over the warm sand and scrub would have been as natural to him as breathing.

I purposely did not include Jesus or Mary in this picture so as not to overshadow Hōhepa himself, though the impact they had on one another's lives was profound.

Tēnā koutou

Ko Atihau me Ngāti Kahungunu oku iwi Ko te awa o Whanganui toku awatupua Ko **Joseph Huatahi Barber** ahau.

I'm a Whanganui based artist/illustrator who loves to create whatever comes to mind.





Consider Personal Prayer

hen getting to know individual members of a local faith community as a newly-arrived Anglican parish priest and facilitator of local ministry, I often asked about their personal prayer life. Almost invariably the answer was something like: "Not great."

In one sense, that's healthily honest. The subject of prayer touches a person's innermost privacy into which no one has the right to intrude uninvited.

But if prayer is the wellspring of our participation in the mission and ministry of the Church in all its expressions in the world, we don't need to be diffident when speaking about our internal spirituality and our external living out of the radically challenging Gospel.

I'm addressing our own private prayer — our spirituality — not the Prayer of the Church which claims more confidence. While I treasure Christianity's wordy liturgical tradition, spirituality is about the stuff deeper than words. I've learnt



Boyd Wilson is an old bloke living in Auckland after long service in agricultural journalism and rural Church ministry. in conversations with people of other faith traditions that they, too, value spirituality. And it doesn't belong solely to religion. I've been with dying people who label themselves agnostic or atheist who have revealed an inner spirituality. I love the ancient Sanskrit greeting "Namaste": the spark of holiness in everything and everyone reaches out to greet the spark in you. This acknowledgement of the sacred is fundamental in the exchange of wairua/breath in the hongi.

I think that every human is gifted with faith however unstructured, unfocused and un-nurtured. And the whole of the wondrous, still-evolving universe is infused, now and since its seeding, with grace, both infinite and intimate.

I trust the deep tradition that insists that the Infinite Other calling us into prayer is closer to each of us than we are to ourselves, so we ought not imagine that we are reaching out to a deity on a remote throne.

Finally, if the Church is to be renewed from grassroots up (rather than languishing under remote hierarchies, clericalism and nostalgia for the good old days) the essential yeast must be true prayer at the grassroots and in the margins of faith. The New Testament Greek *laos* (from which our word "laity" derives) means ALL the people. However, in

my experience the call to renewal from the grassroots up means a long, hard journey. There is always the temptation to compromise not only with top-down institutionalism but also with nostalgia for the good old days of comfortable "churchianity".

Much as I'm inspired by wonderful mentors of prayer through the centuries and respect for the spiritual authority in the Church, I don't believe that I may delegate my personal prayer life to others.

I've done my share of spiritual mentoring but I don't believe anyone can teach another person to pray with deep integrity like they can teach arithmetic. When Jesus's friends asked him how to pray, he answered with the Lord's Prayer. But there's much more to Jesus's teachings and life.

I'm old and mostly detached from institutional church life by physical disability. I keep saying an Office, praying the day's Propers, and so on. Even before our move to a rest home, my partner (in a marriage now in its seventh decade) and I included our garden and kitchen equally in our personal prayer-places. The principle remains.

I picture my minute, faltering offering of prayer entering, along with all life, all creation, into the allembracing Dance of the Three.

I've learned much about prayer from the life of land and from marriage. From the land because it includes vast life, much of it hidden, relating, living, dying yet embraced in the process of dynamic wholeness. From marriage because it's a mutual, constantly renewed commitment to true partnership, giving priority to the subject content of our relationship, demanding listening hearts. I may fool others and myself sometimes but Lesley (and God) never!

People vary in prayer temperaments. Prayer that's part of my being rather than something I "do" focuses on thanksgiving, listening and simply laying down my concerns rather than asking for interventions. I'm happy that others have different approaches — such as a focus on intercession. Our differences are among the reasons why we're called into communities of faith, into communion.



The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ carries on the work of legendary New Zealander, the late Professor Fred Hollows. Fred was an internationally acclaimed eye surgeon and social justice activist who championed the right of all people to have high-quality and affordable eye care. His vision was of a world where no one is needlessly blind or vision impaired.

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Learning As We Journey

KATHLEEN RUSHTON offers insights from Luke 9:51-62 for our journeying in discipleship.

Journey to Jerusalem Begins

We are on many journeys both individually and collectively. In the light of this fact of life, the emphasis on characters making journeys in Luke's Gospel can offer inspiration and food for the journey.

Journeying in Luke-Acts

Luke begins with stories of journeying: Mary "set out" to visit Elizabeth (Lk 1:39); Joseph and Mary journey to Bethlehem and later to Jerusalem for the Passover (Lk 2:41, 44-45, 51). Jesus journeys with disciples to Jerusalem (Lk 9:51-19:37). And Luke ends the Gospel with disciples journeying (Lk 24:13-35).

As followers of Christ, we are known as Christians. But in Acts, "the

Way" is the name used for believers. Paul, for example, introduces himself as a follower of "the Way" (Acts 24:14). This word, found over 100 times in the New Testament, is used both literally and figuratively to mean "way", "road", "journey" and "way of life".

The movement in Luke is towards Jerusalem. In Acts, after the birth of the Church at Pentecost, disciples journey away from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. It is very clear that following Jesus is not static. It is about journeying and being on the way.

Jesus Journeys

Luke speaks of Jesus and the disciples as being joyful in the early days of his ministry. But this joy fades, and a tougher Jesus emerges before he is betrayed, suffers and is put to death (Lk 9:22; 9:44). Luke tells us of this change in Jesus: "When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk 9:51).

"Set his face" conveys a sense of determination. Jesus is "on the way" to a difficult destiny. For most of the journey, he speaks to those around him about the word of God, yet he speaks differently to the different groups around him.

Speaking to Disciples

The disciples are journeying with Jesus. In the nine chapters of Luke, the term "disciple" (mathētēs) is found more often than elsewhere in this Gospel. The expression, "Jesus said to his disciples", is found eight times,

followed by teaching.

The disciples are becoming hearers of the word and Jesus speaks to them mostly in words of encouragement and positive instruction.

Speaking to the Crowd

"The crowd" (ochlos) is mentioned 18 times in these chapters and the term "people" (laos) is found three times.

Jesus speaks in warnings to the crowd and calls them to conversion. To those who listen and become disciples Jesus gives positive instructions on discipleship.

Speaking to Opponents

The third group of people around Jesus is emerging as his opponents and adversaries. Among them are some Pharisees and lawyers. This group repeatedly confronts Jesus and resists his prophetic calls. Jesus speaks to them in parables about resistance.

We Journey

In this time and in our places we, too, are journeying into deeper discipleship — open to new learning and transformation. Like Mary we can "ponder in our hearts" along the way so as not to become fearful, stuck or resistant. We have different journeys that may challenge us at this time — one being the journey to healing the rifts in our families and sociey that have been highlighted during these latter months of the pandemic in our country.

Cultural Journey

In Aotearoa we're being encouraged to engage in the journey of dialogue with cultures different from our own. This requires acknowledging the failures as well as the highlights of our history and participating in actions that bring unity in diversity — for the common good of all God's people. We can act as if we're culturally deaf, or resistant to learning, or as disciples on the way.

When Samaritans refused hospitality to the messengers Jesus sent ahead of him, those messenger-disciples behaved in revengeful fashion — they wished destruction upon the Samaritans (Lk 9:52-54).

Jesus rebuked their attitude even though it was understandable: the Samaritans and Judeans had 700 years of hostility and tense relationship between them.

But as they walked Jesus told them the parable of the Samaritan who crossed the road to attend to the wounded person. Jesus's hearers would have expected that a Judean layperson would have been the next one to follow after the priest and the Levite, and they were shocked — and challenged — that it was a Samaritan (Lk 10:31-33). Jesus's cultural recognition and acceptance

finished, the fruits of discussion and learning must continue.

The Synod itself does not happen until 2023 so there is still plenty of time for us to listen to the many different voices around us: those ostracised, dispossessed and undervalued by Church and society now.

Reverencing Earth Journey

"The way" evokes being earthed, embodied and walking in Earth. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report on impacts, adaptation and vulnerability documents the damage inflicted by

Christ is with us in our journeying as disciples and with the Spirit is encouraging us to integrate the invitations, challenges and responsibilities of the diverse aspects we encounter.

is also apparent in the story of the Samaritan who is the only one of the 10 lepers cured who returned to thank him (Lk 17:11-19).

Cosmic Journey

All people and nature are integrally on a cosmic journey in an evolving universe. We are learning from cosmology of the emergence and the expansion of our universe. Contemporary biology describes the evolution of life on Earth.

Often the Church fails to make a credible connection with science and particularly evolutionary science. It can be challenging for us to learn from the history of the universe that cosmology describes and the story of life that biology articulates. But in doing so we can discover that the fruit of the divine action of creation is answering the deepest intuitions of religion by giving us a fuller and deeper understanding of the ultimate reality of God.

Synodal Journey

We're also being called by Pope Francis to embark on the synodal journey — walking together and listening for the prompting of the Spirit among us. Like me, you may have joined a group in your area, or you may have discerned by yourself, what might help transform the Church. Although officially the diocesan phase of discernment has

humans. Yet time and again in other areas, we have seen change happen when we stand together and build people power. We can do that with climate change too.

The Laudato Si' Action Platform's seven goals could offer us a way of becoming involved in the journey towards the healing of Earth.

Christ is with us in our journeying as disciples and, with the Spirit, is encouraging us to integrate the invitations, challenges and responsibilities of the diverse aspects we encounter — personal, family, cultural, cosmic, sustainable and synodal. This is all about being on the way — learning, encouraging, participating and avoiding becoming resistant.

For further information: *Laudato Si'* Action Platform www.laudatosiactionplatform.org

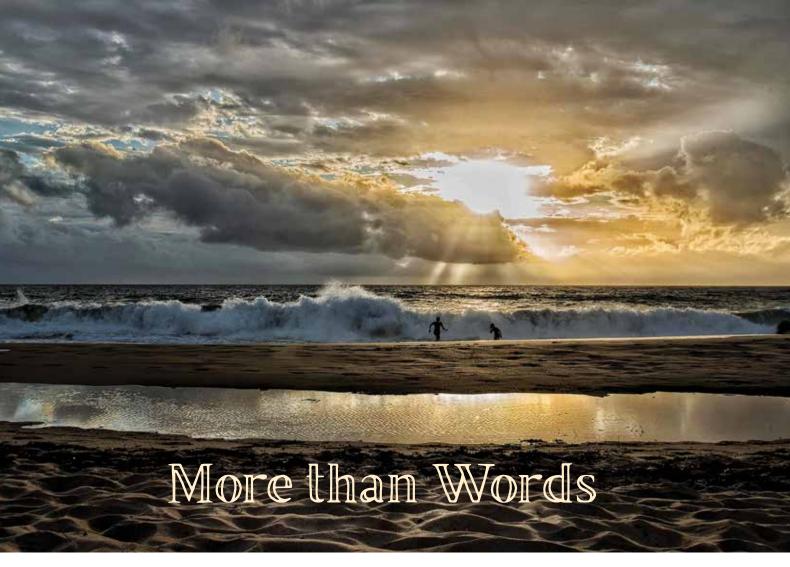
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26 June

RL: 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time RCL: Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

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





ome days I really need a swim. I like that I can diagnose this about myself. I wake in the morning and cycle to the ocean, immerse myself in quiet water, mirror-still. I'd like to say this is silent, but it's not. I hear the swish of water, hear the movement of air through my body, hear the hum of the motorway on the other side of the water.

I've been reading An Altar in the World by Barbara Brown Taylor. It's a book about spiritual practices that don't — or can't — take place just within the four walls of the place where you live: spirituality has to go further than that. There's a spiritual practice in such activities as walking, in getting lost and in offering hospitality. I'm not at the end of the book yet; my list of spiritual practices is incomplete, but I am always seeking more vocabulary to talk to God, so I keep reading.

In his first letter to the Thessalonians Paul tells his readers to pray constantly. It's seemed to me like another of Paul's impossible moral standards. I feel aware that I'm praying only when I'm focusing my attention on God, trying to listen, and trying to speak. Paul's exhortation to pray constantly, surely, is for other people — better people,



Shanti Mathias, a twenty-something living in Tāmaki Makaurau, is working as a journalist. She loves dangly earrings, listening to podcasts and is always learning to pray.

people who have renounced the things of the world to be with God. They can pray constantly, but I can't.

This month I've been learning that our bodies and senses are other ways to be with God. So I'm wondering, is my early morning swim, paddling, fingers cool, lycra stretched over my skin, salt on my tongue, another prayer connection with God? It seems to be a way of praising God for breathing, a way of relating with the rest of creation, a way of being generous to myself while remembering all those who do not have what I have. I hope that it is.

I'm often good with words and others reinforce my eloquence, telling me I can put things well or explain a situation clearly. But there are moments when I have no words; everything I could say or write would be wrong. Even in those times when I feel deep sorrow, or an aching holy delight, or a pooling of uncertainty, I don't need words to lean into God.

I like the feeling that my mind is fluid and ravenous, leaping between ideas and seeing in glimpses. But the dependence on words and ideas sometimes makes me helpless. I'm finding there are other languages — being immersed in the ocean, appreciating the sweetness of a mandarin filling my mouth, the warm weight of a mug of tea — and I'm coming to understand these physical connections. By attending to what is tangible I stop trying to control the world with language and ideas and find God beyond my own creation. It's not much but perhaps this new insight for me is a first step towards praying constantly.

REVIEWS

Tāngata Ngāi Tahu

People of Ngāi Tahu, Volume Two

Edited by Helen Brown and Michael J Stevens Published by Bridget Williams Books, 2022. (NZD 49.99) Reviewed by Tui Cadigan

s a wahine Māori of Ngāi Tahu descent I feel fortunate to review this second volume of biographies of Tāngata Ngāi Tahu. In contrast to Volume One, over half of the people included in this book are wahine Māori which gives a more balanced perspective of iwi life.

The stories weave historical facts and stories to provide a first-hand written portraits, bringing to life the Ngāi Tahu person and the era in which they lived. The photographs add to this by providing faces and settings. Through the experiences of those who contributed their

gifts to Ngāi Tahu life, readers are invited — and excited — to journey with and appreciate the path these characters have helped create for their iwi which continues today.

This book is essential reading for all who claim Ngāi Tahu descent and for those eager to understand Te Waipounamu history and development. Those with an



interest in sociology will find a wealth of information in this work. It is a "must have" book for the benefit of their users for universities, schools and public libraries to have copies.

Recovering the 'True Church'

Challenges for Australian Catholicism beyond the Plenary Council

by Paul Collins Published by Coventry Press, 2022. (NZD 30.66) Reviewed by John Collins

ustralian theologian Paul Collins has written extensively about Church history and the need for renewal. This book provides a timely review of the Catholic Church in Australia and its preparation for the 2023 World Synod in Rome on "For a Synodal Church".

The book is divided into two parts. The first and larger part, "Context for the Plenary", is a comprehensive discussion of the current state of the Australian Church and the issues it faces both internal and external, the conflicting models of Church and the blight of clericalism

and sexual abuse. The second part deals with the activities leading up to the first session of the Australian Plenary Council in October 2021, some detail on the session itself and the process underway currently to prepare for the second session in July 2022.

This book will appeal to anyone interested in the Australian Catholic Church in the 2000s and how synodality is being addressed.



Collins' main thesis is that nothing will change in the Church without root and branch reform and that at present there appears little evidence of that occurring — but he remains hopeful.

Sweat and Salt Water

Selected Works

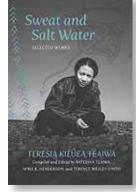
by Teresia Kieuea Teaiwa Edited by Katerina Teaiwa, April K Henderson and Terence Wesley-Smith Published by Victoria University of Wellington Press, 2021. (NZD 40) Reviewed by Cabrini Makasiale

ulou atu. Indeed! I can feel the wet sweat and taste the salty brine of the mighty Pacific Ocean. Teresia Kieuea Teaiwa writes with her canoe paddle pen as she explores and describes what she experiences in academia. She studied and lectured in the three universities of Fiji, Hawaii and Wellington.

Sweat and Salt Water is a collection of 15 of her articles. They cover Pacific Studies, militarism and gender and native reflections. She writes of her struggle

in academia to critique the dominating colonial and postcolonial study methods and the academic opinions that demean indigenous learning styles inherent in Pacific peoples.

If you are interested, curious and/or a researcher of Pasifika peoples, their beliefs and way of living, this book awaits you. You will need time, a coconut tree and a desk in the LI-BRA-REE to gain



from the fullness of Sweat and Salt Water. Both settings are

In March 2017, aged only 48, Teresia "sailed away". In our Pasifika way Teresia is only a breath away. Read her work and you will inhale the pungent odour and wafting perfume of her reflections.



THE VELVET QUEEN

Directed by Marie Amiguet and Vincent Munier Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

o say that I was looking forward to this film about French wildlife photographer Vincent Munier's hunt for the legendary snow leopard in the highlands of Tibet would be an understatement. In the end, *The Velvet Queen* delivered all I had hoped for, and much more.

A nature photographer with an international reputation, famous for his ghostlike images of animals set in snowy landscapes, Munier is here paired with writer Sylvain Tesson as they seek the elusive big cat in the vast uplands of Tibet. But this is very much a film about the journey, not the arrival, and we follow the two adventurers through sunshine and blizzards, over mountains and prairies as they capture the landscape and its animal inhabitants in powerful words and mesmerising images. The stunning cinematography by co-director Marie Amiguet forms a perfect complement to their work.

The film offers us more than an eye-popping parade of exotic animals and landscapes, although this would have been satisfying enough. Writer

Tesson, new to the rigours of alpine expeditions (at least on this extreme scale), is in constant dialogue with seasoned outdoorsman Munier, questioning him about his methods, aims and philosophy as a recorder and interpreter of the natural world.

For Munier, spending hours, days, weeks in spartan hides in often freezing conditions, waiting for the magic conjunction of light, background and fleeting subject, gives life a vital edge denied to those who have chosen to direct their lives along more conventional paths. Increasingly cut off from nature, we cease to value it.

Munier regrets that he has had to travel further and further away from home to find the few truly wild, pristine places left on the planet —

places where nature is still in charge. He laments that in his home region of France the fauna is thinning out, trees and hedgerows cut down. For him, this thoughtless destruction amounts to "a lack of respect for life". For his part, Tesson has learned many valuable life lessons from his companion, including the virtues of attention and patience.

There is much more I could say about *The Velvet Queen*: its entrancing imagery, powerful but unobtrusive score by Warren Ellis and Nick Cave, and its quietly expressed philosophy of nature that is profoundly relevant to the current predicament faced by Planet Earth. But my best advice is simply to see, marvel and, where you can, act on the lessons it provides.

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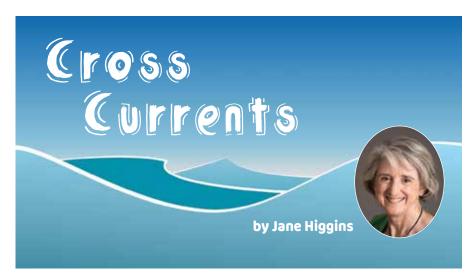
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he Church is the People of God, it is hierarchical, it is pilgrim — these are all images of the Church expressed by the Second Vatican Council. These images are contained in one document, Lumen Gentium, but they don't necessarily sit comfortably together. Their contradictions and confluences provide rich ground for dialogue and disagreement. It's clear, however, that in his writing and his actions Pope Francis is attempting to navigate a path consistent with each image. Several articles in the April and May issues of Tui Motu point to this.

For example, in April, Neil Darragh wrote beautifully of the Church as a pilgrim people. He observed that this image has a sense of journey and change, and also that it is "a rather ragged image, moving along without very clear boundaries about who belongs and who doesn't, with trust in God's leadership".

This idea of journeying together, paying attention to people on the boundaries while trusting in the Spirit, has been the organising principle of the synodality process initiated by Francis in 2021.

Synodality is an ancient word meaning "our common road". Francis has invited "all the baptised" into a process of listening and discernment "to become the Church that God wants us to become." People have been meeting, praying, answering surveys and generally becoming involved in listening to and sharing ideas about the future of the Church.

The diocesan phase of the process

is now complete. During the next phase (June-August 2022) national bishops' conferences are charged with discerning, from the gathered submissions, what their local churches are saying. This is a significant part of the process. Already concerns are being raised overseas (in the London *Tablet*, for example) that some bishops' conferences are shying away from including in their syntheses some of the hard truths expressed by their people.

National bishops' conferences will take syntheses of the responses from their churches to large continental meetings (March 2023) and in the final phase, submissions from all continents will become part of a working document for the 2023 Rome meeting of the Synod of Bishops.

The process entrusts a great deal to the bishops and it seems likely that two images of the Church, as the People of God and as a hierarchical body, may clash in this encounter. As the process moves towards the global stage, we pray that the Spirit will guide those involved towards clear-sightedness and courage.

Through the synodality initiative we have been the pilgrim Church, walking a common road. Now, if we choose, those who have walked this road as individuals, groups, and parishes, could turn that commitment and energy to another vital initiative: the Laudato Si' Action Platform.

The platform (accessible at laudatosiactionplatform.org) is a major grassroots project, unfolding over seven years, to encourage Catholics worldwide to put into action the message of integral ecology offered by Francis in his 2015 encyclical, Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home. Individuals, families, parishes, institutions, religious orders and others can register on the platform and receive practical guidance on how to work through prayer, reflection and action to build a better future in the spirit of Laudato Si'.

As the pilgrim Church, walking a common road together, we can work to save our common home.



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

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

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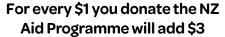












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The editor reserves the right to abridge longer letters while keeping the meaning.

FROM FEAR TO HOPE?

Clare Curran's thought-provoking article (*TM* March 2022) suggests that New Zealand maintained social licence for the public good so that COVID deaths have been relatively minor. Her article suggests that we should be pleased with what has been achieved.

An alternative view is that too often the COVID debate is conducted in terms of physical health forgetting that our spiritual health is ultimately of greater importance. It could be argued that like other pandemics in history COVID was of passing interest until it mutated itself down to a common cold. Our reaction to its transitory nature and how it would leave us as people would be the ultimate test.

We were told to fear the virus and our interactions with one another. The focus was on individual isolation rather than community support of the most vulnerable. As most GPs and counsellors will attest, we have become a more fearful people and levels of anxiety and depression have been heightened. The Church closed its doors over the period of pandemic. In reopening now can the Church

transform the pervasive fear in the community to an Easter spirit of hope?

Kim von Lanthen, Wellington

JUSTICE FOR ALL

This year Russia invaded Ukraine ostensibly for national security reasons. Millions of Ukrainians were forced to flee becoming refugees in neighbouring countries. Ukraine is defending itself from the aggressor. The media shows the loss of life, destruction and devastation in Ukraine and we are moved. The international community is coming to the aid of Ukraine.

Contrast this with another victim and aggressor. In 1948 Israel invaded Palestine — again ostensibly for national security reasons. Millions were forced to flee Palestine and become refugees in other countries.

Palestine continues to defend itself from the aggressor and the media reports every few years show the ongoing harassment, destruction and devastation of Palestine and the huge loss of life. We are moved. But there has been no international action to support the Palestinians from 1948 till today. Why not? When Ukraine defends itself with the backing of the international community committed to their long-term support, there is some semblance of justice and hope for the future.

But from 1948 Palestine has been defending itself without international backing and Israel continues to invade Palestine with impunity and is taking more and more Palestinian land. Where is the justice? Where is the hope? We must have justice for all.

Barbara Cameron, Hamilton

MIKE RIDDELL

What a wonderful epitaph Mike Riddell's final article (*TM* April 2022) made as to the holistic spirituality he lived, practised and often wrote about so eloquently. Beauty, light and joy regularly resonated from his writings — fitting recognition of his deep belief in the Resurrection of Jesus and Christ's constant presence in and around us in every part of our lives. It reminded me of Martin Luther King's final speech on the eve of his assassination and Oscar Romero's last homily. As if they all knew! *Jim Consedine, Christchurch*

SEVEN CHILDREN PLUS ONE

There was a funny mistake in the bio with my article about Eucharist (*TM* May 2022 p23). I came from Australia as a Methodist chaplain at Methodist Ladies College to marry Warren Schrader, a Presbyterian Chaplain at St Andrews College. I took on his seven children ranging from two-year-old twins to Jan aged 13. The children's mother had died giving birth to the twins.

When Warren proposed I said facetiously that the one thing I wanted was that we could have one child to prove that I knew how to do it. (I did ask if he believed in contraception. "Of course. Why do you ask?") We had a child. I now have eight children, plus oodles of grandchildren and great grandchildren and I am very grateful.

Marg Schrader, Waikanae

DO WHAT UNITES US AS CHRISTIANS

We talk about Christian unity, but as long as Church politics exist, various Trust Funds and assets maintained and increased, Christ's prayer of unity will never be achieved. My wife (Anglican) and I know of Marg Schrader's experience of not being welcome at communion time (TM May 2022). We were married in October 1975 and explained to Monsignor Brian Arahill our circumstances. He in turn explained the same to Bishop John Mackie. That year on Christmas Eve Brian paid us a visit and informed us that we were both welcome at the table of the Lord and would be in the Church of the future.

At the Paschal Meal (2,000 years ago) Jesus said: "Do this in re-membrance of Me" — he never referred to any particular denomination. To me, Jesus said "do" — not think about, write, discuss or hesitate to remember him.

Jim Donald, Howick

We have been invited to consider the structure of our Church. Our Creator gifted each of us our humanity — a body that belongs to each person — and that person only. No-one else ever has rights over another person — body or mind! We have responsibilities to others to supply

needs — food, shelter, education, guidance — but never "rights over"!! Every and each person is a gift of our Creator to that person, each of whom is a sanctuary of our God.

It seems to me to be back to front that we are concerned that the clergy become closer to the laity and more involved with them. Surely Jesus gathered a community together and chose people for different jobs — always that person remained themselves a member of that community. The Last Supper was not 12 men around a table with Jesus. No table! A gathering of families with children moving around and mothers or fathers feeding them — it was a community gathered.

Our priests should be chosen from the community, male or female, to do one of the jobs for the community. Individuals can choose to consecrate their life in a special way to serve God in the community, but the celebration of the Mass is a community need — as are meals etc. and a community member should lead and others read, different ones giving the "sermon". The Holy Spirit speaks to each personally and through each. Why should we confine Her voice to be spoken through one man only?

A Church is formed from a community. We do not need large, flash buildings, while people go homeless and hungry. Let us meet the most urgent needs first, celebrating our God's presence among us simply until we have excess funds to build large.

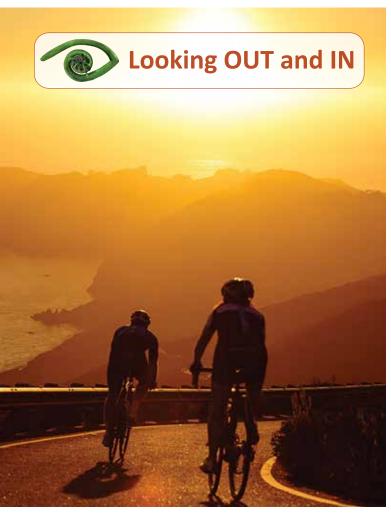
And let us never dare to refuse the Eucharist to anyone who wishes to receive their God.

Maria O'Connell, Christchurch

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TUI MOTU InterIslands Magazine



his morning I needed to get to a pre-dawn appointment on the far side of Ōtautahi. I was offered a ride, but I'm glad I chose to go on my faithful steed (aka bicycle). The roads were dark and still, and the few cars crept quietly along. Stars overhead glittered vastly and coldly, and glittering too were the glass-sharp frost-thorns on the grass of Hagley Park. With warm layers of clothes and legs that are very fond of cycling, this was no hardship at all. I sang snatches of *The Lord is My Shepherd* and other song-prayers as I cycled. It was a soothing way to start a new day after a recent loss.

Another soul-nurturing ride this month was the Christchurch Peace Train. I joined 70 others on a Sunday afternoon to visit a mosque, a synagogue, a Buddhist and a Sikh temple and a couple of churches. The Peace Train is an interfaith initiative by Christchurch mosque attack survivor Mazhar Syed. This year we were a colourful collection of

people with an orchestra of grasshopper bicycles. Some riders were a little wobbly and anxious on city streets while the cycling veterans with their knobbly knees and battered bicycles confidently led us all across the intersections. Over a song and afternoon tea I enjoyed the company of four men from the Church of Latter-day Saints. Why have I not taken time to understand the hope held by Mormons as fellow cyclists and earnest people of faith? People of faith share so much: connecting and finding common ground was the point of this whole ride — and it worked.

Then there was cycling to soccer practice last week with my 13-year-old; we noticed the setting sun slanting across a field, spreading a layer of golden honey over grass and trees. On my Tuesday dawn mountain bike ride I reached the top of the Port Hills and had to stop to admire a sunrise — the light splashed Lemon & Paeroa on me and the clouds were as purple as boysenberry juice in the bottom of the punnet.

The vast scale of the sky, the clouds and wind, the sun and stars remind me that my small plans are just that. All this, thanks to the gift of moving on a bicycle.

And it feels so good. The warm air on your legs when pedalling in summer. The smell of jasmine as you cycle past gardens behind fences on a warm night. In his poem "Training on the Peninsula", Brian Turner describes cycling downhill like this:

I push the gear lever down a little and the chain drops on to a smaller sprocket and the wheels begin to spin faster, and the air's like a quick tongue in my hair as I descend swinging in wide curves around the hill.

I may be peddling a fervent bicycle evangelism (and possibly also florid prose), but I have advice to share. If God feels distant, if you haven't noticed sunrise or sunset of late, if you want to feel like air rushing through your hair, if you want to connect to kindred spirits, can I commend to you the spiritual benefits of riding a bicycle?

Kaaren Mathias lives in Ōtautahi. She cooks naan on a barbeque, forages for free fruit, mentors public health doctor trainees and talks to friends in India.





Bless us with enough food for every meal

Confirm us in reverence for the life we take so that we may eat

Bless us with commitment to achieving zero hunger in our world

Treat us with mouthfuls of deliciousness that encourage us

and fill us with gratitude

Bread of Life

From the *Tui Motu* Team