

Tui Motu

InterIslands

August 1999 Price \$4



Contents

2-3	...editorials	<i>Anna Holmes</i>
4	...letters	
5-7	...APEC and the cry of the poor	<i>Peter Murnane OP</i>
8	<i>world watch</i>	
	FOCUS – women in the church	
9-13	...The role of women in the Catholic Church	<i>Helen Bergin OP</i>
14-15	...A woman for all seasons	<i>Ceridwyn Parr & Danielle Melton OP</i>
16-17	...A feather on the breath of God	<i>Shona Dunlop MacTavish</i>
18	...Mary Mother of the Church	<i>Joan Hardiman OP</i>
19	...The marriage within God	<i>Ronald Rolheiser</i>
20-21	...Blessed are you who weep	<i>Sandra Winton OP</i>
22-23	...Mary's visit	<i>Niki Keehan</i>
24-25	...A place for the final journey	
26	...You're spoiling him rotten	<i>Paul Andrews SJ</i>
27	<i>in memoriam</i> :Fr Frank Bennett	
28-29	<i>books</i>	<i>Neil Vaney SM; Albert Moore</i>
30	...Crosscurrents	<i>Caliban</i>
31	...A dying breed	<i>Peter Mann</i>
32	...Postscript	<i>John Thornley</i>

In praise of wisdom

A mourner at last month's funeral of Cardinal Basil Hume used the phrase "this terrible century" to describe our age, a judgment few would dispute. The explosion of knowledge and technological know-how seems to have been accompanied by an inexorable retreat of wisdom. Cardinal Hume was seen as one of those rare and exceptional human beings – not only good, but also wise.

Surely, however, one of the few consolations of the century has been a steady advance in the condition of women: the acknowledgment of their equality before the law, their improving status and opportunities in the arts and professions, their assumption of leadership roles even on the political stage. In the churches it is no longer a rarity to hear a woman preach or lead in prayer and ritual. But the Catholic Church continues to soft-pedal on women's rights; it is an irony that while the majority of attenders and workers in the church are female, within Catholicism their voice is almost entirely excluded from decision-making.

A *leitmotiv* running through this issue is the wisdom of the feminine, not only as expressed and celebrated in the person of Mary Mother of God but in the contribution of many women authors. Read and dwell awhile on these articles. And then ask yourself: would not the world – and the church – be a safer, a wiser and a better place if the feminine contribution to policies, decisions and ethos were on a par with the power and influence of men?

One aspect of the unwisdom of our times which has especially afflicted this country is the dominance of the economics of the New Right. Their exclusion of the virtues of compassion, care of the weak, reverence for creation and any artistic sense are characteristic of a 'man's world'. The challenge to this philosophy in our *July* issue was sent for comment to various political and economic leaders and a couple of responses are printed on page 4. Significantly, nothing has been heard yet from the Treasurer, Mr English, nor from Mr Rodney Hide, of ACT. Perhaps they are men with nothing to say. ■ *M.H.*

Beata Virgo Maria – a Triptych

Donald Moorhead

In this representation of Mary I am attempting to put in tangible form something that is unportrayable. I wanted to avoid the idealisation of feminine beauty which I think has been excessively used throughout art history. Nevertheless the picture belongs to the Christian tradition, in that I choose certain symbols: the crown, the lily, the rose – with thorns reflecting the suffering of Mary in Christ's crucifixion.

I try to see past the idealisation of woman, so I represent her as a Jewish woman, neither old nor young. I have avoided the ecstatic movement sometimes used for depicting the Queen of Heaven. I prefer the quiet dignity of one who awaits. She has a timeless face. There is no veil, but her headdress is almost like a turban – a hint at a veil, but more regal. The pose is of a woman in an attitude of intercessory prayer, and the text is taken from the Hail



Mary: *Blessed Virgin Mary, pray for us.* In the coffin contour of the central panel I also allude to *at the hour of our death.*

Mary exemplifies attentiveness to the will of God. She is both waiting for God and being with God. These features we see both at the birth and death of Jesus. In the picture there is an intentional waiting on God. To place it in the context of the Trinity, the visual images and words are in sets of three.

Throughout history the mystique of the Virgin Mary in the Christmas story has intrigued many races and cultures. In major Christian traditions – Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican – Mary is further defined as *Theotokos*, the God-bearer, a transcendent figure. This is how I have drawn her, albeit with hands and face earthy and human. ■



Tui Motu-InterIslands

ISSN 1174-8931

Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed.

The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God.

Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

Independent Catholic Magazine Ltd
P O Box 6404, Dunedin North
Phone: 03 477 1449
03 477 8149
email: tuimotu@earthlight.co.nz

Editor: Michael Hill, IC
Assistant Editor: Frances Skelton
Illustrator: Don Moorhead
Directors:

Tom Cloher
Annie Gray
Elizabeth Mackie, OP
Margaret May
Judith McGinley, OP
Ann Neven, RSJ
Paul Rankin, OP
Patricia Stevenson, RSJ

Printed by John McIndoe Ltd
51 Crawford St, Dunedin

Mary and a Church in tension

Anna Holmes

August 15 marks the Feast of the Assumption – the national feast of New Zealand. As a girl and young woman I struggled to make sense of this feast. Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven? My growing awareness and knowledge of modern science made this impossible to believe.

I am now older and perhaps a little wiser. The Assumption is the feast that proclaims that Jesus loves us body and soul. It is, in particular, the feast that makes the wholeness of women sacred after centuries of negative messages about the bodies of women. It heals the division and opposition of male/female and spirit/body brought about by the thinking of some Greek philosophers. It welcomes the physical and spiritual aspects of humanity equally.

The Gospel reading for the Assumption is the visit of Mary to Elizabeth. This wonderful tale is of women who are connected with each other and whose unborn infants are also connected with each other. It celebrates community. It includes the whole of the *Magnificat* – a marvellous prayer of the triumph of weakness over strength, of God's favouring the poor and hungry over the rich, of scattering the proud "in the thoughts of their hearts". What a contradictory passage this is - and what a challenging and contradictory feast is the Assumption!

This issue of *Tui Motu* looks at Women in the Church. It considers Hildegard of Bingen and some contemporary female interpreters. It also looks at the changing shape and understanding of the church in Helen Bergin's article. She says "To be church is often to go where Jesus went – to the fringes of society... Often our church is not a place of ease. However it is a church that is at the crossroads and thus able to set off in different possible directions." Reflecting on this picture of a church in tension I can only agree with her.

The church I know is a church of contradictions and tension. In 1972, in Africa, I remember being rather shocked when two sister friends said: "We are ministering to the people of this parish. The priest visits only occasionally. We feel the call to be priests." I recall the pain of other friends, prison chaplains in New York and in New Zealand saying: "It seems wrong that these women, already abused and damaged by men, should have to see a man in order to receive reconciliation." I joined my local parish group looking at the future of the church in my home diocese. Priestless Sundays are not new in New Zealand – in 1969, on the Chatham Islands, the Sisters and lay people organised a Sunday service when the priest was absent.

Helen Bergin touches on some of the many ministries women are involved in – nearly 87 percent of lay ministers in the United States are women and I would suggest that the figures would be similar worldwide. In East Africa, in 1972 a dialogue between the priest and the woman catechist formed the sermon. It made the story of Mary's Visit to Elizabeth come alive for me – for the catechist was heavily pregnant and I could see her infant jumping for joy.

One of the disturbing things about the expansion of women's ministries is the lack of public recognition and just payment for them. Women who run parishes and give pastoral care are often not paid at all. The other disturbing aspect of church for many women is the lack of real involvement of women in decisions. Consultation, which listens to women, sometimes occurs. The decisions are then made in the absence of women.

Dialogue, in which men and women in the church are able to listen to each other and be changed by their listening, seldom does. It is perhaps thought-provoking to reflect that a church which does not listen to 50 percent of its members is not a universal church.

(continued overleaf)

The rich you will always have with you

Responses to an article by Paul Vallely (July issue)

Paul Vallely's article seemed to me to strike a very fair balance. What it served to do was to remind us how much New Zealand is really out on a limb as far as the general attitudes within developed countries are concerned.

There is a need in New Zealand to rebalance between the three elements of economic efficiency, personal freedom and social justice. I would argue that we have often misunderstood what is meant by the first. There seems to be a common belief in some business circles that improving efficiency necessarily involves reducing social justice.

Indeed, it could be said that the present orthodoxy requires a reduction in social justice to achieve greater economic efficiency. Yet there are many studies, and a good deal of experience, to the contrary. Productivity growth in New Zealand was particularly high when social differences were substantially smaller. It is strange that the argument that greater reward, leads to greater and better effort often seems to be applied only to the very rich.

There are many strands to achieving the rebalancing that is needed. They include much stronger early intervention programmes, better resourcing of schools in poorer areas, more support for families, easier access to tertiary education, greater retraining opportunities, improved housing and health care, and rebalanced industrial relations law. Above all, what is needed is a different vision of where we are going as a nation, one that is much more inclusive, much more based on the notion of shared responsibility and shared rewards, and more cognisant of indulging notions of human dignity and value.

Rt Hon Michael Cullen MP
Wellington

Paul Vallely makes an engaging observation: the rich remain always with us, but so do the poor and there are more of them. What has free market policy and practice done for them? Market rents, for example, have demanded larger sums of money for fairly average accommodation. Available subsidies have been inadequate even for those employed. Not uncommonly between 40 to 50 percent of available income is soaked up in rental payments. Particular subsidies

given to alleviate the plight of the unemployed are even less effective, frequently driving families into accommodation of lesser standard and far removed from the social infrastructure previously enjoyed. This depression of a dependent sector of society delivers higher income to the owners, including Housing New Zealand.

The transfer of money may reflect market value but what kind of value does it represent for society, as it leaves in its wake families less able to be reasonably housed, nourished, and educated? A prominent Maori woman lawyer paid tribute recently to the reasonable rent her parents experienced in a state house in Auckland, as she and her sister (also a lawyer) made it through school and university (whence they graduated without the fees and mortgages).

"User pays" is fine for those who can; the free market works well for those in good economic shape with above average incomes or well established parents, but which policy variant delivers the better society? Is government intervention justified in the interests of a more equitable society?

Quite paradoxically governments of the last decade have intervened, but on the side of the powerful. What other smart country would sell its entire public railway system to private ownership? Auckland city has subsequently been unable to develop a badly needed light rail system because it seems of no interest to *Tranzrail* which is manifestly reluctant to collaborate; its agenda is understandably focused upon generating income for its shareholders.

A further debilitating manifestation of our experiment with the free market has been the privatisation of public administration. A new generation of bureaucrats have colonised government departments investing them with a private sector ethos. Logically, these corporate executives must be paid salaries comparable to their private sector counterparts; so \$250,000 per annum or more is no longer regarded as exceptional. *Election '99* offers a chance to achieve a better balance between market freedom and social responsibility. We'd better make the most of it!

Tom Cloher
Auckland

(editorial continued from previous page)

The Assumption celebrates God's favour of weakness over strength so I am not at all depressed by the current state of the church. Hildegard of Bingen was excommunicated for a time because she buried a sinner, who had repented to her, in consecrated ground. I am excited by the many women working in pastoral care at parish level and in ecumenical endeavours. All round the world I know women who share the Gospel with oth-

ers, enable those beyond the church to feel attached, who build and cherish communities, who carry the face of Christ to places of unimaginable suffering and darkness.

That the church institution has failed to recognise this as 'real' ministry only confirms what I have always believed – we are a church in the process of *becoming* holy. The proud will be "scat-

tered in the thoughts of their heart" as the poor are fed and the Good News is preached to all. ■

(Dr Anna Holmes is a medical practitioner in Christchurch)



APEC – and the cry of the poor

A global free market creates abuse and inequality, claims Peter Murnane OP. The meeting of APEC challenges Christians to listen and take action

Here is a true story: For hundreds of years the fishing folk in certain villages along the coastline of southern Chile were prosperous and self-supporting. With their small boats they caught enough to feed their families and sell a small surplus. But in just a few decades, their catch has shrunk so drastically that they are now forced to collect seaweed and shellfish just to stay alive.

Why? Because big international fishing fleets sweeping the ocean offshore have reduced the fish population so severely that smaller boats cannot gather enough to make their trips worthwhile.

Another true story: Native peoples of the rain forests in Borneo and the Amazon are on the verge of losing the habitat that has supported them as hunter-gatherers for untold centuries. Loggers, land speculators and miners are destroying a life-style based on deep harmony with the plants, animals, birds and countless other species. Like so many indigenous peoples, these will end up living on the fringes of cities, degraded by poverty, alcohol and prostitution.

Another: Across Pakistan and India, every day about two million children between the ages of four and 12 work long hours making carpets for export. Their 'wages' are minimal; if they make a mistake they are fined. They often suffer violence and sexual abuse. They work as slaves because their parents are trapped in debt. They miss out on schooling and even childhood itself.

How is it that stories like these come close to breaking our heart? It is not just that people suffer loss. Is it the sheer injustice? Or is it their sense of hopeless disappointment... that they will go on facing their hardships without ever feeling hope of release?

If our own children hear these sad stories from around the world today, they reasonably want to know "why?". What can we tell them?

That this is what happens when people have more money than their victims, and so can pillage their property or force them to work in inhuman conditions. Moreover, using the power of that money, they can convince parliaments and the public that their marauding is necessary for 'Progress' or 'Free Trade'.

Some respectable people will be aggrieved if I claim that APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) is responsible for situations like this in the Asian-Pacific region. But since APEC's leaders will meet in Auckland in September, we need to find and tell the truth about this. This article is a challenge to them to disprove that:

- the abuses caused by the 'free market' - exemplified in these stories - are not exceptional, but have become exceedingly common today;
- APEC, in promoting an unrestrained market, promotes such inhuman excesses;
- such abuses conflict with the teachings

of the gospel. Hence Christians need to examine APEC carefully, so as to lessen this destruction that *we* are already causing... for we are all involved. If we remain silent while others make the choices, we share in the consequences of those choices.

Many people are hungry, not because they do not know how to grow food –they are prevented from doing so

What are these 'abuses'? The poorest are starving amid untold suffering. Every day some 35,000 children die from hunger and related diseases. Hunger is not a new phenomenon, but what is new is *why* many are starving. It is not because there isn't enough food. Huge surpluses exist and affluent farmers are often paid *not* to produce. Many are hungry, not because they do not know how to grow food: they are *prevented* from doing so.

Cheap food produced by 'agro-business' is dumped in struggling countries, destroying local food production. When the *International Monetary Fund* and *World Bank* offer 'rescue' loans, they often impose requirements which benefit big business but severely damage the people of the country being 'helped'. Tariffs are lifted, the currency is devalued, the price of fuel raised and small-scale local agriculture is destroyed.

This has happened in Vietnam, the Phil-



ippines, the former USSR, the Balkans, Brazil, Peru etc. It takes from weaker people their power and rights, in the name of opening up these unfortunate nations to the 'free' market. Cheap labour is a key to huge profits. But when wages are kept down, trade unions forbidden and production 'rationalized' by relocating in the cheapest labour area, the children of the poor starve.

*when wages are kept
down and production
relocated in the cheapest
labour area, the children of
the poor starve*

Industry free of government control – a key aim of APEC – is also destroying environmental treasures. A paper mill, inadequately controlled by government, has made our Tarawera river black and poisonous. The silt and poisons from transnational mines have damaged rivers like the Fly in Papua New Guinea. In the Solomon Islands rapacious logging damages rainforests beyond recovery, while the runoff kills coral reefs.

Agri-business is expanding and devastating natural habitats. To grow cotton in northern New South Wales, millionaire entrepreneurs have bulldozed every tree and bush from vast tracts of the plains. The pesticide poisons sprayed over the cotton many times each year drain with irrigation waters into the arid land's fragile river system.

The wealthy of many countries – hiding behind respected company names – are taking over the assets of the poor: their timber, fish, electric power, telecommunications or even water. The profits that flow to shareholders is *taxation by private enterprise*. Rather than 'free trade', this should be called piracy. A child would sensibly ask: why does a foreign company own and profit from the water in our tap? ...from our hydro schemes? Can't *we* organize our own community's affairs?

Not least among these abuses, profiteers often trample on the rights of indig-

enous peoples. Hundreds of thousands have been massacred (in Guatemala for land; in East Timor for land and oil; in Western New Guinea for land and minerals; in Amazonia for land, timber and mining). Those native peoples who survive will lose their habitat, home and livelihood, and see their culture destroyed. The high rate of Maori unemployment has a lot to do with APEC – tariff cuts closing many plants and factories in this country.

So that business can flourish unchecked, APEC wants to weaken any remaining government controls that are seen as 'impeding' trade. There are grave dangers hidden in this, for it will remove our fragile protection against products which endanger public or private health, or harm our ecology. We may be unable to prevent transnational firms from claiming rights to the DNA of New Zealand flora or fauna.

National parliaments could be 'persuaded' against passing laws that insist on decent wages and working conditions or give legal rights to workers and their unions. New Zealand jobs and earning power would further drift to countries with even less regard for workers' rights. If governments lose their essential power to protect their people, who can defend the poor against ever more inhuman excesses?

Christian social teaching stresses the right of all to a living wage. It also emphasizes the *principle of subsidiarity*, that no larger group, even a government, should undertake what can be done just as well by a smaller group. APEC, profoundly anti-democratic, ignores this principle. Its Senior Officials' Meetings are closed, secret discussions. The decisions they make can affect the lives of many, who have little chance to participate.

APEC contradicts the *good news* that Jesus gave us. The Gospel tells us that we find God in the way we treat other human beings: that we are connected, and *responsible for each other*. When we pray: "Thy kingdom come..." we are praying

about right relationships: "forgive us... as we forgive". If we rob others of food, of hope, of life, we need forgiveness. It shocks us to hear Jesus (*Matthew 25*) say about people we often despise: "That was *me* sleeping under the bridge, unemployed, hungry, dirty, in prison." Jesus put aside the most sacred obligations of religious law – like keeping the sabbath – to attend to a person who was shut out because of ritual uncleanness, for such persons are loved by God.

APEC, an organization designed to increase the wealth of the wealthy, might not *intend* to exclude the poor in ever-increasing numbers, or to further disinherit indigenous people. But a brief study of its policies shows that it *will* put more people out of work, make them more hungry, prone to illness and victims of despair. APEC, a so-called 'community of economies', overlooks the truth that economies are abstractions, and do not normally take account of the suffering of peoples, nor their rights.

For all these reasons, religious sisters, brothers and priests are planning to demonstrate in protest against APEC, before it meets in Auckland in September. This may startle some Christians, but only if they do not realize that religious are called with particular clarity to do what all Christians are called to do: to live the *Beatitudes*, the core of the *good news*. (*Mt 5:3-10*). Their role in the church is "to give witness to the values of the gospel; to work strongly for the saving mission of the Church" (*Perfectae Caritatis 43*). The struggle for personal holiness cannot be separated from the need to call our society to reform itself.

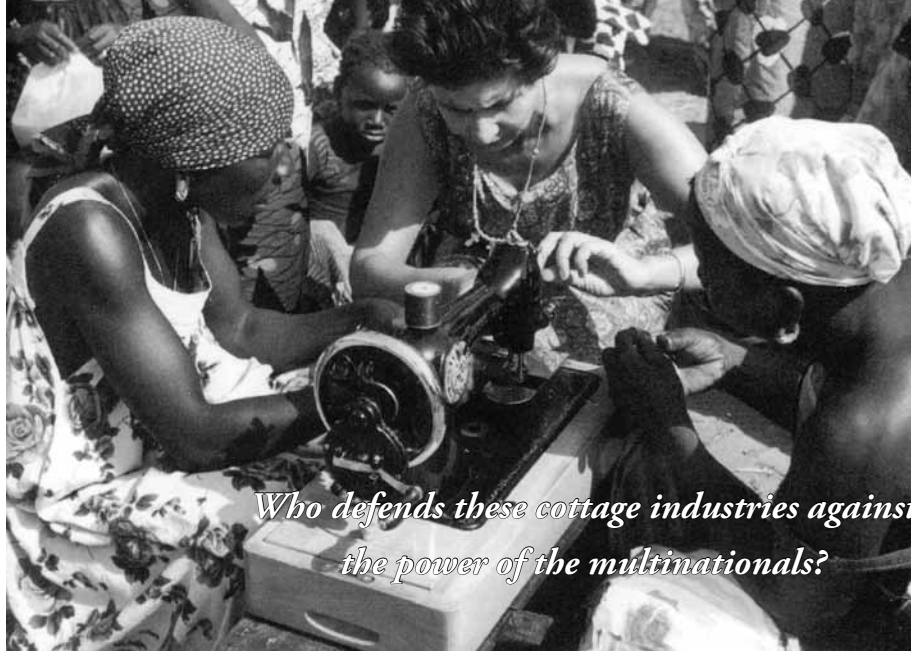
It would be a foolish Christian who would deny Isaiah's claim that genuine fasting means *to loose the bonds of injustice... to let the oppressed go free... to share your bread with the hungry... and not to hide yourself from your own kin* (*Is 58 6-9*). Even more absurd to forget Jesus' words opening his public ministry: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... to bring good news to the poor... to proclaim release to captives... and recovery of sight*

to the blind, to let the oppressed go free... (Lk 4:18-19). Jesus warned us: *Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possession. (Lk 12:15).* Paul bluntly called greed "idolatry" (Col 3:5).

APEC puts the wealth into fewer hands. The onus rests on those who promote its policies - putting dollars before people and making it easier for the rich to accumulate more - to avoid that greed, and to match their actions to Jesus' warning. His words ring down through the millennia: *For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? (Mt 16:26)*

Sisters and brothers in religious communities have a positive, prophetic role to speak out for *justice*, (not just 'charity') and against preventable causes of suffering. Even before other Christians, they are called to continue the work Jesus began, to preach his Good News. A world-wide Synod of Bishops in 1971 declared: "Action on behalf of justice, and participation in the transformation of the world is a *constitutive part* of ... preaching ... the Gospel."

The common attitude in our consumer society is that possessing and consuming is happiness. Do we imagine that this is a biblical ideal? In the Hebrew



scriptures prosperity was a blessing. But prosperity meant something that every household should enjoy: its own vine and fig tree (Zech 3:10). Those who, by amassing capital, took away this right were condemned.

Any APEC supporter who doubts this should read the story of Naboth's vineyard. (1 Kg 21 1-24) and Isaiah's further warning: *Ah, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is room for no one but you, and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land! (Is 5:8).*

It is no use simply to get angry or to attack those responsible for injustices. The protest by the Auckland religious will be silent and peaceful, concluding

with prayer. A Christian response is to seek out the persons who are doing this kind of damage to their neighbour... to approach them as brothers and sisters, not to attack but to question and explore the truth with them.

It is not enough to pray for God's reign to come. We must meet our 'enemies', listen to them, talk with them and pray, not only for them, but "forgive *us... as we forgive*". They are, after all, our sisters and brothers. Perhaps that is why it hurts so much to hear of the damage they do. ■

You are invited

to take part in an

AUCKLAND WITNESS WALK TO CHALLENGE APEC

Sunday 5 September at 2.00pm

- The route will follow Tamaki Drive to St Heliers
- led by Catholic Sisters, Brothers and Priests
- to express publicly our concern about the unjust effects of APEC policies

everybody welcome

Assemble at 1.30pm at Sisters of St Joseph, Selwyn Ave, Mission Bay
For more information, contact: Margaret Martin RSM 09 263 6464

A justice project of the Congregational Leaders Conference of Aotearoa New Zealand

**Bible
Society**



**..providing
Scriptures to
everyone in their
own language**

To help...

freephone 0800 4

Fr Gerard Burns in East Timor

Fr Gerard Burns returned to Wellington late last month after spending several weeks in East Timor with the joint team from Caritas NZ and Caritas Australia. While there he made several journeys out of Dili accompanying convoys of supplies, mostly to the west of the country where the paramilitaries have been particularly active. The situation in Dili itself has improved due to the presence of international observers and aid agencies.

The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has declared that the situation in the province has improved. But Caritas reports little evidence of this in the country areas. It seems that up to 60,000 people may have been displaced as a result of the activities of the Indonesian army and the pro-Integration para-militaries. Two E Timorese Caritas staff have been beaten up and the agency has had property stolen.

Fr Gerard is due to report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Wellington and is hopeful of an interview with Mr McKinnon to give them first hand reports of the situation. The referendum on the future of East Timor has been postponed and is now due to take

place on 22-23 August. There is no polling booth in this country, but the New Zealand government is providing assistance to enable some students here to fly to Sydney to vote.

Unfortunately not all East Timorese here qualify for this. CORSO has launched an appeal to enable these people to register their vote. Anyone wishing to support this is asked to send a donation to the *East Timor Ballot Appeal c/- CORSO* PO Box 1375, Dunedin. ■

Death of Peace Prize laureate in Rwanda

Fr Modeste Mungwarareba, Secretary General of the Episcopal Conference of Rwanda, died in hospital in Butare in early May, aged 48. Of Tutsi descent, this disciple of racial reconciliation was a leading figure in the Catholic church in Rwanda. His health had been weakened by all that he underwent during a period of imprisonment in 1990 and in the genocide of 1994.

Fr Modeste was a well-loved member of the *Service d'Animation Theologique* in Butare, a training centre for the laity, based on the need for reconciliation. Over half

the membership were slain during the massacres of 1994. Fr Modeste escaped by hiding in the ceiling of a church building.

The work of Fr Modeste and the founder of the agency, layman Laurien Ntezimana, a Hutu, was rewarded in 1998 when they were jointly awarded the International Peace Prize in Louvain by the International President of *Pax Christi* Cardinal Daneels. One of Fr Modeste's achievements was to inspire the *Confession of Detmold*, signed in December 1997 by Rwandan Christians from different ethnic groups committing themselves to build a Rwanda fit for all to live in. ■

Dr Kate Dewes in Dublin

At a Pax Christi Conference in Dublin in May Dr Kate Dewes, a New Zealander, launched a book *Pacific Women speak out for Independence and Denuclearisation* which she helped produce. It outlines various ways in which Pacific peoples have confronted the colonial powers via law courts and international forums, on issues such as nuclear abolition, the rights of indigenous peoples, independence and peaceful co-existence. ■

Cardinal Hume's funeral at Westminster Cathedral on 25 June was attended by the Prime Ministers of Britain and of Ireland as well as by civic and church leaders – and by the Duchess of York representing the Queen. The Cathedral was packed inside and out. It was described as "like a state funeral".

In the panegyric Bishop John Crowley spoke of the Cardinal's last days and his personal reflections on the *Our Father*, which are like a final spiritual testament to the people of his diocese and the world.

Last testament of Basil Hume

"Our Father Who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy Name. To sing the praises of God; it is that for which we are made, and it is that which will be, for all eternity, our greatest joy. Thy Kingdom Come. The Gospel values of Jesus – justice, love and peace – embraced throughout the whole world and in all their fullness.

"Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That's the only thing that really matters. What God wants for us is what is best for us."



Bishop Crowley said: "There was a solid earthiness about his holiness, his wholeness which was anything but other-worldly." ■

The Role of Women in the Catholic Church

Helen Bergin OP delivered this paper in June to the NZ Bishops' Conference committee on Women in the Church



Part One: What is the Church?

Church is a gathering of disciples trying to be faithful to Jesus' Spirit; it is people baptised into the 'body of Christ', people participating in the eucharistic action of Jesus as life for one another and for the world; discovering and sharing God's word in Scriptures, being sacraments of Jesus.

Church is people participating in the priestly, prophetic and royal dimensions of Jesus' life, sharing in Jesus' mission to proclaim the Good News; it is people called to reveal God's hopes for the world by bringing about the reign of God's love, truth and justice in particular locations; it is thousands of small communities attempting to be in communion with others who might otherwise be worlds' apart.

It is the People of God listening together to the voice of the Spirit as discerned authoritatively both within and outside the Christian community; it is people journeying in the hope of god's blessed fulfilment in the "new Jerusalem".

How do we attempt to be that church?

In some ways, that question has been partly answered in the first question. However, I would like to single out two major ways:

- The first way is by building Christian community. One of the most popular ecclesiological terms for church, especially in the last 30 years, has been the term *communion*. This term has many facets – the baptised person's communion with Jesus; the Spirit's communion

with believers; the individual's sharing in Jesus' sufferings for the world; the communion shared among official leaders of Christian communities.

At the heart of all such communion is Eucharist. It is thanksgiving in which bread and wine are taken, blessed, transformed and given so that, in Jesus, the community might be formed more fully as life-giving bread for all. In a Catholic consciousness, being church and celebrating Eucharist are intrinsically related.

Being fed from the table of Jesus' body and blood also invites participants to make communion or community happen. This is essential if Eucharist is not to be a farce. To enter into communion with the body and blood of Jesus is to pledge oneself to being a communion-maker in all sorts of ways – within a parish, a local neighbourhood, among local parishes, across ethnic groups, among dioceses, among regions and nations, among denominations.

*to enter into communion
with the body and blood of
Jesus is to pledge oneself
to being a communion-
maker*

- The second way of attempting 'to be church' is by listening to the *joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the people of our time* (GS 1). This, of course, can be done from and within one's own home, one's workplace, among one's extended family or within political

structures. However, for the church to live as a Spirit-filled reality, often the ears and eyes of the church will need to be directed beyond the edges of church life, towards those who are searching for what the church can offer but do not know how to get there; towards those who once knew what the church offered but can no longer find it; towards those who have been scarred by life choices and life's circumstances; towards those who want life but might be looking in ultimately vain directions. To be church is often to go where Jesus went – to the fringes of his society.

It seems that if, as church, we are intent on building communities of people who together can encourage one another to make life-giving communities within and on the outskirts of church, then, we are most likely being faithful to the one in whose name we gather each "first day of the week" to share communion.

• Thirdly *What is the church for?*

It is for those who belong to it to encourage and assist one another to be Christ's body. And it is for them, with God's help, to signal God's reign on this earth by making truth, justice and peace liberating realities for individuals and communities.

Major documents on the church, especially *Lumen Gentium*, have reminded Catholics, among other things, that the church as "mystery" cannot be fathomed fully. Awareness of history, and thus of change, affects our way of being church; each baptised person shares in the priestly, prophetic and royal offices of Jesus Christ.

The church is on pilgrimage; the universal church respects and encourages the diversity of world cultures; the local diocesan church is very significant; familiarity with Scriptures is vital for our understanding of church; the healthy life of the church is the responsibility of every baptised person; the church of Jesus Christ “subsists in the Catholic church” even though elements of this church can be discovered elsewhere.

There is a diversity of ministries within the church, some stemming from Baptism and Confirmation, others flowing also from the sacrament of Orders. The late Karl Rahner spoke of the church after Vatican II becoming a truly universal church, in the sense of allowing for the richness and diversity of ecclesial life throughout the globe. Each of the above-mentioned points marks a change from a concept quite different before Vatican II into something we sometimes now accept too easily.

However, not only did we as Catholics see ourselves and our roles differently. We also saw others differently. We were reminded that we share with other Christians the same gift of the Holy Spirit, devotion to the same Scriptures and an honouring of Mary.

We were invited to learn from other churches, perhaps about their particular emphasis on Trinity, for example, or their different ways of worshipping; to enter into serious dialogue not only with other Christians, but with major world religions as well. We were asked to recognise the voices of the world in our midst.

In response there has been resistance, vitality, confusion, freedom, calls for deeper hope and faith, and calls to risk. Often, our church is not a place of ease. However, it is a church that is at a crossroads and thus able to set off in different possible directions. Being the post-Vatican Council II church is a major new moment in the journey of the church as it seeks, under the guidance of Christ’s Spirit, to keep exploring its identity as church.

Part Two: The Changing Shape of the Church

A French theologian, Bruno Chenu, said of the mega-shift that the church is presently undergoing “We know that the transition is irreversible. It is taking place under our eyes”. I would like to point to four changes currently happening in the Catholic church:

1. Parish Pastoral Leadership

When I looked at the situation within the diocese of Auckland, I noted, in *The N.Z. Catholic Directory 1999*, that of the 66 parishes in the diocese 17 parishes list by name lay persons who are assisting in pastoral leadership of a parish. In fact, 27 lay people are named within those 17 parishes (not to mention other parishes in the diocese where lay people in posts such as chairpersons and members of parish councils are influential in the life of the parish).

What is happening locally is also happening in many other areas of the world. In 1992, 19,000 parishes of the United States had lay parish coordinators. Of the 20,000 non-ordained persons leading this parish ministry 17,500 were

New forms of parish leadership are emerging. There are parishes in Australia, for example, where two women religious share the major day-to-day guidance of the parish, with a priest joining the community on Sunday for Eucharist and any other sacramental celebrations. Other parishes, here and abroad, have a single non-ordained person in charge of the parish with the priest again joining the congregation on Sunday. Still other parishes have priest and pastoral assistant together guiding the life of the parish and yet others have larger teams of people involved in the pastoral care and, frequently, in the decision-making of the parish.

In many cases, the role of the lay leaders as formators and educators in eucharistic and sacramental preparation, in prayer and scriptural programmes means that more adults are being formed in their understanding of church, and hopefully in their responsibilities towards the community. In other cases, the role of the lay leaders becomes quite liturgical, their care for different needs sometimes involving them in such occasions as the leading of funeral services and reflections on the Word of God.



women. We know also, that in other areas of the world, including the Pacific Islands, catechists have kept the Christian community together over the years.

The involvement of lay persons in all forms of church ministry is a reclaiming of ministry that stems from Baptism rather than ministry that responds to episcopal needs. It is also a result of the declining number of ordained ministers available to lead parishes.

When we reflect on what this might mean for our church, we can note three major effects:

- there is a change in what the pastoral leader of some parishes looks like. The face and social experience, not to mention gender, of those performing leadership roles is visibly different;
- people in parishes are experiencing different combinations of what pastoral

leadership can look like, depending on particular circumstances;

- there is sometimes an uneasy mix between the ministries of those whose ministries derive fundamentally from the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation and those that derive from the sacrament of Orders. Lay persons' participation in their ministries often depends on the good will or otherwise of the priest in the parish.

In the local community, the question of accountability needs to function in two directions – between people and priest and between priest and people.

2. Changes within the Christian community.

At diocesan and national levels women and men are being given responsibilities in many other forms of church ministry – in pastoral care within hospitals, prisons, schools, industry, ethnic groups, in counselling services, with the bereaved, with those preparing for and those within marriage. Again, the variety is extensive. As with pastoral parish leadership, the face of those ministering is different from the clerical face of the past.

At both local and diocesan levels, two fundamental things are also happening: Firstly, there is a new theological understanding emerging. Those previously absent from guiding the life of the church are catalysts for raising new questions about the expression of Christian vocation and about the responsibilities of all. This is having an overflow effect among local parishioners, many of whom are also in the process of discovering their own roles within the church. This is not just a leadership change: this is *everybody*.

Secondly, there is also occurring a blurring of the edges between who may and who may not perform certain functions within the leadership of the community.

A fundamental change is occurring within the church mainly because of education. In many tertiary theological colleges the number of lay people studying theology greatly exceeds the number who are studying theology as part of their preparation for ordained ministry. Lay people are claiming responsibility to participate at an informed level in the life of the church, a situation which may lead to the eventual emergence of further lay ministries.

3. The opening up to Catholic Christians of the Bible.

In the last 20 years many people have made in-depth studies of the bible; vast number of ordinary parishioners have rediscovered the bible through ongoing Scripture study groups; many others have undertaken Scripture study programmes in preparation for being Ministers of the Word. A consequence of this is that many ordinary believers are now finding courage to voice their understanding of the Word of God. On certain occasions, persons other than an ordained minister offer reflections on the Word of God. For the entire community, this is a moment of richness. It suggests a wider, and hopefully, a deeper claiming of Catholic identity.

4. Decline in vocations

For an ever-increasing number of communities world-wide, the presence of an ordained minister at Sunday Eucharist is becoming less possible. In 1980, in the Sudan and Ethiopia, for example, there was one priest for every 10,000 Catholics. One institutional response to this reality has been the increased number, since the mid 1980's, of weekday services of the Word with communion and, more notably, "Sunday services without a priest" (SWAP). While not greatly prevalent in New Zealand, these services could increase in coming years.

This raises the question of communal participation at Sunday Eucharist forming ecclesial community and identity. It also raises the question of the link between pastoral leadership of a Christian community, which may be conducted by lay persons, and the liturgical leadership of Eucharist which is confined to that of the ordained priest. We are aware of the present regulations in this regard. A decrease in Eucharistic participation by a Christian community might lead to a gradual diminishment of what has been so vital to Catholic life. Will a proliferation of Sunday services without a priest actually lead to an increasing appetite for Eucharist, or will it instead dull our appetite?



A further change at diocesan and national levels has occurred in the composition of diocesan pastoral councils where ideally – men and women are equally represented and where, together with the bishop, all are being formed for their pastoral roles and where lay members are helping guide the bishop of a particular local church in decisions that must be made. An ideal not always being achieved.

The steady rise of an informed and articulate laity suggests that church life is in transition. For example, the priest now has to preach to a congregation in which some people are already more theologically competent and aware than he. The potential for dialogue that is here is only occasionally exploited: often such people experience intense frustration, and sadly some cease attending altogether.

Part Three: Ministerial Roles for Women

This section has three parts. First, we will explore the term ‘ministry’. Second, we will discuss how ministries emerge. Third, we will note roles of women in regard to the church, offering some thoughts for the future.

1. What is ministry?

Ministry in its specialised sense refers to *publicly recognised works of service* undertaken for a specified time and carried out *on behalf of the church*. Ministry exists where the gifts of people are recognised and accepted for use by the community. To this extent, ministry stems from the principle of *call* (either from the community or someone deputised by the community) and *response*.

Strictly speaking therefore, a ministerial role is given an ecclesial mandate – perhaps during Eucharist or at a special commissioning or installation service. Sometimes, the minister’s gifts will be utilised within the community itself eg. as minister of communion; sometimes outside the community proper eg. as chaplain to prisons.

Christifideles Laici (1988), the fruit of the episcopal Synod on the Laity, distinguishes between charisms, ministries and service when it says in *Article 20: The charisms, the ministries, the different forms of service exercised by the lay faithful exist in communion and on behalf of communion*. Evidently then, charisms or freely bestowed gifts of the Spirit, ministries which are gifts more formally recognised, and service are each necessary for the life of the community.

This document speaks of all ministry being a *participation in Jesus’ Christ’s own ministry to build up the Body of Christ* (Art 21); it draws a distinction between ministries deriving from Baptism and Confirmation and those which derive from the sacrament of Orders (Art 22) and it encourages pastors to acknowledge and foster the ministries, offices and roles of the lay faithful that find their foundation in

Baptism, Confirmation and often in Matrimony (Art 23).

With regard to women, the official church stipulates that some ministerial roles may include women while others may not. The ordained ministries of deacon, presbyter and bishop exclude women and thus prohibit women from representing the official church in a symbolic and sacramental way. Certain responsibilities connected with the practice of Orders therefore officially exclude women. Such exclusions are regular preaching of the Word of God to the Sunday assembly and many areas of local, diocesan, regional and universal decision-making. With regard to ministries stemming from Baptism and Confirmation, women, as has already been noted, are extremely highly represented.

2. How do ministries emerge?

Very often, historically, recognition of ministries has followed after the performance of certain tasks by individuals within and on behalf of the Christian community. A certain period of practice and discernment leads to eventual formal recognition of particular roles within the church. If we were to study the lists of ministries related in *Romans* 12:3-8, *1 Corinthians* 12:4-11 and *Ephesians* 4:11-12, we see no mention of the role of *episkopos*. Eventual Christian leadership was not given to the prophets (mentioned in the above three passages of Scriptures) but to the *episkopos* and the *presbyteroi* (not mentioned in those Scriptures).

At the same time, in the New Testament era, *diakonos* might refer to a specific ministry of service or to service in general and the one doing it was probably female as well as male. Sometime during the second to the fourth centuries, the *diakonos* became closely associated with service to the presbyter or *episcopos*, especially in an administrative role. Then, for much of Christian history, the role of deacon virtually disappeared.

Ministries, however, sometimes also arise from ongoing theological reflection on the nature and mission of

church. With the call by Vatican Council II, for a broadening of ministerial roles such as Ministers of Word and of Communion and other diverse roles, have been claimed as a response to the theological insight that each baptised person shares in the priestly, prophetic and royal offices of Jesus Christ.

New ministries have given public recognition to lay people and to their tasks of responsibility within and on behalf of the church. The current flowering of new ministries for the baptised will lead to some that will eventually be formally recognised. As these ministries appear the ‘job description’ of the ordained ministry is also changing.

3. What roles will women play in these ministries?

If women are to look for a public place within the universal official church, the picture is not encouraging. I will cite two examples. First, of the 134 positions held within the Offices of the Holy See, no position is held by a woman. Second, in 1998, of the 163 members of the Synod of Oceania, eight women attended as ‘auditors’ and even then, the auditors numbered twelve men and eight women. I ask myself: “within the universal church ‘Who is acknowledged as worthwhile?’ and ‘Where is the voice of women’ in this church?”

Let us turn to the reality of women’s involvements in the church at local and national levels. Women’s often marginal status within official church life might, in fact, open up certain ministerial roles on behalf of the church. Several theologians have written recently about the importance of margins and frontiers. An American theologian, Bernard Lee, speaks of a ‘margin’ being the space between the text of a page and what is yet to be written. In other words, it is the point of possibility.

Lee also speaks of comments written in the margins of a text often influencing the way in which a text can be interpreted by a later reader. Margins, therefore, can have power. Other theologians speak of ‘frontiers’ as places bridging old

and new realities; as places where one exists in tension; as places where two different realms intersect; as places of birth.

Some actual 'ministries'

• Ministry of community-maker

Many Catholic women today experience the difficult and the positive elements of people living and speaking 'from the margins' or 'at the frontiers'? I know of Catholic women whose parish pastoral ministry takes them by choice into the lives of women and men whose affiliation with the church is weak and yet whose desire to be reconnected is strong. I know of Catholic sisters whose involvement in Women's Refuges, for example, brings them into contact with large numbers of suffering families, many of whom are, or have been, Catholic and who see their helpers as signs, though unofficial, of the church caring for them. Many Catholic women are involved in building and enabling community both within church and across its borders.

• Ministry of Ecumenism

I know of Catholic women who are invited to preach in worship services of other Christian churches and who experience enriching gospel dialogue across denominational boundaries. Their voice, however, is rarely heard within our Catholic community. Is the Spirit of God inviting some to be leaders in bridging church divisions? Does Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman (*Jn 4:4-42*) not initiate such a possibility?

• Ministry of preaching

Because so many Catholic women have been enriched by Scripture study, and because so many have the gifts to share their insights with others, perhaps we

need new ministries of preaching. When some of the voices of the community are rarely heard, there is a silence and diminishment for the whole commu-

nity. Was not the reality of women proclaiming the Word one of the earliest ministries recorded by Paul in *1 Corinthians 11*? Were not Mary Magdalene, Mary and Salome given the greatest preaching task within the Christian story "He has been raised. He is going before you." (*Mk 16:6-7*)

• Ministry of companionship

Women have constantly lived 'in be-

lected by female franchise" be established by the Vatican. Any teaching on faith, morals or administrative matters would be sent to this commission for comment and no document could be promulgated without the agreement of this group. Perhaps we could extend this idea and suggest something similar for each national church as well.

This creative taking up of possible new



tween worlds' or on the margins in the church. There is an affinity for women of 'like' ministering to 'like'. There is a remembering of Jesus' challenge from and acceptance of the Syro-Phoenician woman and of the woman who was haemorrhaging. Neither woman was fully included in the Jewish society of her day. Maybe, we need to enlarge women's present day spiritual direction ministries into further "ministries of companionship".

Ministry of women's voice

The local *Made in God's Image* report asked "that in the event of any statement being made by the NZ Catholic Bishops' Conference about the experiences, aspirations or concerns of women, there be genuine consultation with a wide range of women." We live in an age when women's requests to be heard and received as full subjects is taken for granted.

Mary Douglas, a British anthropologist suggests, in the light of gender distinctions constantly being mentioned in the discussion of women's roles in the church, that a Women's Commission on Doctrine "empowered by the Pope and

directions is leading many Catholic women to stand with women who know social and religious isolation and who are ministering to them in those places. Perhaps because of certain ecclesial restrictions placed on Catholic women in ministry, some women, in response to God's Spirit, are inviting others in the church to a place of future fruitfulness for all the church. It is difficult living on the edge of two different worlds, but in view of religious and ethnic tensions now occurring in many of our own cities, all are being called to live on new thresholds. Perhaps ministries for women based on gospel precedents of 'Jesus and the margins' might assist all to bring about God's reign in our day.

I do not suggest that the above-named ministries should shift general Christian responsibility on to a few 'ministerial' shoulders. However, when certain tasks on behalf of the church are highlighted as especially significant or necessary, then all are reminded of their call to be involved in that task too. The public acknowledgment of women's voice and authority within the Christian community can only lead to a richness for the whole Body of Christ. ■



A Woman for all seasons



*Hildegard of Bingen lived in the Rhineland from 1098 to 1179. Her wonderfully creative life has been celebrated in recent times by **Danielle Melton OP** and Anglican laywomen **Ceridwyn Parr**, through a series of dramatic presentations of her life and teachings.*



The visions

Hildegard's self-portrait shows the moment of her 'awakening'. After a long period of illness she becomes 'inflamed by a fiery light' and starts to write. A great flowering takes place in her creativity, her writing, her activity as a religious founder and a preacher. She describes it as her Pentecost. The monk depicted is her secretary, Volmar.

of her visions if they were part of the religious vocabulary? Perhaps part of the reason is that their content would have seemed much broader than was usual then. Hildegard's visions had deep and complex theological significance, and they required an audience who understood doctrine as well as allusion and metaphor.

Her visions were concerned with big issues like reform of monastic orders, the purity and proper behaviour of the clergy, the correct relationship between church and state; and not just the individual path to God and personal morality. Perhaps Hildegard was overwhelmed with the enormity and the implications of her mission as transmitted in her visions, especially in the early stages. Later, however, she demonstrates no lack of confidence in interpreting the visions and admonishing all manner of listeners.

In a social climate which did not envisage women in any roles apart from those of wife, mother or alternatively as religious celibate, mystical writing by women was acceptable, provided the women were part of an established order and were perceived as orthodox.

The affirmation received from Bernard moved her from being a passive visionary who simply receives a message from the divine, to being an active and engaged prophet. This role was additional

Hildegard of Bingen wrote to Bernard of Clairvaux in 1147, when she was 49, describing how she had been seeing visions since her early childhood:

I am greatly troubled by this vision which has appeared to me: through the inspiration of divine mystery this vision touches my heart like a burning flame..

In our presentation and theological performance, we aim to paint Hildegard with broader brush-strokes, showing the whole range of her talents : artist, musician, preacher, administrator, herbalist, horticulturalist, architect, builder. Hildegard herself testifies how important the visions were in her life:

I have always seen these visions in my soul; I do not hear these things with my outer ears, nor do I perceive them with the rational parts of my mind, nor with any combination of my five senses, but only in my soul, with my outer eyes open; so that I never suffer in them any unconsciousness

induced by ecstasy, but I see them when I am awake, day and night.

What were these visions all about, and why were they such a problem for Hildegard that she needed to seek the approval of a high-status cleric such as Bernard of Clairvaux? From early childhood Hildegard had a deep spiritual awareness of what she later called the *Reflection of the Living Light*. At times a strange, bright, gleaming light filled her visual field. Some scholars attribute this to cortical disturbance caused by migraines, but such disturbances cannot account for the breadth and depth of her all embracing cosmology. Within the bright light Hildegard saw figures and elaborate structures which she became more and more skilled at interpreting as divine teaching.

At that time visions were an accepted way of experiencing a close relationship with God. Why was Hildegard unsure

to her administrative responsibilities – with first one and then two convents – and the concomitant obligation of prayer, liturgy, construction of buildings, social work and pastoral care.

In her middle years Hildegard became aware of an increased energy level:

My veins and my heart were at that point at full strength, something that had been lacking to me from childhood.

This mid-life energy of Hildegard's which propelled her into public life as a prophet, occurred in the context of decades of living in an enclosed Benedictine community where worship and obedience to the perceived will of God is the main reason for existence. In this social and religious context, visions were a normal method of expressing the experience of the divine. Women in convents wrote devotional literature based on their own experience, partly because they lacked a full academic education, and partly because it was of more practical value for other religious and lay people if they wrote liturgical dramas, biographies of saints, letters of spiritual direction and personal testimonies.

In other words, their writing was experiential and practical, rather than academic, and intended for learned audiences. In the 12th century there was a new spiritual emphasis within the Benedictine movement, inspired by St Anselm a century earlier, which accentuated the desirability of an intense personal relationship with God. Although Hildegard did not seek this mystical unitive relationship, its appearance in the language of the day provided an acceptable framework for her to build on. The new tradition reinforced the historical and Biblical manifestation of God speaking through the weak and powerless, as with Samuel, Mary, Jesus or the disciples. Thus there is a tradition of divine wisdom being transmitted through an unexpected channel.

Hildegard's biographers compare her to St Paul, saying: *When I am weak, I am strong.* Sociologically, choosing a religious vocation (and therefore a

life of virginity) raised the status of a woman above the demands of the flesh and therefore closer to the higher status of a man. This higher status would add to her cachet as a visionary and writer, which in turn was to give her a voice and a corresponding belief in the value of her message.

To be recognised as a visionary gave a woman the authority to communicate the truth and wisdom of God, but this message would need to be one which kept the people obedient and docile at the same time as nourishing them. Hildegard would have realised that her message was bigger, bolder and more disturbing to the status quo. It challenged clerical integrity and authority. No wonder she hesitated until she had the approval from the highest level of the hierarchy, Bernard of Clairvaux, who also had the ear and the confidence of his protégé, the Pope. Apart from the ecclesiastical authorities who validated Hildegard's visionary calling, her own sense of personal authority increased over the years. Her biographers comment: *This holy virgin was therefore, as we learn from her own words, gifted with a truly wonderful and exceptionally rare kind of vision.*

Hildegard described her visions to scribes and artists who recorded them. They are collected in her book called *Scivias, Know the Ways of the Lord*. In her visions she was exploring the complex theological concepts of Creator and creation, Redeemer and redemption, as well as the history of salvation. Her vivid language was intended to help people understand their place in creation as well as possibilities for a better world.

The visions were a vehicle for Hildegard, giving her a divine compulsion to teach and write. Hildegard wished to establish the full glory of the church, which she represented as a battered and damaged woman. At the same time she used powerful feminine images for the divine and for the virtues, the first Christian writer to take seriously the feminine aspects of God.

In the recent dance presentation of the Visions of Hildegard – *Feather on the Breath of God*, the capacity audience at St Paul's Cathedral in Dunedin was

Hildegard was a feisty, creative person, a prophetic figure who continues to inspire women today. She comes across as being very human; her creative peak was reached in middle age, after her visions had been received as authentic.

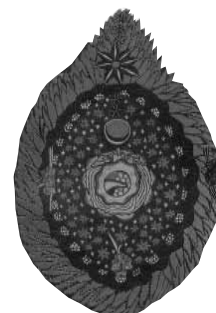
invited to enter Hildegard's interior visionary experience (see pages 16-17), by seeing female dancers demonstrate her struggle with religious experience, her battle with contemporary restrictions on her gender, and, finally, her triumphant depiction of the new creation which would allow full divinity to all humanity. In contemporary dance we saw the battle over evil and negative tendencies portrayed dramatically, just as in Hildegard's day this same struggle was portrayed in illuminated manuscript and dramatic liturgy.

The close harmony of the dancers and the passionate struggles and reconciliations honoured Hildegard's belief: *Everything that is in heaven, on the earth and under the earth is penetrated with connectedness and with relatedness.* ■

Mandala of the egg



Hildegard depicts the universe as an egg. "By this supreme instrument in the figure of an egg", she writes, "– and which is the universe – invisible and eternal things are manifest." Hildegard cared ardently about the Cosmos. In representing it as an egg, which is a deeply feminine symbol, she is asserting the essential unity of the Cosmos and the interconnection of its parts.



Feather on the



Scenes of the *Visions of Hildegard* danced in St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Dunedin, by the Dunedin Dance Theatre.

It was a vivid and exhilarating performance, faithfully portraying Hildegard's struggle to understand the extraordinary visions she was experiencing, in a riot of glorious colour and music and choreography. Choreographer Shona Dunlop MacTavish focused this ballet on Hildegard's visionary experiences, which lend themselves to balletic interpretation more than her other more scientific writings.



The intense blue of Hildegard's habit and her shining gold veil provided a stunning contrast with the Vision's shimmering silver suit. An animated backdrop was provided by the stark white of the eight nuns' habits adorned down the front scapular with brilliant symbols. The eight tall lilies held aloft were signs of their dedicated life (*picture top left*). All this rich colour and symbolism, combined with the upbeat rhythms of the synthesiser playing over the haunting beauty of Hildegard's own compositions, and danced to with such passionate movement, portrayed her visionary experiences so movingly.

Danielle Melton & Ceridwyn Parr

Hildegard receiving her Vision of Life, danced by Suzanne Renner, <<



Breath of God



◁◁ Hildegard of Bingen, danced by Bronwyn Judge



Hildegard dancing *The Fruitful Earth* accompanied by her her sister nuns, with abandonment and joy



Photos: Ngaire Gardiner

Vice and virtue, playing their part too.. ▷▷

Hildegard of Bingen is a patron saint of the needed ecology of our times. She was in love with nature, and her cosmic imagery was overwhelming. It is this imagery I have tried to capture in this dance-drama. The selection of certain writings and poems which were spoken throughout the presentation, interlock the dance themes giving additional insight and meaning.

The following mystical and inspirational words of Hildegard prompted me to embark on this work:

I am the breeze that nurtures all things green.

I encourage blossoms to flourish;

I am the rain coming from the dew

*That causes the grass to laugh
With the joy of life!*

How could one not respond to such a paeon of joy? I also delighted in these words of Matthew Fox:

“We must break out of our exclusively left-brain theologies and educational modes, to make hearts, imagination and hands **dance** with shared insight and illuminations.”

Hildegard’s thoughts, symbols and prophecies were spiritual, primal and sometimes surprisingly pragmatic. As she pointed out all nature is at the disposal of humankind, and we must work at it if we are to survive. These words became a focus of our dance.

The gift of creation was celebrated in our dance by using the metaphors of the cosmic egg (deeply feminine), the tree and the wheel.

The drama of the Universe as we presented it was expressed through the Mandala with ropes of compassion and healing, then repeated in ourselves through ever-increasing spirals of compassion. In another section love is reflected by the dancers depicting leaping fountains and the rays of the sun. Vice and virtue play their part too, for the power of the Devil is made manifest in both her metaphoric concepts as well as her glorious illuminations.

Shona Dunlop MacTavish

A strong woman whose Magnificat is an encouragement to all who struggle. Yet why, asks Joan Hardiman OP, do many women distance themselves from Mary?

Mary Mother of the Church

The Vatican Council chose an interesting title for Mary by invoking her as *Mary Mother of the Church*. It seemed strange at the time, yet many titles given to Mary by the church over the centuries must have sounded equally strange when they were first uttered. Titles which have a heavily classical or theological flavour, such as *Mediatrix* or *Coredemptrix*, can put people off precisely because they are outside the vocabulary of the ordinary Christian. Indeed one person who would certainly have been puzzled by such titles would have been Mary of Nazareth.

Again, titles for Mary which appealed to people in one century may have a discordant ring to today's worshippers. The style of devotion of previous days doesn't always meet contemporary needs. Nevertheless, there are characteristics which persist down the centuries of devotion to Mary:• she is a human person, not a goddess;• she is a historical person, the mother of Jesus of Nazareth;• Mary is always seen as a holy person, one close to Jesus;• there has always been a tendency to see Mary as represent- ative or symbolic.

So, the instinct of the church to give a new title to Mary appropriate to this age is quite fitting, provided the language keeps within these criteria. And *Mother of the Church* does. The Scriptures give us a few glimpses of the situations Mary experienced as a mother, and they are extraordinarily like the pressures and stress suffered by many women in our own day and in our own culture: Mary was pregnant and not yet married (*Luke 1:34*) She was threatened with divorce (*Matt. 1:18-24*) She was homeless when about to give birth (*Luke 2:7*) She was a refugee with a young baby (*Matt. 1:13-15*) She was bewildered by her son's actions (*Luke 2:41-52*) Her son could not stay in her home village (*Luke 4:16-40*) Her son was tried as a criminal and executed (*Luke 23*) She ended her life in Ephesus in Asia Minor with St John away from her homeland (*tradition based on John 19:26,27*).

The worrying thing is that so many women in situations similar to the above in our own times feel they cannot belong to our parishes, since their problems are compounded by a sense of inadequacy and unworthiness in the face of our Christian

communities. So why this anomaly – that the *Mother of the Church* suffered just as they do, yet when Mary is presented as the *perfect one*, suffering women often feel compelled to distance themselves from her?

Addressing this question humbly and searchingly could perhaps be a task appropriate to the celebration of the new millennium. Something radical needs to happen to change the perception that only those who are socially secure can continue as members of our church. It could be a task for all of us, not just those in official leadership positions. It could be a task that demands the skill and faith of Mary the Mother of Jesus:

- who noticed the plight when the wine ran out at the wedding of Cana, and did something about it;
- who stayed on there till the bitter end at Calvary;
- who was present in the midst of the cowering apostles before the Pentecost event.

Mary comes down to us as a very strong woman who proclaimed her trust in God through the words of the Magnificat: *He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.* (*Luke 1:52*). What a constant source of encouragement these verses are, for those who struggle against injustice and oppression, whether political, social, domestic, financial or racial!

And in the *Acts of the Apostles* we find Mary present as one of the post-Resurrection community of believers – one who prays continuously, receives the Holy Spirit and witnesses to the Resurrection. She is already present as a mother figure in those foundational moments of the church.

Pope Paul VI wrote of Mary:

Mary is held up as an example for the way in which, in her own particular life, she fully and responsibly accepted the will of God, because she heard the word of God and acted on it, and because charity and the spirit of service were the driving force behind her



The marriage within God

A celebrated North American author who understands a considerable amount about the symbols that undergird the way we think, recently commented that the mythic task for our age is that of doing some mythical celestial marital therapy. Put into simpler terms this means that we must imagine how, in the world of fairy-tales, in that other world of magic and enchantment, the great King and the great Queen can be at peace with one another.

That is, to my mind, also the great theological (not to mention psychological) task for our time: We must reconcile the male and female aspects of God.

We must see and feel God not only as a great King but as a great Queen. Beyond even that we must imagine a picture wherein the masculinity within God empowers the femininity there in such a way that the feminine can fully be itself. Conversely, we must imagine how the femininity within God can empower the masculinity there so that the masculinity can be fully expressive. That is no easy task – either in imagining God or in imagining human relationships between men and women.

action. She is worthy of imitation because she was the first, the most perfect, of Christ's disciples. (Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary 1974).

When we examine the Scriptural image of Mary free from the hype that succeeding generations have often loaded upon her, we see her emerge as a real person, a mother, one very close to Jesus, a fellow-disciple who belongs to the church of today, especially to the women who struggle to belong to it. ■

Ronald
Rolheiser

We have, to my mind, no strong model here, that is, no real imaginative picture of how the masculine and the feminine mutually empower each other – despite the claims of some recent feminist theologies that their conception does this. We are far from even a minimally adequate picture of this at the present time.

Theologically, our difficulties begin with the fact that we cannot imagine God (nor, indeed, do we dare to!) as married. The conception of God in all the great world religions never presents us with a married God. Yahweh does not have a wife, nor does the ultimate divine reality within Hinduism, Buddhism, or Taoism. It is not that God is conceived of in these religions as only masculine. In all of them, God is either seen as both male and female, at least in their deepest understanding of God, or God is conceived of as beyond gender. The problem is not that the female is absent, but that, for the most part, within Christianity, Judaism, and Islam (the religions who believe in Yahweh), the female aspect is not integrated imaginatively into the Godhead. In the end, in the imagination if not in theology, we have a masculine God, a celibate, who has a feminine side to him.

In Roman Catholicism, classically we compensated for this by putting a lot of the feminine side of God into the Blessed Virgin Mary. She was seen as the mother of God – not God's equal or wife theologically, but more or less his wife imaginatively. This had its good points, though, in the end, it left God

basically masculine and, as the critique of feminism has made clear, a better balance needs to be brought about.

More recent theology has attempted to bring about this balance by imagining the Holy Spirit as feminine. This, however, as many theologians have pointed out, perhaps creates more problems than it solves. Among other things, it leaves the Creator masculine.

So where are we at right now? A long way from where we would need to be. Our theologies of the past, for all their strengths and goodness, are, on this point, lacking balance. The present theologies of feminism are, for all their strengths, on this point, too simplistic. They too are in want of new imagination. In both the old and the new – in the classical theology of God in Western Christianity and in the proposals of radical feminism – there still is no adequate picture of how masculinity and femininity can work together to truly empower each other. This is doubly true *vis a vis* how we understand the relationship of masculinity and femininity within the same God. For the most part, on this point, our imaginations are pumping dry.

But we are making progress. We are understanding what's at stake here, namely, how important it is to make peace between the King and the Queen. We are also understanding how difficult is the task... how difficult it is to bring together masculinity and femininity in human relationships and in God so that one is not threatened by the other, so that one does not need the other to be subservient so that it can act, so that one is not merely a satellite in the orbit of the other, so that both recognise that they exist to empower the other, and so that each feels itself as real only through the other. ■

Exploring the Beatitudes – 3

Blessed are you who weep... (Lk 6:21)

Sandra Winton, OP

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus says to his disciples, *Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.*

It is hard for modern disciples to make sense of this. Christians in earlier ages wore their hair shirts and walked on their knees over cobblestones confident that this would be repaid in heaven. This kind of chosen pain does not easily make sense today when so many people

suffer more terribly against their will. And to expect that all will be made right in the next life seems to modern people to diminish and defend against the realities of worldwide human suffering.

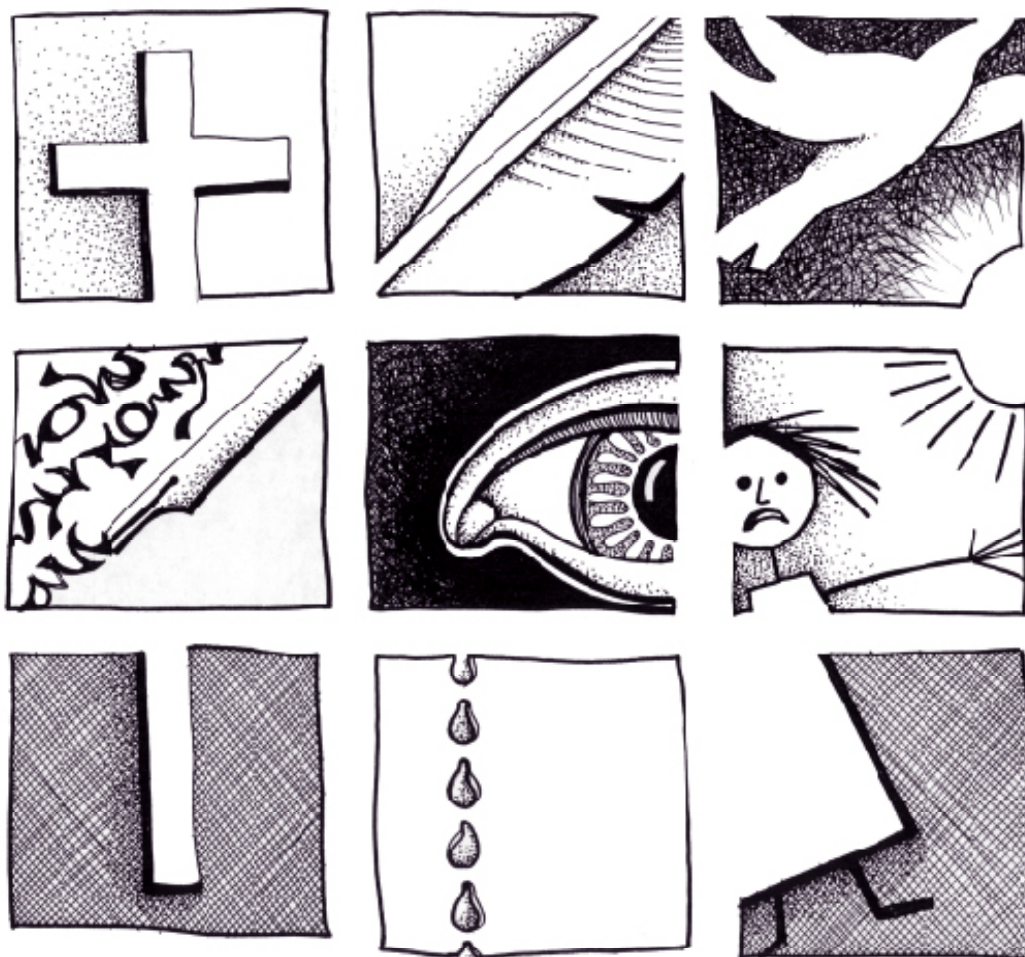
Similarly a Christian joy that turns its eyes from the realities of war, poverty, starvation, violence, the depletion of the planet seems dangerously close to the lack of consciousness which

is substantially responsible for such suffering. The greed for wealth and power which sits at one end of the see-saw does not see – or does not take in – the human deprivation at the other. *Dives* feasts unaware of the man dying at his gate.

To see, to take in, however, sometimes seems more than we can bear. Who wants to imagine what it is like for a widowed mother of small children in Zambia to learn she has Aids? To hear of the daily fear and brutal killing of East Timorese people shocks and appalls us. To imagine a planet where an old man tries to describe to a child what birds were like, how they soared in the air and sang to the sunrise, and were so light upon your hand, seems further than we want to stretch our minds.

But I believe that we have to find ways of living un-anesthetised in our age. We have to find ways of seeing and feeling that do not eat us up or paralyse us. We have to learn to weep. Otherwise we are failing to love. Otherwise the gospel is like a quill pen in a computer age - a curiosity but not for real business.

Theologian Mary Hunt says that passion for justice begins

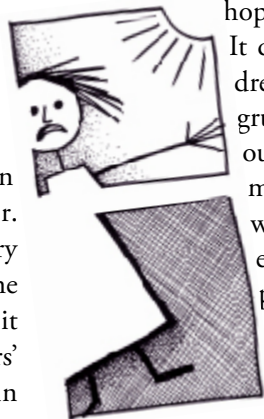


in the body, specifically when we see what is wrong and weep for it. When we notice one another's tears, we validate and confirm this feeling and connect in what we know. When we wipe one another's tears dry and take steps to change the things that made us weep, justice is on the move.

For most of us this will come in some very specific encounter. When I think of poverty in our country I think of a white nylon dress. In the small country school that I attended it was clear who was who - the farmers' children, the poor families, those in between. Daphne came from a poor family. Added to that she was plain with a round face and thick ankles. Her clothes were always shabby and faded. They were clearly passed down. She was not always clean. She was often left out. She was part of the environment. As a child I recorded it but almost as a demographic fact.

One day, however, Daphne came to school in a new dress. She had never worn a new dress to school before. It was made of white nylon. My mother would have said it was a dress for

church or birthday parties. But Daphne wore it to school. It was the first time I really saw her - her desire to be the same, to have new clothes, her terrible hope of being accepted.



It did not happen. The dress became grey and grubby. The hope faded out. But it stuck in my mind. And no matter what any politician or economist says about poverty or the lack of it, I know, in my being that no child should have to live like that. I have wept

for it. I know.

In *Matthew* Jesus delivers his beatitudes from up a mountain. *Luke's* Jesus, on the other hand, is down among people, people pushing around, wanting to touch and be touched, drawing from him the power and healing they crave when he looks up and says to his disciples, *Blessed are you who weep....* Perhaps he is asking them to see and be moved, to weep. Perhaps he is showing them something of his own disturbing compassion. For this beatitude describes not only the

persecuted, poor and hungry disciples of *Luke's* church but also the Jesus they recalled - the Jesus who did not shirk human suffering, who wept for it, who hung on the cross - and who was totally at peace with himself. For the deepest Christian laughter comes from the knowledge of being welcomed by God to the banquet of unconditional acceptance. Part of this means being of one heart with the God who loves deeply and who weeps at human pain.

I was among the audience in the Dunedin Town Hall when the Dalai Lama visited some years ago. He made a deep impression as a profoundly free and whole person, humanly spiritual, who lived in his being the sufferings of the Tibetan people - and most of all for his marvellous laugh. Spontaneous and free, it seemed to come from the centre of his being, from far inside where weeping and laughter sit together.

If we are to live with Christian integrity in our age we need to learn to see, to love, to weep and to act - as God sees, loves, weeps and acts. In this is a joy more true than any other on offer. ■

The Travellers (Luke 8:1-3)

*We are the travelling women.
Our names are lost
but the cost
of companioning Jesus is not.*

*We are the once lepers and widows,
outcasts and bleeders,
prayers and dreamers
who dared.*

*We are the bakers and servants,
dancers and weavers,
gossips, believers
who chose to be chosen.*

*Our names are lost like blood
in a red sea.
But the sound of our voice
is pulse to the pilgrim heart.*

Anne Powell

The Last Memory

She heard her name being called in this most unlikely place;
searchingly she looked around and beyond the barbed fence;
there he stood, his face pressed against the cold iron bars
as if to bridge the infinite gap between them.

Her heart leapt for joy, knowing he had returned from the dungeon,
though it was like leaping from the furnace into the cauldron.
"Did get the letter and the lovely card you sent to the other place.
Thank you", he said and she knew he meant it.

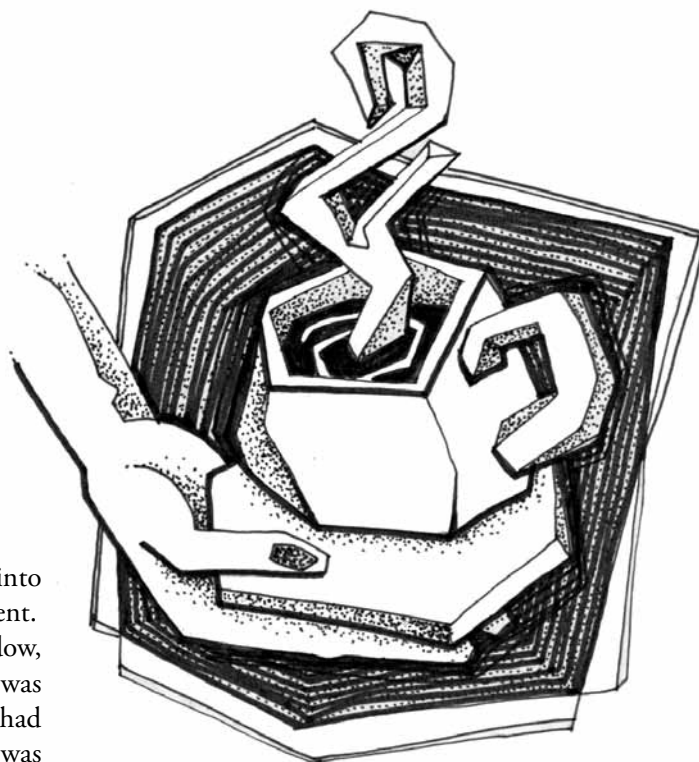
This was a moment she was to remember always
for she never saw him again, and in this final memory
remained encapsulated the very essence of an unlikely alliance
between two people,
one labelled sane and the other criminally insane.

Then one day she read about this tragic man;
the bloodied finale of a life destroyed from its very inception;
the sheer wastefulness of precious human bonds
smashed to smithereens by unnamed forces within and without.

Laetitia Puthenpadath

Mary's visit

Niki Keehan



Cath the caregiver brought the morning tea trolley into the lounge and wondered why the room felt different. Was it the fresh spring air blowing in the opened window, or the fact the TV was off and the room was quiet? It was strangely quiet, the conversation was gentle and Hazel had stopped calling out. There was a visitor with her. That was quite unusual as she never had visitors. The old lady in blue was talking quietly to her and Hazel was smiling.

"Just serving tea, dear; would you like a cup with us?"

"You are kind. I'll have mine just the same as Hazel, dear, thank you."

Tea poured, Cath left with the trolley to have her coffee and cigarette in the staffroom. She would come in later to collect the cups and saucers. Hazel and her visitor enjoyed their tea, chatting like old friends do.

Cath said, "Won't disturb you, just want to pick up the cups, dear". The visitor was now sitting by George and talking about fishing at the lake with him and how difficult it was to find reliable nets to hold a big catch.

"Yes, my boys always had problems with the nets breaking."

"Living with your family are you?" asked Cath.

"My nephew's family, dear", the visitor said. Cath was struck by the deep blue eyes in the wrinkled old face.

"Come far to visit the folks have you?"

"Yes, quite a distance."

"Must hurry with these cups, got to get them done before lunch – the cook gets so cross when they're late back, but the folks do like a bit of a chat."

"I know they like a wee chat, that's why I came." Cath took the cups back feeling so much better; the lady with the blue eyes knew they liked a chat.

An hour later at lunch time Cath asked, "would you like to stay for lunch – you could sit with Hazel and Winnie?"

"Just let me sit where it's easiest for you".

"Winnie sits with Hazel and Winnie doesn't talk much; she lost her only son in an accident and has withdrawn into

herself completely. Her husband died years ago and she has never come to terms with that either. We sat them together because they're both so quiet."

"I know how it is for her. My only son died apparently needlessly, and my husband passed away long ago. I am well looked after by my nephew's family. Family support is a wonderful thing you know."

Cath felt a bit mean sitting her at that table; they were such grumpy old souls when they did talk, but those blue eyes of hers seemed to know they needed help.

"By the way – what was your name? So I can introduce you to Winnie".

"Mary, dear – Mary Brown."

Mary was introduced and sat with the two old ladies to share their lunch. She said very little to them but the feeling at the table changed, the air of sadness dispelled. Hazel and Winnie ate a good lunch, something they hadn't done for a long time.

After lunch they sometimes had entertainment in the lounge. There was none planned for today, and the old visitor in her shabby blue coat sat at the piano and played *Remembrance*. The residents all nodded, clapped and smiled happily. Then she sat there and played long forgotten melodies until the afternoon tea trolley came.

"You still here – haven't you a home to go to?" Cath's shift was just about to finish, and she was surprised to see a morning visitor still there.

"This is my home, too, you know, dear."

"Oh is it just? Where do you come from? Who do you live with – everyday that is?"

"My nephew took care of me when Joseph and my son died, but now my home is in heaven."

"Oh dear, we've got a right one here", muttered Cath. She sat Mary down with a cup of tea and got the receptionist to start ringing other local Rest Homes and the Police to find out if there were any old ladies reported missing.

Mary sat and sipped her tea with Winnie, Hazel and George. Her blue eyes twinkled at the fuss and bother and the sound of the approaching police siren. She smiled at the old people whose sadness she knew and understood. She finished her tea, put down her cup and saucer, picked up her handbag, pulled her coat together and walked out of the room. Cath hurried in looking for her.

"Mary dear, there's a nice lady here to talk to you and give you a ride in a police car." Cath looked surprised. "Where has she gone? She was here a minute ago; she can't have left the building because I'd have seen her."

Cath was tired and ready to go home. She had started at seven in the morning. It had been a long day. Now this strange old lady had vanished, and she had to tell the policewoman something. Besides the receptionist would be cross having wasted all her time phoning other homes.

The policewoman glared at her. "This is the third call out we've had for a mysterious 'Mary who lives in heaven' – same story every time, no one's reported her missing – she's done a runner when we get there. Perhaps you'll end up famous as Lourdes." She strode back to her police car and drove off in a hurry.

Cath smiled at the thought of turning the place into a shrine. "You do get your laughs in this place," she said – and wondered where the fragrance of roses came from. ■

Spirituality for Single People

*A day for exploring
and sharing*

Facilitated by single people

Saturday 14 August 1999

9.15am – 3.15pm

Catholic Institute of Theology
Newman Hall, 16 Waterloo Quadrant
Auckland Central

Cost: \$35 (\$5 discount if prepaid)
Bring lunch – Tea & Coffee provided
(Parking at rear)

Further inquiries:

Contact Catholic Institute of Theology

Ph (09) 379-6424 Fax: (09) 379-6426
email cit@theology.ac.nz

Meditation

The little baby was presented for baptism...
*and the priest welcomed the child
into God's community.*

The baby grew into a toddler...
*and the parents helped the toddler walk and talk,
and showed her love and understanding.*

The child went to school...
*and teacher taught the child reading and maths,
and respect for others and sharing
and nurtured her self-worth.*

The child prepared for first reconciliation...
*and the parents explained the mercy of God
and the priest gave the child absolution.*

The child received first Eucharist...
*and the parents explained the food
that was nourishing the child's spirit.*

The child received Confirmation...
*and the Bishop breathed the Spirit of God
on the child.*

The teenager went to secondary school...
*and her peers helped her learn respect for herself
and uphold her own choices.*

The student went on to University...
*and the lecturers showed her
the wonders of the universe
and the joys of an inquiring mind.*

The graduate went into the work force...
*and her colleagues showed her a world of greed,
of confusion, of despair, of unreal expectations.*

The worker did not accept this view of life...
*for had she not become a child of God,
fed on His body and blood,
received the Holy Spirit,
experienced love and understanding,
learnt respect and self-esteem,
confidence in her choices,
 marvelled at the world around her,
experienced forgiveness.*

*And the seed of faith, planted at her baptism and
nurtured through all her life encounters, burst forth. It
had fallen on fertile ground, prepared by all those who
laid down the foundations in her heart.*

And the Christian went out...
and loved God, herself and

Yvonne Sang

*Both Niki Keehan's story and Yvonne Sang's
Meditation were written as part of the Walk By Faith
3-year Course*

Hospices are becoming a normal and accepted part of New Zealand society. Tui Motu pays a visit to the one just round the corner

Chief Executive Officer, Dave Ryan (right) and volunteer worker, Eli Gray-Smith, outside the Otago Community Hospice



A homely place for the final journey

Dave Ryan is Chief Executive Officer of the Otago Community Hospice in Dunedin city. At any given time the Otago hospice has eight in-patients and up to 40 patients per week using the daycare facilities. In addition, the staff may run five outpatient clinics each week – for people who are at the stage of needing assessment.

For Dave, running the hospice is an extremely satisfying work because every day he sees patients being relieved of acute distress, which was denied to his own parents. They both died when he was quite young – and they both died in considerable pain. The hospice is a place where patients will come for a time so that from a medical point of view the pain of their terminal illness can be controlled; and at a personal level they can be helped into a peaceful acceptance of their condition.

A usual scenario will be that a patient is referred to the hospice by their GP or from hospital when it has become clear that medical treatment is not going to arrest or cure the illness. When they first arrive patients are often in a negative state since it has finally become clear that there is no reversal of their condition. But Dave's experience is that, in most cases, after a few days that sense of hopelessness diminishes and they begin to accept their situation.

Indeed it is often the family members who need to be consoled and helped. The hospice is essentially a *family* place. The staff are trained to make the patients as 'at home' as possible and to be equally hospitable to visitors. The house is welcoming and friendly with none of the bustle inevitably to be found in a hospital ward. Often patients stay for a few days until their pain situation

is under proper control, and they can then return home. Others may need more constant care and will stay there until they die. Normally the length of stay is approximately a month. There are others with terminal illness who come in by day so as to give their carers some respite. But this will also serve to get a patient used to the place, and they will settle in more easily when the time comes.

One group of people very much part of the hospice team are the volunteers. Altogether there are nearly a hundred people who give their services freely to the Otago Community hospice. They help with cleaning, cooking and transporting patients – but they also become part of the team and learn to adopt the same routines as regards hygiene and the way of relating to patients and families as the regular staff.

Because of the special care demanded by this kind of nursing, the professional staffing level is high. There is also a small team of doctors on call and a social worker working pretty well fulltime counselling patients and families, some of whom will need ongoing help after their loved one has died. There are also two chaplains. Dave insists that the spiritual dimension is central. When a dying person comes to a point of peace and acceptance, then even their physical situation is helped and invariably they will need less painkilling drugs. Holistic therapy is commonly used – music, art, massage and ‘aroma-therapy’. The whole regime of the hospice revolves around providing the sort of caring family atmosphere which will gently lead the patient to this desired level of acceptance.

Eli Gray-Smith is one of the regular helpers at the Otago Hospice. He is a single man: laughingly, he says he first became involved in the hospice to avoid having to attend Christmas dinner with his relations and their swarms of children! He felt out of place – but he has never felt out of place in the hospice.

He’s a keen musician, and nothing gives him greater pleasure than playing the piano for the patients or leading the singing when it is someone’s birthday. Eli is passionate about the success of the hospice regime for palliative care: “during all the 8 years I have worked here I have never heard a patient scream!”



Dave Ryan says people like Eli are invaluable to the success of the hospice. About half the cost of running the place is met from the Health Funding Authority. It is a tribute to the generosity of the local people that getting the balance is usually achieved. Indeed it is very important for the people of Otago to have a sense of ownership and pride in their hospice. But a vital factor in the equation is the work done by the volunteers like Eli.

Hospice care is free, and this in itself takes a great load of worry off the shoulders of some patients and their families. The spread of age of patients is much wider than one might suspect: at least half under 60 – many in the 45 to 60 age bracket. Occasionally they have patients who are much younger. In spite of the human tragedies which are happening there every day the hospice is a happy place.

Hospice policy is quite clear: *neither to hasten death nor to postpone it*. For Dave it has been the most rewarding work he has ever been engaged in. There have been moments of extraordinary poignancy, like the couple who advanced their wedding date by a couple of months so that the bride’s mother, a patient, could share in the joy of the day. The staff organised the whole function, and there was not a dry eye in the house.

And Dave often thinks of the little boy who provided the hospice with its logo. He drew it while he was accompanying his dying mother. It is a sketch of a magnificently coloured butterfly winging its way towards the sun. ■



Free

Christopher News Notes

Over 60 titles to choose from - below is a selection

Spiritual Matters

- 314 **To the Ends of the Earth**
Ways women and men can answer the missionary call
- 336 **God Delights in You**
Celebrate your relationship with God
- 339 **Spirituality, Happiness and Health**
The importance of harmony for the whole person
- 347 **The Power of Forgiveness**
Offer and seek forgiveness; it can heal lives

If unavailable at your local Parish Church write to us today...all items available free on request

The Christophers, P O Box 1937, Wellington

*Inspirational * Timely * Practical*



Mini-Sabbatical

Welcome the Year of Jubilee

lee

9th March -

Needing time to slow down, to renew your vision? Is it time for a change of place and a change of pace?

In Mark 6:30, Jesus says:

"Come away to some quiet place all by yourselves and rest for awhile".

An opportunity for a loosely structured program offering a six-day Retreat, workshop on Christ – the Year of Jubilee and a Seminar on the *Enneagram*. Time to pray, relax, read and see some of the scenic beauty of Brisbane and environs.

The Cenacle at Ormiston is situated on the shores of Moreton Bay – 35 minutes from the city of Brisbane – in an area noted for the koala population and native bird life.

For further information:

Sr Pat Clouston,

The Cenacle, 267 Wellington St, Ormiston, Q.4160

Tel(07)3286-4011

Fax (07)3821-3788

You're Spoiling him Rotten

Psychotherapist, Paul Andrews SJ, continues his series on bringing up young people

Just as school principals hate to hear the accusation *Discipline is going to the dogs*, so parents are sensitive to the accusation of spoiling their children, especially if it comes from the older generation. It implies that they have not the courage to do their job. Spoiling has a different meaning at different ages. I remember one mother distressed by the accusation that her nine-year-old Maurice was spoiled and that she was doing the same to three-month-old Ross. What does spoiling mean at different ages?

Baby Ross is a mass of needs: to be fed and held and kept warm and kept clean. His survival depends completely on mother or her substitute. He cannot even perceive the needs of others, let alone meet them. The one gift he can give is his evident contentment when mother feeds or cuddles him. If his cries of need are met consistently, then the world starts to become a trustworthy place, though still more frightening than the warm, nourishing comfort of the womb. The promptness and reliability with which mother responds to his cries becomes part of his consciousness. His first social achievement is to let mother out of his sight without undue anxiety or rage, because she has become an inner certainty as well as an outer predictability. She is becoming an 'internal mother', a comforting sense that even if she is not beside him, he is being looked after.

Penelope Leach (*The Parents' A to Z*, London, Penguin) puts it this way: "If you find yourself deliberately withholding attention because your baby is 'too demanding', be warned. The slower you are to meet the needs he expresses, and the more you ration your attention to him, the more he will demand, because

the more anxious he will become in case those needs are not going to be met. If you leave him to cry alone in his cot because 'he has got to learn', he will not learn to play there quietly. Instead he will learn to cry hard the moment he awakens because experience of being left too long has made it impossible for him to be contented there."



Spoiling has quite a different meaning for Ross than for Maurice. As the baby grows, a lot of his life will consist of postponing his own needs and impulses and adjusting to others' needs. He has to be initiated gently into the realisation that not all his demands can be met at once, if at all, and that other people have needs as well as him. The more secure and contented a baby is, the sooner he is able to wait, to allow for others' needs. That security is built up by the consistency with which mother responds to his needs in the first year of his life.

A spoiled child – and Maurice may well be such – is full of unsatisfied *needs* and intolerant of others' *demands*. He is selfish, and unable to tolerate frustration. The way that spoiling comes about varies at different ages. Rigid disciplinarians of young babies breed spoiled, unhappy children with no confidence in themselves or their parents. Ross could be spoilt by a mother who will never leave him alone when he is not

wanting attention, or who in other ways is *unresponsive* to him. Grandparents can sometimes spoil their children in this way.

After the first year, children are spoiled by over-protection, by never being allowed to do things for themselves, by never being allowed out of their mother's sight. Some children grow up with a strong internal need to achieve, a satisfaction in managing their own life that makes them happy, well-motivated students. The sort of parents who produce this inner motivation are deeply involved with their children, watching them every step of the way, but not doing things for them that they could do for themselves. They take more pleasure in seeing the child try than in doing things for her. They love to see her feed and dress herself, choose her own friends, go on messages, use public transport, manage her own homework, make her own mistakes and correct them, rather than go out with perfect homework for which she feels she can take only half the credit.

Fashions change, but there is no change in the old law that two-year-olds want to be boss, and protest at being thwarted in any way. In babyhood their needs *have* to be met. In childhood they begin to make allowance for others' needs and demands. In the period between the two, management is never easy. There is nothing sadder than to see a household where a nine-year-old boy has been allowed to go on imagining that he is the boss, that the world revolves around his needs, and that what he shouts must be heeded. At that stage it will take a concerted effort from both parents to bring him back to a sense of others' needs. ■

Father Francis Bennett – an artisan for God

Fr Tom Fahey

The recent death of Fr Francis Bennett in Auckland brought to mind the striking record of his family in the life of the church in New Zealand. Of the six children who came with their parents from England to this country in 1910 – four boys and two girls – two became diocesan priests, one a Marist priest, one a Marist Brother, one sister a nun and the other married. Surely a great testimony to the faith and goodness of their parents.

The remarkable talents of the four men, all driven by the urge to question how things worked and to invent new and improved ways, would point to a father who was a genius. Imagine my surprise the only time I met their mother when Frank was showing her over Holy Cross College in Mosgiel, to find that her main interest was in how the plumbing worked! Was she the parent who handed on the practical gifts they so abundantly displayed? If so, she was richly rewarded in the use they made of them.

Frank was not long in Holy Cross as a student when radio was invented. He soon had made his own version. When the Rector kindly told the students the latest news he had heard on his radio, it was stale news to them. And so it went on.

In July 1931 Frank left Holy Cross to be ordained, and next February he was back on the staff. Greek was one of the subjects entrusted to him. It was not long till he found the textbook needed replacing. He discovered an old typewriter with a Greek alphabet. He made out new lessons, typed them, then duplicated them. In the classroom he at times stood behind us, maybe to hide a falling tear.

When the Vincentian Fathers came to staff Holy Cross in 1934, Frs Frank Finlay and Frank Bennett were the two

diocesan priests kept on to teach, but they were not otherwise engaged in the work of the seminary. So Frank Bennett had time to help in the entertainment side of our lives and to develop his skills as a magician, even being sought as a tutor for the Magicians Club in Dunedin.

While still on the teaching staff at Holy Cross Frank became interested in the work of the church amongst the youth in Europe. It was the time when Canon Cardijn of Belgium was having great success with the *Young Christian Workers'* Movement which spread over many countries before the Second World War. Frank studied their literature and used it as his guide in beginning this work in Dunedin.

When his time at the seminary ended, he became part of the Dunedin diocese and was appointed to work full time with the young workers setting up separate organisations for men and women. With the co-operation of the parish clergy, groups were formed in most parts of the diocese. These were successful for a number of years in continuing the growth of their members and others in the life of the church and in their personal lives. But the war drained off most of the young men to the forces and the initial fervour was never regained. Frank eventually left this work to become parish priest of Mornington and later of Tainui.

When he retired he went to live at the family 'bach' in Tairua in the Coromandel Peninsula. There he worked for many years, dreaming up the perfect church for Tairua, designing it, building it, decorating it, and of course, providing Mass for the people till he was over 85 years old. The last four years of life were spent in the Home of the Little Sisters in Auckland, aware, but unable to speak. Death freed him on 8 May at the age of 90, to meet his Creator: the mas-

ter inventor, designer, builder, carver, painter, decorator, weaver, stained-glass maker, film producer, classical guitarist, go-cart Racer, and, most of all, priest.

Father Bennett was a dedicated priest, gifted beyond the usual and he gave himself sincerely and unsparingly to his ministry. He strove to be perfect in all that he did to the last detail. Yet there were many disappointments. His great dream of a nationwide Youth Apostolate did not come up to expectations. In following the lead of Canon Cardijn, Frank had a clear picture in his mind, but maybe it was based on how Belgium met its needs rather than the needs of New Zealand. Frank seemed to find it hard to let young people examine their situations and make decisions of their own. He wanted to teach them rather than lead them to think for themselves. Perhaps in those early days inculturation in spirituality and liturgy was not understood as it is today.

However, we must not look back at a life like Frank Bennett's to find fault. Frank did not belong to the Dunedin diocese by ordination, but generously he gave all his priestly years to it. There were signs of a hidden loneliness with his family so far away. His friends who loved him realised this lonely aspect, which at times made him seem distant.

To pray that Frank may now *Rest in Peace* does not quite fit in with the memory of his busy life on earth! One may think rather of the joy and wonder that will be his in contemplating the whole of creation and its hidden marvels. And to be enveloped in the love of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will heal all of life's pains and disappointments.

All you works of the Lord, Bless the Lord. ■

The appalling silence of God

The Sparrow (1997, 506pp)
Children of God (1999, 510 pp)
 by Mary Doris Russell
 Black Swan
 Price: \$24.95 each
 Review: Neil Vaney, SM

The central character in these two novels is Emilio Sandoz, Jesuit priest and linguist, sole survivor of the first stellar journey to make contact with another civilisation. Having passed through a year of intense suffering trying to relate what happened when he landed on Rakhat, he is finally able to tell the story of hope and betrayal – and his own brutalisation. Vincenzo Giuliani, the Jesuit Superior General, who sent him out, quotes him a passage from the Greek poet, Aeschylus, “*In our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.*” (*Sparrow*, 502). These words conclude the first novel and form the bridge to the second. They capture the themes of Russell’s work: suffering, the search for wisdom, the apparent appalling silence of God.

Russell is part of a continuing tradition of authors who have explored in their novels the issues of religion and human relations with the cosmos. The chain stretches from Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* to C S Lewis’ exploration of original sin in *Perelandra*. It has moved into visual media in the elaborate allegories of modern political issues in *Star Trek* to the exploration of human freedom in the face of genetic modification in the movie *Gattaca*. The distinctiveness of Russell’s work is the power with which the worlds of technology, cultural anthropology (especially questions of first contact), and theology collide and interpenetrate one another. Though true novels, built on a gripping plot with many unexpected turnings and a small cast of deeply engaging and subtle characters, Russell’s work is a relentless intellectual

exploration, touching upon the most troubling questions that vex the human heart and intelligence.

The author’s central focus is theodicy, how one reconciles a loving God with the agonies of human life and the apparent indifference of the physical universe. This theme emerges time and again: in the inexplicable death of Marc Robichaux, musicologist and ritualist, soon after the party lands on Rakhat, the planet first detected on radio by bursts of exquisite music: “*He came all this way for the music and he didn’t even get to hear it once... What kind of stinking goddam trick is this for God to play?*” (*Sparrow*, 249).

After he is sold into the harem of Hlavin Kitheri, ruler of the city of Galatna, then raped, Emilio is devastated by despair and rage that the God for whom he had sacrificed so much had let this happen to him. While pondering if he can send a return party to Rakhat, Giuliani muses, “*It was absurd in hindsight – the very idea that a handful of humans might have been able to do everything right the first time... On Rakhat, that ignorance proved catastrophic.*” (*Children*, 31-32).

Here we touch on Russell’s second leading theme, the possibility of understanding across different cultures, even with alien species. The polyglot cast of the first journey: Sandoz, of poor Costa Rican parents, Sofia Mendez, a Sephardic Jew growing up in war-ravaged Beirut, Jimmy Quinn whose astrophysics had been the departure ticket from Northern Ireland, and four others of equally diverse origins, provide a rich tapestry in which elements of contact, distance, longing and misunderstanding constantly cross and interweave. On Rakhat the same difficulties appear. The Jesuit party fails to understand that the gentle and sociable Runa among whom they land are the domesticated food supply for the dominant Jana’ata overlords. Later Sandoz, despite his revulsion, comes to see that the Jana’ata’s harsh population

controls have led to a planet with no unemployment, overcrowding, pollution, starvation or beggars, a situation immensely different from the earth of 2060, staggering to support its 16 billion inhabitants.

Over the thousand pages of the two books Russell explores many other themes: the paradox of celibacy in anthropology, the dilemmas of power in the Church and in the Jesuit order, the role of beauty and music in bridging diverse cultures. She touches on interesting subplots: another suppression of the Jesuits for contesting the Catholic Church’s teaching on birth control, the links of the Vatican with the Neapolitan Camorra, and the effect of various natural disasters such as a major eruption of Vesuvius. She is unafraid to explore the deepest struggles and intimacy of prayer, even to recounting a mystical moment for a reborn Jana’ata.

These novels are not light reading. Though each could be read separately, they are deeply intermeshed. Their time sequences are complex, spanning the earth years 2019-96. Because of relativity effects, however, the travellers to Rakhat age less quickly than those back on earth. This requires the reader to cope with two different time sequences though Russell does all she can to assist us by frequently pointing out the differing time frames. There are long discussions and debates between the characters, especially on the trips out to Rakhat, and in Emilio’s first debriefing. The author does provide many moments of lyrical beauty, nonetheless. Her description of the woods on Rakhat and the mountainous N’Jarr valley are gripping. There are moments of exquisite tenderness, for instance, when Emilio returns to Naples after his second journey and meets all unexpected his daughter Ariana and her newly born son, Tommaso, whom she invites her father to hold: “*Kids and babies’, he thought. ‘Don’t do this to me again.’ But there was no way to resist. He looked at this undreamed-of daughter and at her tiny child – frowning and milky in dreamless sleep – and found room in the*



Rekindling a sense of wonder

The Re-Enchantment of Everyday Life
by Thomas Moore
Harper Collins; Hodder & Stoughton
pbk.1996
Price: A\$24.95
Review: Albert C. Moore

In this conclusion to his trilogy Thomas Moore takes *care of the soul* into a whole range of experiences of private and public life. This makes it the largest and most ambitious of the three books; it looks to a soul-centred therapy which really works to bring joy and re-enchantment to our everyday life in nature and culture.

I personally welcome this vision. Some, however, may suspect Moore of becoming a best-selling New Age guru for the upwardly mobile, seeking cosy life-enhancement and short-cuts to success (as in those hype-ridden books on the airport stands). But Thomas Moore does not succumb to these temptations. He requires personal soul-searching, sacrificial effort and thoughtful participation in the life of society around us; the world has to be re-souled and re-enchanted.

So what does this enchantment amount to? It draws on the imagery of magic: "Enchantment is a spell that comes over us". We find our heart is electrified by some haunting quality in the world. Things, places and people suddenly "become translucent with grace and infused with otherworldly value". "Enchantment is an ascendancy of the soul." This looks for a rich poetic participation in life, based on the dialogue between our lived experience and our imagination.

But again, as with the concept of the soul, we live in a time of *dis-enchantment*. Along with material abundance we experience much of our life as

tasteless, flat and repetitive. We are removed from the warmth and mystery of nature. Religious devotion and traditions from the past are cynically dismissed as hypocritical, irrelevant, dated and *uncool*. If we are to recover a sense of personal involvement and joy in everyday life, such attitudes need to be reversed.

These key concepts and goals are well discussed in the introduction and conclusion. However, the 'main course' of the book consists of some 370 pages in between with a wealth of applications to life. Moore's own lifetime of study with books and music leads to fascinating reflections on "the magic of bookstores", music and the arts, noise and silence. But the major emphasis is on everyday experiences of life such as nature and trees, space and habitat, ecology, politics, business and even jewellery. Every reader is due to find surprise and enrichment somewhere here.

To focus on just one section which arouses literally a 'gut-reaction' in all of us, the discussion of "the Interiority of Food" shows food as a major source of enchantment. This means viewing food not just as a health and dietary problem of chemical components, but as conveying another kind of interiority – the soul of food. Food can convey a cultural imagination, "a taste of life"; so spices are essential to "taste imagination", a form of knowing and enchantment. The whole sequence of preparation of food, including shopping, cooking, laying the table, dining and cleaning up, make up "the poetics of food".

In this book as in the previous ones, Moore is able to illuminate many such earthy everyday experiences with a profound feel for enchantment.

One question: some readers may be puzzled by his positive references to astrology, fate, magic and divination. I, too, have reservations about such terms when they are already overloaded with ancient literal meanings associated with determination by the stars and cosmic fate; these would surely contradict Moore's essential message of the soul and its imaginative freedom. Moore takes the risk of being misread, he says, because he is searching for a middle path between too simple belief and psychological reduction to metaphor; he wants "a midrealm where imagination is taken seriously though not literally" (p.XIX).

For him, then, the creative imagination is the key and context for interpreting these terms, as he makes clear in his conclusion: "We need to be educated above all in imagination". Enchantment "places imagination before information". The small steps we take towards enchantment in everyday life can express deep compassion and a new way of life. Here are echoes of the biblical vision of a new heaven and a new earth.

Along with many other readers I shall return to Moore's trilogy. They are, of course, only books after all; *we* still have to do the work. But they are books to be thought out, lived out and also to be shared out in reading in the company of others, especially soul-mates. ■

We will find those books

Books mentioned in this paper, or any other books you can't find,



OC Books

Tollfree 0800 886 226
39 Princes St, Dunedin
Ph/Fax (03) 477 9919

Visit our website

<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~mcrowl>

crowded necropolis of his heart. 'Yes', he said finally, amazed and resigned and somehow content. 'Yes. I would like that very much.' (Children, 508)

So end two novels much preoccupied with new life in the midst of death. It rounds off a vision in which different cultures, and even alien cultures, can ultimately transcend barriers of diversity and incomprehension to accept one another because all of them are "...children of a God so high that our ranks and our differences are as nothing in his far sight." (Children, 418) ■

The pleasure of a good TV interview

Television in New Zealand continues to slide down the slippery slope of public apathy and Government indifference. Television executives appear to be reluctant to acknowledge any shortcomings in their administration while taking refuge in the questionable viewing statistics which are pumped out weekly from various agencies. The administrators also appear reluctant to face up to the digital revolution with all that this implies. For with the advent of digital reception (numbers converted to pictures) which frees up space formerly occupied by the sending of pictures (analogue television), greater choice will be available to viewers. This does not mean that there will be a greater range of quality television, but it will mean that the long-suffering viewer in this country will have the opportunity of avoiding the saturation advertising which continues to erode the enjoyment of good programming.

One of the particular pleasures which many viewers have is listening to an extended interview with a famous person or exploring a political or ethical question with someone who is involved in an issue which is receiving media attention. This is why so many people record *Hard Talk* from BBC World in which interviewer Tim Sebastian uses a range of techniques to draw out his subject.

Sebastian's interview with Sir Edmund Hillary was a masterpiece of careful exploration. In the course of the half-hour programme, he managed to uncover Hillary's strength of purpose, his doggedness, his humility and the sensitivity which is not so well known. He revealed a man searching for spiritual solace after the death of his wife and daughter and who found comfort in Hinduism and purpose in helping the people of Nepal. The result was a deeply moving and revealing

Crosscurrents

by Caliban

interview with a man we thought we knew well.

It was also interesting to have seen Murray Ball, the cartoonist, on *Crossfire* TV1's sad attempt at a current affairs programme. The idea of two journalists firing salvos at the subject is anything but constructive and does not allow for a sensible exploration of ideas. But in this programme, Murray Ball appeared to make Linda Clark and Mike Hosking a little uncomfortable. With his slow,



thoughtful and sensitive comments on some of the issues before the media, it was interesting to see their reaction. Hosking actually slowed down and listened to what was being said while Clark rattled on like a demented fowl as if trying to shut out the image of a subject who not only discussed his feelings but who revealed a strong spirituality.

Paul Cutler, head of news and current affairs at TVNZ told the *Listener* in 1992 that the age of the extended interview programme was dead and that such a programme could not be shown in Prime Time because it would not attract an audience. With such a mind set it's not surprising

that TV1 is so bereft of current affairs comment and that the Channel is content with news as entertainment as practised by Paul Holmes.

The result is that many viewers are forced to record BBC World for *Hard Talk* or *Dateline London* where the issues of the week are discussed by a panel of leading journalists. We could have the same here if there was any commitment to meeting viewers' needs but any complaint simply results in the week's ratings being parroted back at us and told that the Channel cannot afford the luxury of meeting the demands of a small minority.

In a civilised administration, it would be reasonable to assume that the task of TV1, a kind of quasi public service channel through government default, would be to reflect our people in all our diversity, reflecting the multi-cultural and ethnic mix that is contemporary New Zealand.

How refreshing it would be if the present cabinet and the Minister of Broadcasting acknowledged the true function of television. For it has the ability to engage the public as no other media can. It has been subverted for economic reasons, made sterile for political reasons and brought to a barren state by a blinkered and apathetic administration.

Television at its best can stimulate us, challenge us, inspire and educate us. But if this cabinet decided that TV1 could become the Public Service Channel, owned by the state and freed from the debasing effect of advertising, there would be a climate in which quality television would eventually flourish. It may even be a climate which would encourage the kind of television which meets, not the needs of the advertisers, but the aspirations of ordinary New Zealanders. ■

The Religious Broadcaster – a dying breed

Peter Mann

The room looks stark, furnished only with a table and chair. A microphone, suspended from the ceiling, is positioned in front of the chair's occupant who can also see, through a glass panel, the technician beyond. The occupant waits for the indicator light to change. When it does so, the broadcaster begins to read the script. If a mistake is made, the technician stops the recording and the broadcaster resumes at a suitable place. Music and any recording of a reading is added, the recording timed out. Another religious broadcast goes to air. It became a familiar experience for those of us chosen by our Christian denomination to become broadcasters.

Thirty years on, our breed has almost vanished. There has been no public outcry – just a resigned acceptance. Yet they not only served a valuable purpose when they first went to air, but many people still look back on them with gratitude as a means of coming to faith. How were they achieved?

In the post-World War II years, the NZBS and mainstream churches co-operated to recruit talent. The Service

set up a special department, headed for some years by an Anglican priest, Fr Charles Harrison, who many found to be an inspiration. He did not suffer fools gladly and his usual method of making a critique of a script would be to say "This script is passable, BUT..."

So it came about that I joined a sizeable group chosen by the churches. Some programmes were carried on the ZB network but the bulk of them were broadcast over the National Stations and the flagship programme was *A Faith for Today* which went to air at 10am on weekdays. It was as good a time as any – 'smoke O' was usually observed at that hour both in the workplace and, often, the home. Ten minutes were allowed, and within that time the broadcaster would develop a theme with a brief reading of Scripture and a hymn.

Success depended on the observation of certain rules. The first was to catch the attention of the listener – and you had about 30 seconds to do it. Otherwise you could flag it away. Then there was the voice – modulated, interesting and sincere. The script had to be heard, not read. Then the subject matter, which

might range from theology to ethics to community concerns to law and order – a huge range. But the purpose was to bring a Christian viewpoint to the chosen subject matter. It had to be relevant and focused.

The advent of television created more limited opportunities for the Christian churches. Programmes of congregational singing became, and have remained, popular. But TV never offered the opportunity that radio did for a serious attempt to communicate the Gospel. Those of us trained in this medium have been grateful for the chance to construct and deliver short addresses that carry conviction and hold the listeners' attention. Every such address needs a beginning, a middle and an end.

But this is not only for those called and trained for such work. I am convinced we do not need to look any further than the Gospels for guidance. The precision of the reported teaching of Jesus makes it luminous and relevant. The earthiness and the spirituality are equally encapsulated. Not only is there balance but excitement as well. Our generation still needs to heed and practice those skills for at the heart of Christian communication is one person sharing the Gospel with another. Religious broadcasters sought no more than to do just that. ■

(Rev Peter Mann is the retired Anglican Bishop of Dunedin)

If you know a friend who might enjoy reading Tui Motu – and perhaps become a subscriber – then fill in the name below and send it to:

**P O Box 6404
Dunedin North 9030**

– and we will send them a free copy.

Name:.....

.....

Address:.....

.....

TUI MOTU-INTERISLANDS SUBSCRIPTION

NAME:.....

ADDRESS:.....

..... Area Code.....

\$20 for FIVE ISSUES

\$40 for ONE YEAR'S Subscription (11 issues)

Overseas: \$50 Australia and South Pacific: \$60 elsewhere

I enclose a cheque for \$_____ (Payable to: *Tui Motu-InterIslands*)

or please debit my credit card (Visa/Mastercard)

Card No: _____

Expiry date _____

Signature _____

Mail to P O Box 6404 DUNEDIN NORTH 9030

Working in the community for free

I count myself privileged to work in two sectors of people services; first, adult and community education, and second, welfare or social services. In my *voluntary* time I am a member of the ACEA (Adult and Community Education Association). This is the network which aims to provide a collective national voice to promote adult and community education as a recognisable education sector. Along with the community schools, polytechnics and universities, it includes WEAs, community houses, literacy groups and a myriad of other non-formal learning agencies.

Within a culture that defines learning as 'training' and 'upskilling' of the individual for paid employment, the broader vision that enhances the social, emotional and spiritual well-being, alongside the mental, manual and physical skills, is at risk. In a time of rapid social change as we manage the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial age, the concept of lifelong

learning, in the widest understanding of this term, is an idea whose time has come. Action by our government is long overdue!

In my *waged* work I am executive officer for the local network of welfare groups. Nationally we come together under the NZ Council of Social Services. Along with the Christian Council of Social Services (NZCCSS) and the NZ Federation of Voluntary Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations (NZFVWO), these three national networks are currently negotiating with central government for funding to ensure the continuing work of their central offices. When so much rhetoric is spoken about devolution of services to 'the community', the slowness of central government to recognise and resource grassroots networks is a tragedy.

The issues that underlie both areas – lifelong learning and welfare support – are fundamental to any healthy

democracy. At stake is the vision of an integrative society in which the individual and community give support to each other. Only this co-operative model will sustain that sense of the whole and the holy, shared not just by Christians, but all people of goodwill.

Prior to the last election our local Council of Social Services sent this question to the Paul Holmes Leaders Debate, September 1996: *Much of the welfare support for people that used to be provided by the state is now the responsibility of voluntary social service organisations. If government accepts that it would have great difficulty meeting the welfare needs of citizens without the enormous contribution of the voluntary social service sector, how would your party support and strengthen voluntary social service organisations?*

Unfortunately, the question was not asked then. Will it be addressed this time?

John Thornley

John Thornley is publisher/editor of Music in the Air, a bi-annual journal exploring song and spirituality

new from Paula Ripple Comin!



mixed blessings

Is it possible to survive or even grow through the seemingly inevitable tensions and turmoils that complicate our lives?

Well-known author, Paula Ripple Comin, draws on these painful life experiences to show how seemingly ordinary hurts and joys are our pathways to wholeness

Pbk 158pp RRP \$22.50

Mail orders our speciality
ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

C

CATHOLIC SUPPLIES (NZ) LTD, 80 Adelaide Rd, P O Box 16 110, Wellington

Phone: 04 384 3665 * Fax 04 384 3663 * Freephone 0800 882 284 or 0800-Cath-Sup

email: catholic.supplies@clear.net.nz