Tui Motu

InterIslands

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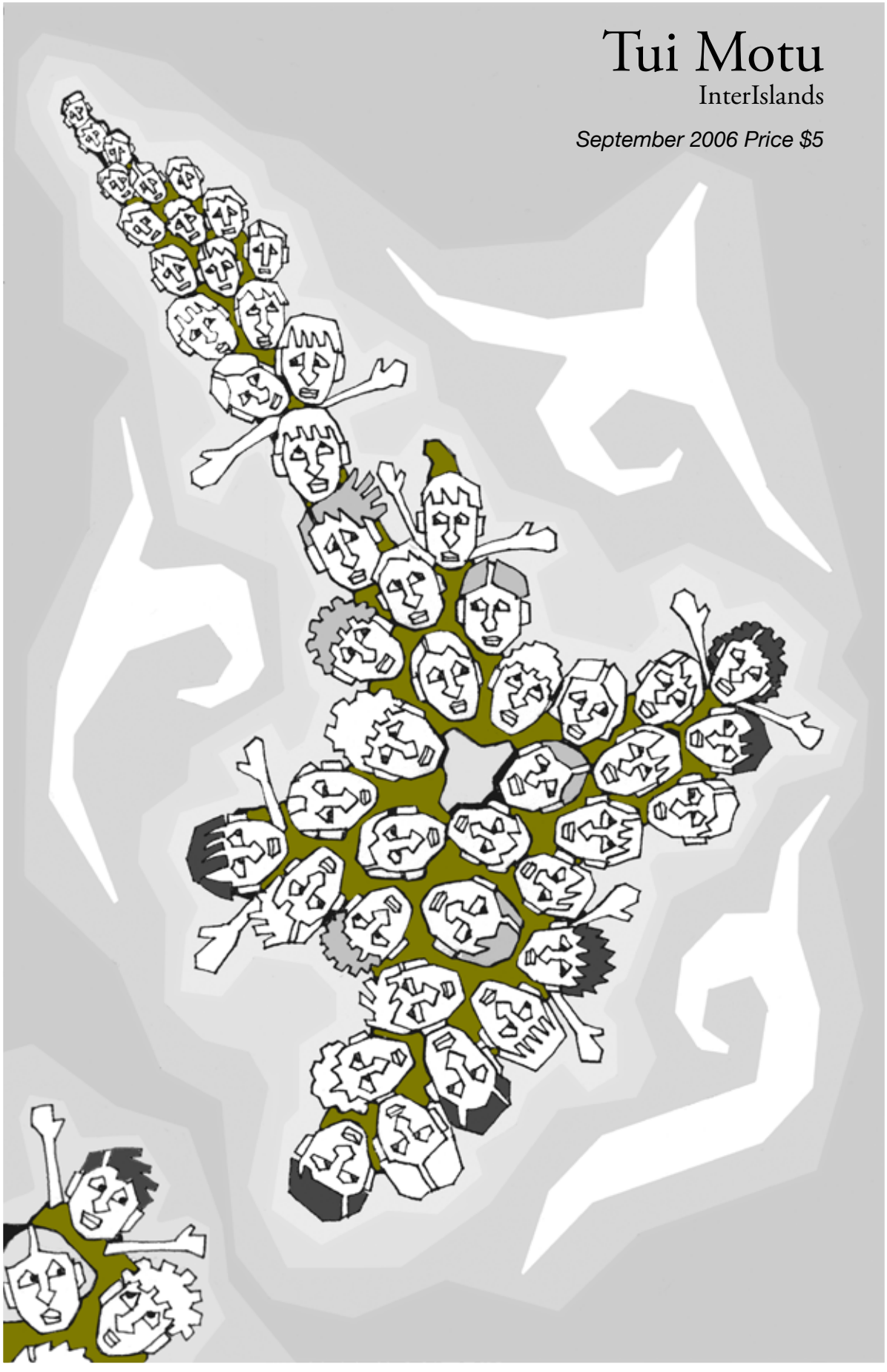

… that others may simply live

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…that others may simply live

This quotation from Mohandas Gandhi "live simply – that others may simply live" – has received new urgency in view of the looming environmental crisis which is upon us. *Caritas Aotearoa* has put this issue fairly and squarely before us for ***Social Justice Week***. Perhaps no other single factor gives this slogan more immediate relevance than the predicament facing thousands of Pacific Islanders as they watch the seas around them rising and washing their homes away.

Recently Fr Michael McKenzie spoke in Wellington and over National Radio. He comes from Kiribati – and the effects of global warming are already having a calamitous effect on those mid-Pacific atolls. He said with feeling: "The rising of the sun is a sign to us of life, but the rising of the sea is a sign to us of death"(*see p 7*). People closer to nature than us in our air-conditioned offices and centrally heated homes, know precisely how to read these alarming signs.

Mary Betz (*pp 6-7*) puts the facts of global warming before us, noting that during this century climate change may produce as many as 150 million 'environmental' refugees. And the first wave will be right here in the Pacific. Many will need to come here. This is the simple fact of life against which we need to judge the alarming news item a few days ago that New Zealand is turning away increasing numbers of immigrants. Will our response be to slam our doors shut as the mood of society becoming more isolationist and xenophobic?

Social Justice Week will hopefully help us to put all this in the context of faith. We need to get behind raw facts to the causes. And we need to re-examine the quality of our own lives. The interview with Lutheran theologian Norm Habel (*pp 10-11*) provides us with ample food for thought. For him, caring for the earth arose from his concern for the Aboriginal people of South Australia. He listened to them and learnt from them a reverence for Creation which, he suggests, predates the culture of the first Scriptural authors.

Yet there is plenty in Christian tradition to help us. The whole Franciscan movement and the spirit of St Francis himself should prompt us to re-examine the way we live so as to treat with reverence the earth that God has given us. If we do, we will surely conclude that the education of our young people and our own political and social concerns need to undergo a radical change.

So – will you vote at the next election for someone who campaigns on a platform of economic shrinkage, not growth; for conserving energy rather than new gas fields, hydro dams – or, God help us, nuclear power stations? Will you support the one who invites you to ***live more simply***?

M.H.

Social Justice Week 10-16 September

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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.
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Stewards of creation

Tui Motu and a handful of religious communities have long burned a candle for recognition of environmental concerns as a fundamental aspect of work for social justice. However, for the most part it has not been a central concern of most Catholic social justice organisations, despite a considerable body of Catholic social teaching.

The mystery is why most Catholics, particularly these committed to social justice, are unfamiliar with and largely unmotivated by that teaching. One factor is a sense among many people that the environment is somehow a less urgent, less pressing issue than poverty and the economic arguments which have dominated political discourse. For others, time devoted to conservation is devoted to trees, plants and animals rather than people – saving whales is instead of, and at the expense of, saving people.

On the other hand, an overemphasis by the church on the place of human beings as the centre of creation diminishes the gifts of biodiversity. Catholics motivated by an intuitive sense that all God's creation must be cared for as an integral part of our faith have not always found inspiration in the anthropocentric, formal teachings of the Catholic Church.

There is a growing awareness that today's ecological crises put at risk the future of all creation, including humanity. The environmental challenges we face are not just to our lifestyles, but to our lives. And those living most at risk and on the margins are again, as in so many other issues, the most poor and vulnerable members of our international family.

Stewardship means that we consider ourselves charged with the responsibility for caring for God's creation. But equally the preferential option for the poor, solidarity with victims of environmental destruction, and the need to preserve the common good also mean that it is time that environmental concerns rose to the top of social justice priorities.

Lisa Beech

Statement on Environmental Justice

New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference 2006

"The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast. Therefore the earth's treasures no longer serve to build God's garden for all to live in, but they have been made to serve the powers of exploitation and destruction." **(Pope Benedict XVI, *Homily at Inaugural Mass,* 2005)**

What does the commandment *Thou shall not kill* mean when 20 percent of the world's population consumes resources at a rate that robs poorer nations and future generations of what they need to survive? What does it mean to respect life when 30,000 people die each day from poverty? What does it mean to be stewards of the earth when up to half of all living species are expected to become extinct in the next 200 years? The existence of extreme poverty and environmental destruction in our world are not natural forces, nor acts of God, but result from human behaviour.

Our world is facing an ecological crisis, which could equally be called an economic crisis, or a poverty crisis. Its public face is the suffering of the poor and the degradation of our environment, at a time when accumulation of wealth and material goods has never occupied our attention more.

For the peoples of the Pacific, climate change is already among the most urgent threats facing them. Rising temperatures and sea levels, and the greater intensity of storms and natural disasters, are already affecting the food and water supply for people on low-lying islands in different parts of the Pacific. It is predicted that in the Pacific alone, there may be a million environmental refugees before the end of this century.

As Pope Benedict said: "The external deserts are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast". Protecting the environment involves moderating our desires to consume and own more, which create lifestyles that bring death to millions of other people. Consumerism, global environmental change and suffering in the developing world are inextricably linked.

Individual acts of selfishness can create a society characterised by a desire for short term gain and immediate gratification over longer term needs and a wider view. In response, both individual and collective acts of selflessness are needed – of self-sacrifice for the greater good, of self-denial in the midst of convenient choices, of choosing simpler lifestyles in the midst of a consumer society.

Ultimately, this is a global problem requiring real global solutions.The world needs to seriously reduce its carbon output, and some New Zealand households could achieve that overnight by simply changing the kind of car they drive. Avoiding water waste and excess packaging are two simple steps which can be acted upon by individuals and households.

But vulnerable members of our own society – such as the elderly – have suffered previously during power crises by going without necessities such as warmth and light, and we have to work to ensure that the costs of any changes to our lifestyles are borne by those who can best afford them.

Our understanding that we are stewards of God's creation, our solidarity with the poor, and our respect for the common good make the issue of environmental justice the responsibility of every person. (*abridged*) ■

Tui Motu wishes to thank *Caritas Aotearoa* for providing material on this page and on pp 6-9 for Social Justice Week

Women in ministry

It was a refreshing account of the role of women as priests and deacons in the early church by Mary Betz. Unfortunately she is very short on her analysis of New Testament women. A number of women accompanied Jesus similar to the disciples. Several are known by name: Mary of Magdala; Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph; Joanna wife of Chuza; Salome, the mother of Zebedee's sons; and Susanna. At the Cross we meet Mary, the wife of Clopas, and the sister of the mother of Jesus. The women 'follow' Jesus, 'minister' to him, and they '***came up with him***' to Jerusalem. The phrase '***came up with him***' is used only once more in the New Testament, where it refers to those who had encountered the resurrected Lord and were his witnesses (*Acts 13:31*). Clearly, the role of women in the early church was far more important and more equal to men than the Catholic Church wants us to believe. (*abridged*)
Hiltrud Gruger, Mt Albert, Auckland.

Regarding the letter from Carl Telford (*August)*, an attitude of 'rediscovery of' rather than 'rewriting' history might be called for. Anyone interested in women in the ministry of the early church can find references to recent scholarship at *www.tuimotu.org*
Mary Betz, Auckland.

Re B. Taumoepeau's (*August TM p 12*) – my family and I are Catholics who live in a small parish, served by a priest twice monthly. There is no doubt that conducting our own Eucharistic Services does not weaken our faith, rather the opposite. Our PP at the time sensed the strength in our women and selected the mother of a large mixed-marriage family to be our first Eucharistic Minister.

letters to the editor ✍

We welcome comment, discussion, argument, debate. But please keep letters under 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge, while not altering meaning.

Response articles (up to a page) are also welcome, but need to be by negotiation

We men would be foolish to question the strength and faith of our mothers, wives and daughters. My wife says that she is priest, pastor and servant to our large extended family, of our parish and wider community, and quite comfortably so without the external witness of Holy Orders. Her empowering sacrament is Matrimony, and her Source of strength is her Lord. It is a full-time calling.
We love your paper and wish you God's blessings upon your work.
David Aynsley, Gore

Does hell exist?

Mike Riddell – *Hell hath no Fury* (*TM July*) says the concept of hell was a "late" development in Scripture, implying that it is not authentic. The New Testament quotes Jesus describing Hell as eternal punishment; are these statements not genuine?
Dispensing with Hell raises more problems than it answers: for instance, what would the destiny of the human race have been if the human race had not been redeemed? Surely not even Mike Riddell would imagine we would all have been welcomed into the beatific vision without our sins forgiven! So what name would he give for the state of those excluded from the presence of God? (*abridged*)
Patrick Cronin, Nelson

'Late development' does not mean 'inauthentic'. The Assumption of Mary is an even later development –ed.

Israel's right to exist

John Honoré makes some good points about the conflict in the Holy Land (*TM Aug*). But I think it's dangerous to become so outraged at Israeli injustice and violence that we are tempted to question the right of Israel to exist as a state.
Every people has the natural law right to gather themselves together as a nation with their own laws and customs. No one has the right to take this away, regardless of what crimes its rulers might commit and the injustices committed during the establishment of the state of Israel.
The path to peace is built on a recognition of the diginity of every person, made in the image of God and what is divine in every human soul. Questioning a nation's right to exist is abhorrent and can only harden attitudes rather than lead to reconciliation and peace.
Chris Sullivan, Pakuranga

To leave or to stay?

Such groups as outlined by Eve Adams (*July TM*) have been around for years. Before reading her contribution I was well disposed towards such groups. But I finished her article with some unease. Is it wise to start another something new?
The building block of wisdom is humility. It may seem exciting, fulfilling, courageous etc. to follow a glittering star as represented by this worthy list. But, somehow, to me it sounds very middle class and comfortable and a damn sight easier than knuckling down and persevering with this dreadful 'institution' we feel saddled with.
I am told there are 60 Christian churches in Wanganui. I imagine each will have started with a similarly worthy list. The result is the scandal of a fractured, often fractious, Body of Christ.
Phil Wilkinson, Wanganui

Kiwi successes in Adelaide

At the *Australasian Catholic Press Association* awards in Adelaide in August, *Tui Motu* came away empty-handed. We are, however, delighted to congratulate other Kiwi publications.

NZ Catholic won the Bishop Philip Kennedy Award for best newspaper, the fourth time in nine years. It also won best news story and highly commended for its websight. Congratulations to new editor Gavin Abraham.

Wel-com, Wellington's diocesan paper, won best newspaper feature and was highly commended for best column.

Marist Messenger won best editorial and best magazine feature, as well as being highly commended for the most improved publication.

The *Magellan*, published by the Redemptorists, won the Bishop Philip Kennedy Award for magazines. ■

Errol Pike, of the NZ Bible Society, has been elected first ever Kiwi President of the *Australasian Religious Press Association* (ARPA), representing 80 publications

A Michaelmas reflection

Paul Oestreicher

To have expelled Beelzebub from heaven is a stupendous feat. But the Archangel Michael will not rest on his laurels as long as the devil, as Scripture tells us, goes about here below "as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour".

Throughout my life I am privileged to have lived under the protection of St Michael. Seventy five years ago, punctually on the feast of ***St Michael and all Angels*** (*29 September),* I arrived on this planet. Michael has never left me, though he could have chosen to delegate my care to the Apostle to the Gentiles whose name I bear.

My parents left me in no doubt about the importance of angels. My image of my protector has never been of a fierce and remote sword bearer. His wings are comforting. He flies at my speed and reminds me not to drive faster than at his. (In this, as in many things, I have lapsed, as three penalty points on my driving licence remind me.)

On Michaelmas 1950, my 19th birthday, he guided me to my first ever Anglican Eucharist in a beautiful, small wooden church that bears his name in Anderson's Bay, Dunedin, New Zealand. This mystical experience was the first step on my journey to holy orders. On Michaelmas nine years later, the Bishop of London ordained me deacon in St Paul's Cathedral and priest a year later, once more with Michael and all the Angels hovering above. Through good times and bad he has remained a faithful and demanding companion. He was the invisible good-humoured presence too when my second marriage was blessed on his feast day by both rabbi and priest.

In 1986 my Archangel gave me a new challenge when I was invited to direct the *Centre for International Reconciliation* at St Michael's Cathedral in the city of Coventry, England. The Archangel's dramatic image faced me as I walked up the steps of architect Basil Spence's masterpiece. From Michael I would now, after all those years, begin to learn the meaning of the 'Warfare of the Spirit'. I had until then never quite managed to square Michael the warrior with Jesus the Prince of Peace.

Basil Spence was determined to commission Britain's finest artists to give meaning to his cathedral. As the sculptor of the Cathedral's angelic patron he proposed the controversial Jacob Epstein. The Bishop was happy with that, but his advisers shook their heads. "Surely not, Bishop, he's a Jew". "Like Jesus", replied the Bishop – and the matter was settled.

Epstein in his old age thought deeply before agreeing and laid down conditions. Michael must bear the clear features of humanity, wings excepted. So must the great adversary with whom Michael is at war, horns excepted. A dragon was out of the question.

St Michael (J Epstein) Coventry, England

The two great protagonists adorning the approach to Coventry Cathedral symbolise our human reality. They represent the two sides of our own nature in conflict but also close, spiritually wrestling with each other. Michael stands, spear in hand, strong and assured, the divine nature in each of us.

Satan lies at Michael's feet looking up to the Archangel imploringly, his hands in chains but the chains not holding him fast. He is still to be reckoned with. He is vulnerable and naked, yet a vibrant man with all his undisguised sexuality. His is the spirit of rebellion in each of us. Michael's features are compassionate. He and Satan are not implacable enemies. Most important of all, breaking with tradition, Michael's spear does not deal Beelzebub a deathblow. It faces upwards. Healing is not ruled out.

Epstein, secular Jew that he was, saw in this powerful symbolism the struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness in the human personality. We are all of us both harbingers of divine love and purveyors of terrifying evil. All of us are both angelic and satanic. In the Warfare of the Spirit we are all on both sides. Typically, George Bush and Osama Bin Laden choose to demonise only the other. It's our survival tactic, but it doesn't work. Or else we begin to hate ourselves and deny our own divinity. Either way we fear to face up to our divided self.

Nevertheless, Jacob Epstein leaves the visitor to Coventry Cathedral in no doubt about the outcome of a struggle that is both cosmic and personal. Holy Michael confidently proclaims that perfect love casts out fear.

Peace campaigner Paul Oestreicher, retired Canon of Coventry Cathedral, was brought up in Dunedin

House washed away by the 2004 flooding in the Manawatu

Are we *really* getting warmer?

Mary Betz examines the evidence for global warming – and its dire effects which are already on us.

What must we do to avert it?

If we – meaning the first world countries – continue on our current path, a warming of this magnitude (3°C) would risk bringing about the end of civilisation as we know it by the end of this century. - (Peter Barrett, Professor of Geology, Victoria University)

Is this an absurd claim? The words are the judgment of a geologist who has studied 40 million years of past Antarctic climate. He believes, however, that doom and gloom is not inevitable if we respond to the problem now.

Sea level rises in many countries around the world have already caused huge problems. In the Pacific, Kiribati and Tuvalu are small nations built on atolls, which at their highest points are only a few metres above sea level. These islands are becoming uninhabitable (*see* graphic description *opposite*). And – there is no inland to move to, being surrounded by sea on one side and lagoon on the other. They face loss of their very countries if sea levels continue to rise.

In 2001, the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (IPCC) issued its Third Assessment Report. It stated that in the past 150 years the world's average surface temperatures have increased by approximately 0.6°C; two-thirds of that rise has taken place since 1975. The report also looked ahead and predicted that the mean surface temperatures could increase by between 1.4°C and 5.8°C by 2100. Along with this, sea levels are expected to rise between 9 and 88 cm by 2100, eroding unprotected coastlines and flooding low-lying areas.

The change is already with us. Glaciers are in retreat world-wide (any West Coast resident or tramper can vouch for that). Polar ice is reducing. The growing seasons in some places have increased by up to 11 days over the past 30 years. Habitat ranges for some plants and animals are shifting to cooler areas.

IPCC scientists claim the world is warming due to human activity. We drive more cars (burning petrol) and use more oil and coal for electricity than at any time in human history. The use of these fossil fuels, formed over millions of years from the remains of plants and animals, releases carbon into the air in the form of carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is necessary for plant growth, and a natural part of the air we breathe, but too much of it causes the earth to heat up like a greenhouse – hence, the term 'greenhouse gases'.

In New Zealand, approximately 43 percent of our greenhouse gases, not only carbon dioxide but also methane, nitrous oxide and others, comes from fossil fuel use (nearly half from vehicles, mostly cars). But the surprise is that agriculture produces 50 percent of greenhouse gas emissions here, from the methane and some nitrous oxide farm animals produce. However, these emissions are part of natural recycling. The cows get their carbon and nitrogen from renewable plant sources. Emissions from industrial processes and the decomposition of waste make up the remaining 7 percent. In the world at large, carbon dioxide from fossil fuels is the major contributor to greenhouse gases.

Globally our climate has been relatively stable for 10,000 years. Some scientists say that current climate changes are a natural fluctuation in which human activity plays little part. The fact remains, if greenhouse gas emission is not reduced, there will be flooding of coastal areas around the world and mass migrations of displaced people.

The Red Cross has estimated that already 58 percent of refugees have been displaced due to climate change (25 million people). The IPCC has estimated that by 2050, rising sea levels and environmental damage due to climate change could make 150 million people into environmental refugees.

What can we expect to happen?

IPCC predicts temperature increases by 2030 of 0.3°-1.4°C and overall rainfall decrease of as much as 10 percent, along with more high-intensity rainfall events. Low-lying coastal settlements will become increasingly vulnerable to higher sea levels and more frequent

intense storms. Floods and landslides could increase in frequency and severity. Areas currently experiencing occasional drought will be more likely to get drier, threatening electricity supply from hydro lakes and irrigation in drier areas like Canterbury.

Areas currently receiving higher rainfall are likely to get wetter. Warmer temperatures will increase the likelihood of new disease-bearing pests establishing themselves in New Zealand. But the biggest noticeable effect will be the probable arrival of thousands of environmental refugees from the Pacific Islands.

What can be done?

The Kyoto Protocol (ratified by 55 countries, responsible for 55 percent of the developed world's 1990 carbon dioxide emissions) requires its member countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions over the period 2008-2012. The United States, the world's largest producer, has not ratified it – nor has Australia, which has the most greenhouse gas emissions per capita. Developing nations account for three-quarters of the world's population, but less than half of human-created greenhouse gases.

New Zealand has committed itself to reducing its average greenhouse gas emissions over the period 2008-2012 to 1990 levels – or take other actions (paying financial penalties, planting forests which will absorb carbon dioxide, etc). The New Zealand Climate Change Office reports, however, that with the continuing increase in the number of cars, also the drop in reforestation and the dropping of the carbon tax and agricultural tax, our total emissions are projected to be 30 percent over target by 2012.

There are two things we need to do. Firstly, prepare for the climate change which is inevitable, despite any global reductions in greenhouse gases (even if the world stopped burning oil today, effects of current greenhouse gases be with us for the next 50 years). This means planning at every level of government – preparedness in emergency, social service and health sectors, coastal and flood protection measures, land and resource use changes, rezoning in vulnerable low-lying areas, provision for immigration of increasing numbers of environmental refugees in the coming years.

Secondly, we all need to be aware of and consciously make changes in the way we use energy.

- lobby for electricity companies which are committed to renewable energy;
- personally use less energy and stop buying wasteful technology;
- reduce our use of forests (paper) and fossil fuels (plastics) by choosing products with minimal packaging;
- reduce consumption of meat.
- lobby the government to offer incentives for greenhouse gas reduction and fund research.

What is certain is that climate change is with us, and it will cause major change for our environment. This will demand change in lifestyle, seeking to live sustainably within our environment. It will entail a generous response to our Pacific Islands neighbours, who will almost certainly need our help. ■

Mary Betz works in Auckland for Caritas Aotearoa

…a sign of death…

Kiribati priest Fr Michael McKenzie doesn't have much time for climate change skeptics. "Talking about climate change is very, very different to living with it," he says.

Fr Michael was keynote speaker at a *Caritas Oceania* forum on environmental justice held in Wellington in July. He is frustrated, he says, when he hears that decision-makers continue to cast doubt on the reality of climate change. "People living in air-conditioned houses, and working in air-conditioned offices, who buy their food from the supermarket and drive around in cars, might not be so aware of the climate changing. But we are."

Fr Michael said people on Kiribati measure the rising sea in terms of the rows of coconut trees being destroyed, and the amount of black soil now infertile as a result of salt water. Islands once surrounded by peaceful lagoons have become vulnerable to high tide and storm surges, making fishing more difficult and hazardous. "The rising of the sun is a sign to us of life, but the rising of the sea is a sign to us of death."

Land-based food sources are also being affected, as fewer and smaller fruits are harvested, while plants grown for medicines are losing their potency. Salt water is beginning to seep into fresh water supplies, meaning some islanders now must walk one or two km to fetch water. On *Ocean Island,* one Kiribati atoll, Fr Michael said water supplies had failed entirely during a recent drought, and inhabitants were forced to take to their boats to chase rainfall at sea, in the hope of catching fresh water in buckets.

People also notice climate change through increased sunburn, and the need now to wear footwear in the middle of the day as the ground is too hot to walk on. Coconut which used to take two to three days to dry into copra is now ready at the end of the first day, while coconut oil no longer solidifies in the early morning dew. Fish stocks have reduced, and fishermen report that some varieties which were once plentiful are now rarely seen, while others have disappeared all together.

Fr McKenzie said the inhabitants of Kiribati explain the changes in the weather by saying: "The sun has come down closer to the island." He called for countries like Australia and New Zealand to wake up to our responsibility for our Pacific neighbours. ***Who will be a Good Samaritan for us?***, he asks.

In the Beginning

Ron Sharp

Paleontologists, archeologists and physicists, in recent times, have been able to estimate the 'age' of the universe, our galaxy, solar system and the emergence of humans. As a consequence, faith people have been able to discover a much deeper sense of wonder at the originating and sustaining mystery behind, or rather, within it all.

God has become even more fathomless and beyond our understanding. Thirteen billion years ago some tiny elements broke free from predictability and burst forth into powerful explosive activity forming into matter.

It was another eight billion years before our galaxy and the supernova explosions that resulted in the birth of our sun and planets. It is now clear that the vast expanse of the universe is forever unfolding in an evolutionary and unpredictably explosive process of creativity. The greatest secret of our creating mystery in this proces is the mysterious dynamics of birth, destructive death and rebirth.

Somehow the strange activity of destruction, darkness and death are powerful sources of potential possibilities; growth can only come through pain. "And God found it good", including the destructive part of the process. So who made it evil?

Nearly four-and-a-half million years ago humans began to take shape. Given our unfolding appearance in planet earth's story, we are just beginning to come out of our self-centred teens. Old Testament stories and those of every cultural grouping have expressed achievements of our ancestors, who survived floods, great plate shifts and ice ages, developed their brain, discovered how to make fire, navigated vast oceans and invented the wheel.

But about 10,000 years ago, in our late childhood, we embarked on a very destructive part of our journey, out of which we are just beginning to be reborn. It was the birth of a force that caused us to want to reduce everything into controllable parts. We wanted to be more powerful than the life-force within us. It began with the shift to the agricultural age. Our masculine side asserted a dominance and dissected everything into parts, not content to accept the mystery of the whole.

We are still caught up in those dualisms: good and evil; right and wrong, natural and supernatural, heaven and hell, male and female, white and black, us and them, order and chaos, security and fear, allies and enemies, and win and lose. Humans are not superior to to the rest of creation. We are simply another species amongst the many and interdependent on each other species and substance within the whole planet.

In the new physics everything is relational and part of the whole. The old saying was "the whole is the sum of its parts"; whereas the new physics says, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts". We have no right to see insects, plants, animals, land or nature as our inferiors to be exploited and controlled.

"The body is one body", says St Paul, "That is why the eye can't say to the hand, 'I don't need your help'; the head can't say to the feet, "I don't need your help. That's nonsense... If something goes wrong with one part, all the parts are hurt." Life as a whole is not predictable; it is full of 'perhaps' and 'maybe'. We will never understand it fully. It will not be controlled. We are far too small a species to be able to fathom the mystery permeating this ever-unfolding mystery. ■

Helping people to recover a deep sense of awe and connection to Earth is the aim of workshops by Fr Peter Healy and Sr Noelene Landrigan. These have been held in Whanganui, Pukekaraka Marae at Otaki and Carterton. More are due in Wellington on 9 September and Upper Hutt on 23 September. The aim of the workshops is to reawaken in people a sense of our interconnectedness with Earth and each other and a desire to live in a more sustainable manner.
The process hinges on sharing some of the insights of science into our 13 billion year history, expressed in the photo above by a spiral time-line from the beginning, the Big Bang at the centre, the origins of the earth and of human, up to the present .

Ron Sharp is an environmentalist and a member of St Peter Chanel parish, Motueka

Caring for creation and people

Unsustainable agricultural practices degrade the physical environment and pose threats to our ability to protect God's creation and promote human dignity. Overseas markets dictate the value of commodities exported by developing countries. To overcome these inequalities, unsustainable crop production and timber harvesting may occur, which damage the environment.

While these practices have significantly increased agricultural productivity, they have also created deprivation. For instance, top soil depletion, increased production costs, the decline of family farms, and the disintegration of social and economic conditions in rural communities are just some of the costs involved in unsustainable practices.

This type of development is not sustainable, nor does it adhere to the Catholic vision of development, which embraces more than just the economic aspects of people's lives.

Caritas Aotearoa has this vision:

- to uphold the dignity of the human person and reject the commodification of the poor and vulnerable;
- to be sustainable – socially, economically and environmentally;
- to make a difference to the lives of people living with poverty and injustice;
- to benefit not just an individual, but the whole community.

The Rancho Grande Project

A good example of this vision in action is the sustainable development project in Rancho Grande in the mountains of northern Nicaragua that *Caritas* supports. The project revitalises the productive capacity of small organic farmers. Before the project started, families were generally dependent on two or three staple crops, making them highly vulnerable to markets, pests and climate conditions.

By implementing sustainable agriculture practices through diversifying their crops and sowing plants suitable to the local conditions, farmers are raising income levels and improving family nutrition and health. The project will assist 300 households in 9 communities – approximately 2,400 people. Solidarity is at the heart of the project, bringing together many small farmers and small producers (previously deeply divided by the civil war) to support each other.

This project is a living example of *Caritas*' commitment of working in solidarity not only with people but with the whole of creation. ■

Dumping Garbage

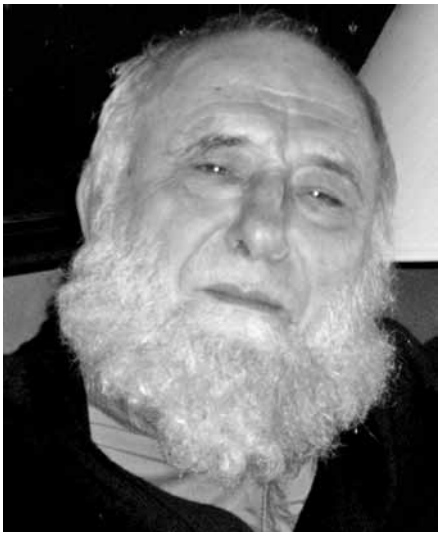
Throwing unwanted thoughts into an imaginary garbage bin is a technique that has worked well for me. I've filled lots of rubbish bins – with prejudices, unrealistic expectations, anger and resentment, all kinds of petty jealousies. Yes, I've felt good, and even virtuous, tossing them away.

Of course, rubbish disposal hasn't been only a task for my brain – our household of five manages to generate quite a lot of the physical. I've been really busy these past weeks, reading up and writing about environmental justice for ***Social Justice Week*** in September. Including reading and writing about household garbage and our need to reduce waste and recycle what we can.

Meanwhile the unwashed cans have been building up in a smelly pile in the kitchen. So last Monday I guiltily threw the lot into the wheelie bin. I dragged the overloaded bin out to the road, slipped on the path and fell and broke my arm. Does God still strike with lightning after all?

Perhaps I'm carrying around a huge, overloaded mental garbage bin that is as much as a load around my life as the plaster cast on my physical arm. Of course, the answer is simple – it's better not to create waste in the first place.

Lisa Beech



Prophet of the earth

Lutheran priest and scholar, Norman Habel, has two great passions in his life – the spirituality of the land and of the aboriginal people.

Tui Motu *spoke to him recently in Adelaide*

When people are culturally deprived there are inevitably issues of abuse of women and children. The strong emphasis in recent times on Aboriginal rights has concentrated on their situation as regards the outside world and internal issues have been hidden. In the centre of Australia many Aboriginal people have been deprived of their reason for living: no work, loss of their tribal structures. So they turn to alcohol, petrol sniffing, and these other abuses also occur.

My experience has been at a Lutheran mission station at Finke River, near Alice Springs. This was set up by German Lutherans in the mid-19th Century. At first the mission provided a stable environment for the people, but eventually control was taken over by the Government. The people were bereft and could not return to their old culture which they had largely lost. They had lost the old with its values. The old tribal law was superseded by Australian law. They had lost one culture and not really gained a new one.

There is a lot of criticism presently as to whether the Aboriginals should receive the hand-outs which they have become dependent upon. One of their leading spokespeople, Noel Pearson, is very critical of the dependency mindset which has been inculcated. He is extremely eloquent. He also makes the white people realise they still have responsibilities. He has done a lot to persuade the Lutheran schools to make provision for Aboriginal children to be taught the skills to survive in Australian society without losing their cultural base. Sadly the retention rate among these students is poor, but the Lutheran schools are making a much better job of it than the government schools.

One healthy development is that many of the city schools now have lots of overseas students, so the Aboriginal pupils do not stand out as completely different. They are simply one of several cultural groupings. Emmanuel College here in Adelaide has also succeeded in associating the actual site with Aboriginal cultural history: identifying their sacred sites, identifying the native trees, finding out who lived here. There is a statue of reconciliation outside the school with the school symbol, a dove, along with the ibis which is the symbol of the Aboriginal people. The symbol can be made alive for these students.

The first Governor of South Australia, Hindmarsh, encouraged the Lutheran immigrants to learn the local language so that the aboriginal children could be taught. He maintained that the indigenous people also should have a choice of land. These ideals were not lived out. I often ask: "What was God doing in Australia before the Europeans came?" God didn't arrive with Captain Cook, the great white hope. The eternal search for God has always been there.

I worked with an indigenous group and we put out a book called *Rainbow Spirit Theology.* There were six Queensland aboriginal men who wrote it with me. The book helped indigenous people to reclaim their own spiritual heritage via Christianity.

I was helped by George Rosendale, who taught me a lot about indigenous faith and spirituality. George's grandparents had been murdered by the local police. His mother was rescued by a local mission. George was born under a tree and the mother buried the afterbirth in the earth so that the spirit could connect between George and the land his people had come from. The aboriginals are always bonded with the land. They have had a sense of kinship with the land, something Europeans have largely lost.

The '*rainbow spirit*' up north was in fact a huge snake, but this was not approved by the missionaries who considered the snake to be diabolic! This idea was negated and never explored. Of course the snake, in aboriginal symbolism, has nothing to do with the devil. It is the life-force emerging during the monsoon – and it all emerges from the ground. Christ himself is linked with the serpent of Moses, which was the healing spirit.

A spirituality of the earth

There are two strands in my life: my passion for the Aboriginal people and for the land. I worked for years with the indigenous people – but I came to realise that I would never fully understand them until I came to understand the land.

So I explored the different ideologies about land we find in the Scriptures. I discovered that none of these quite compared with the way the aboriginal people feel: their sense of the earth is even more basic. Psalm 139, for instance, speaks of the psalmist being "made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth"(*v 15*). But nowhere in Scripture can I find a place where one would talk to the land, go to the land for the message. The sense of kinship with the earth is never quite as strong as one would learn from these primitive peoples.

George Rosendale not only speaks of Earth as Mother, but as father, mother, brother, sister – the lot! Your ancestors are in the earth, and you are bonded with the earth. For instance there is a tradition in Central Australia that to discover the particular 'dreaming' of a person you must discover where the mother was when she felt the first movement in the womb: that is when the ancestral spirit from the earth entered her. The child is from the earth.

The second influence on me is that I was born and bred on a farm in Western Victoria. My great-grandfather came from Germany and settled on the land. The land was cleared, but my great grandfather in 1870 planted native trees. He established a native reserve, and was an early conservationist. Those are my roots. I realised that I have this kinship with the land in my genes.

Ten years ago we had a conference on Religion and Ecology, so I put my other indigenous issues aside and launched upon the *Earth Bible* project and also the composition of liturgies to celebrate the Season of Creation. In 2008 we hope to put out a volume of ecological hermeneutics.

Ecology and Christian Faith

In the *Earth Bible* we ask ourselves what are the Eco-justice principles by which we could seek answers both from the Biblical text and the Christian Tradition of the West. This brings us to question how we have treated the earth in the West – and how radically different it is from the way the indigenous people regarded the earth.

I am a committed environmentalist, aware of my kinship with creation, but also asking the question: how do I read the Bible with a new set of eyes asking: *is the text eco-friendly or not?* Sometimes ***yes***, sometimes ***no***. In some places the cultural context was by no means eco-friendly. So where can we look to grapple with the big forces presently at work which are destroying the planet.

Christians become bogged down debating Creationism; evolutionists become preoccupied with the viewpoint of human beings; what I call 'heavenism' implies that it doesn't matter what happens to the earth – our home is in heaven! The earth doesn't seriously matter to these viewpoints. Meanwhile the great corporate giants give grudging acceptance to sustainability – but only on their terms. *Sustain the affluent lifestyle we've got.* What it doesn't mean is sustain the life of the less affluent people. The sense of St Francis is lost and ignored.

wisdom is not so much an attribute of God as something integral to the cosmos itself

So what is our contemporary meta-narrative? How can we speak to the politics of 'progress at all costs'? How can we persuade people that the resources of the earth are finite, that 'growth' has got to stop?

In a recent *New Internationalist* the concept of 'carbon credits' is discredited. As long as we continue to dig carbon out of the earth and burn it we are promoting global warming and diminishing the planet's energy reserves. Al Gore has appeared in a new movie which graphically portrays the shrinking icecaps and the rising oceans and emphasises that the crisis is not in the future: it's upon us now.

The dilemma is that we in the religious community are busy arguing about Creationism and Evolution as concepts – and the planet itself is being destroyed. We need to be asking: *who or what is the cosmic Christ*? Christ fills the cosmos. What is this telling us?

Teaching on Wisdom in Job 28

In Chapter 28 Job asks where wisdom is to be discovered? There are all sorts of stories as to where on earth wisdom can be found. The answer is in the final verses – God searches the earth and discovers wisdom, and affirms it as being fundamental to the cosmos. Wisdom, according to this, is not so much an attribute of God – one who saves me from sin – as an asset which God employs, something integral to the cosmos. So what is this designing force?

Is Wisdom the logos (of John's Gospel, the Word) or is it the Spirit, that hovers over the deep and 'renews the face of the earth'? My sense is that *Job 38* and *Proverbs 8* point to a designing force, a core characteristic. The planet has its core or its wisdom. The Cosmic Christ is with us to restore and reconcile the planet.

We must ask what is this planet? Is it just one of a stream of creations? Our planet is a unique fragment of the Universe. We are a unique and sacred site in the Universe, the Garden of Eden. It is more than just our home. All faiths need to contribute towards the answer. The earth's creatures intuit the answer – reflecting the glory of God. We humans can utter it in speech.

The breathing of the earth is happening all around us. Presently we are choking the earth. In the season of creation the hardest part is for us to say: 'we as the people of the planet are raping the earth'. Not just me as a sinner, but the human race I belong to which is sinning. Israel blows up an oil installation; the whole Lebanese coastline is polluted – and no one seems to care a jot about that. This earth is undeniably special. It is the garden of Eden. It is the pearl of great price God has entrusted to us.Let us cherish and preserve it. ■

Car-less days

Helen Wadsworth

This year I gave up the car for Lent. Yup, that's right, I decided to not-drive for six weeks. Lenten sacrifices are not really a Presbyterian tradition, and I've never really been one for voluntarily doing without. Imagine, a working, Auckland-dwelling, mother of a 20-month-old, not driving for six weeks.

What brought this on, this perverse decision to make life difficult for myself? I was reading *A Short History of Progress* in which Ronald Wright predicts doom for our civilisation if we continue along the road of what we call 'progress'. I heard Lisa Harrow, actress turned environmentalist, on the radio, as well as several other programmes dealing with environmental issues.

This all started me thinking. I call myself eco-friendly but what do I actually do? I have a worm farm. I don't use plastic wrap and limit the use of disposable nappies… but it doesn't seem a lot really. What else can I do?

Then I read Kathleen Gallagher's article in *Tui Motu*. It was called *Voluntary Poverty and Contemplative Action* (*March '06*) and it was all about living simply, recycling, being aware and connecting physically to the place you live. It gave a Christian flavour to the insights I'd been getting. And it all connected inside me somehow. This connection happened on the first day of Lent. So giving up the car, a fast-moving, fuel-consuming machine, until Easter, seemed the obvious thing.

Can I do it? Well, I can walk or bike to work – Rosie on the back of the bike or in the buggy. I can walk to the supermarket, use the buggy as a trolley. Use public transport – my daughter is nearly two and she's never been on the bus! It'll be a challenge – luckily a temporary one, I think to myself.

I enjoy it for the first few days. There's a kind of freedom. It's fun biking and walking. I don't have to make all those transport decisions. I know that I'll walk to work. I know that to visit my sisters, I'll be using the bike. I also know I won't be able to fit anything else in that morning. That's always the temptation when driving. Squeeze as much as you can into every segment of time.

One morning Rosie and I spend the morning in our own garden, looking at bugs, picking up and eating feijoas and running around on the grass. Rosie loves it. I love it too.

Day seven – reality sinks in. Rosie is awake all night. She's sick. I have to get her to the doctor in one direction, then find a reliever for my class and prepare something for the reliever to teach in another direction – all in the space of two hours. I use the car. I thank goodness for cars. Using the car again also reminds me what a horrible business driving in Auckland is. Exhaust fumes, noisy roads, endless waits at traffic lights, stupid drivers and a general sense of frustration.

The bus and train trips I do with Rosie during Lent couldn't be more different. With a 20-month-old in tow, these journeys are a joy in themselves. The destination is insignificant and the time flies by. We sing the bus song, do lots of running up and down the train carriage, and find numerous things to look at out the window.

Sometimes, not driving a car seems restrictive. After much ethical deliberation I decide that although I am not driving, I will allow myself to be driven. How else would I visit my parents 40 minutes drive away? I want to go to the plant shop but it's going to take me all morning to get there and back.

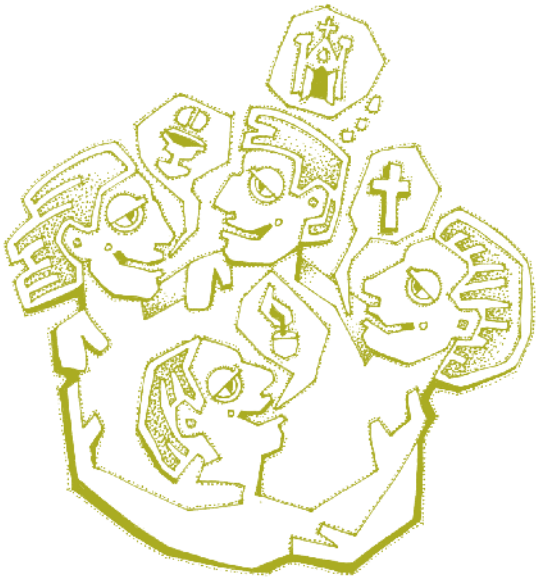
I end up getting lifts with my brother-in-law, my friend and my parents. Being reliant on others, if only to get places, is another enlightening side-effect of not driving. It hits me how much cars foster independence. I realise how much I avoid asking things of others when, in fact, family and friends are happy to help me out. Plus, it's fun to share rides with them.

Good Friday dawns glorious. It's celebrated with a family bike ride to Rosie's carer's house. We whiz down the hill and shout 'wheee' as the wind rushes past. We spot dogs and cats down driveways. We wave at people in their cars. Once there, invited kids and their parents sit and run around in the garden, hide and find Easter eggs, sip juice and champagne and enjoy good company, warm sun and blue sky.

Later in the day I do the stats. Nearly six weeks. I've driven six times – four of those were to see the doctor. I may not have reached a higher spiritual plane, but I have felt a stronger connection to the people and places closest to me, and had many moments of joy at being alive. I certainly haven't saved the planet. But I have come to realise that driving the car is a choice that I don't always have to take.

Overcoming discord in the church – 2

*In Part 1 (*TM August*) Timothy Radcliffe OP described the polarisation in the church between what he calls* ***Kingdom*** *Catholics and* ***Communion*** *Catholics. In Part II he shows how the two sides may speak to each other*



Dialogue is not simply part of a liberal agenda. It is not an alternative to adhering to the truth. It belongs to the way in which we hang on to the truth in its fullness. Through talking together, especially with those with whom we disagree, we build a home for God, the God who is the eternal conversation of the Trinity. So how are we to do that?

Do not be afraid – I see you

First of all we have to stop being afraid of each other. We see other Catholics as menacing our home in the church. For some Catholics any mention of Opus Dei, or Mother Angelica or the Legionaries of Christ produces a frisson of horror. These are just the sort of people who are seen as turning the church around, undermining our dreams of renewal.

To those of you who feel that, I say: *Do not be afraid.* God has promised the Kingdom. We do not know how or when it will come, but one day we shall rejoice in the perfect freedom of Christ. We will reach the home for which we long, even though every bishop in the world belonged to Opus Dei.

Communion Catholics can also be free of all fear. They may see menace in every liberated feminist nun, in every bearded and sandalled priest. To those Catholics, we too can say: *Do not be afraid.* The church is not about to crumble. Even though every bishop in the world was a hippie, the church will survive. To see one's fellow Catholics, whether of the so-called left or right, as an ultimate threat to one's home is a failure of faith.

In many African societies the traditional greeting is "I see you." When you are at home in a community, then you know that you are seen. Women often complain of the pain of feeling that within the church they are invisible in our great patriarchal institution.

William James wrote, "No more fiendish punishment could be devised, if such a thing were physically possible, than that one should be turned loose in society and remain absolutely unnoticed by all the members thereof." This is precisely the pain that so many in the church feel, women, gays, ethnic minorities.

We as a church need to find ways of saying, "I see you. I do not just see you as an object, an obedient churchgoer, someone who puts some money in the collection, but I see you as a subject, who sees me."

It was precisely this sense of being invisible that tormented so many more traditional Catholics in the '70s and '80s, feeling that their sensitivities were simply ignored or that progressive Catholics took pleasure in shocking them. Now the tide has turned it is no surprise that they sometimes like to make themselves heard, after so many years of feeling unseen and unregarded.

I grew up in a strong Catholic family, with endless Catholic cousins and uncles and aunts. We had gone to the same Benedictine school for four generations. For people like me, the great adventure of the '70s was reaching out to discover a larger world, filled with Protestants, with Jews and even atheists. We eagerly cast off our habits, and so as to express our individualism, put on identical black polo neck jerseys and blue jeans. We were 'Romans' stretching ourselves to be more Catholic, more universal.

However, many young people today have grown up without a strong sense of identity. Often the ones I meet are converts, or maybe from non-practising backgrounds. And so the exciting journey for them is to discover what it means to be Roman. They will delight in what is distinctive, and put pictures of the Pope on their doors. We have to hear what they say and see what they do as part of another journey, leading to the Kingdom too.

Let us look very briefly at two areas of tension. My argument is that when there is a disagreement, then go deeper. Go to a depth at which you may be able to transcend your difference. You may still end up by disagreeing, but at least you may see the difference in a new light.

Liturgy

First of all liturgy. This is always a minefield. There is something about organising liturgy that makes reasonable people go red and storm out of the room. The fundamental difference here is often between those who believe rubrics must be followed without deviation, and others who believe liturgy is mechanical unless it can be personalised. The difference is between priests who begin by saying, "The Lord be with you," and those who say, "Good morning. It's wonderful to see you all here today."

This tension is the cause of vast pain in the church. The answer is, I suggest, to go deeper and find ways of transcending this dichotomy between what is given and what we creatively make.

The present Pope has a profound sense of the liturgy as a gift. He hates people just tinkering with it. He wrote: "when liturgy is self-made, it can no longer give us what its proper gift should be: the encounter with the mystery that is not our own product but rather our origin and the source of our life."

I myself discovered a deeper sense of what it is to receive the Eucharist as a gift during hard times in Africa. Burundi was torn apart by civil war between Hutus and Tutsis. For a few days I toured with two of my brother Dominicans, one Hutu and the other Tutsi.

The whole place was in chaos. But every evening the three of us celebrated the Eucharist together. Often it was hard to know what to say to each other, but the church gave us something to do, what Jesus himself did the night before he died. It was powerful because it was given and not made up.

There is no ultimate conflict between seeing liturgy as that which is given by the church and creativity. There is all the difference between liturgical tinkering, especially when the priest wants to make himself the star of the show, and real creativity, which is a way of reverently accepting what is given.

If one can move to a deeper level of analysis, then liturgists may still get upset with each other. Some will wish to stick to the rubrics and others will experiment. But the argument may be more fruitful, because both may be brought to see that it is not the choice between receiving a gift and making it up. We should have moved on from there.

Sexual ethics

The church proposes a beautiful ideal, of sexual intercourse within the context of a lifelong commitment to a person of the other sex, open to the reproduction of children. And yet this ideal is hardly understood, let alone practised, by most people within our society. A large percentage of people are either divorced and remarried, or living with partners, or practising contraception or in same-sex relationships. There is a chasm between the church's teaching about sexual behaviour and what many Catholics live.

my argument is – when you disagree, go deeper

One reaction to this – often that of Communion Catholics – is to insist on the teaching. This has been church teaching through the centuries, and it would be dishonest to surrender it. Many Kingdom Catholics will feel unhappy about this.Millions of decent Catholics will find themselves pushed to the edge of the community because they are in what are called 'irregular situations'. Yet it is for people like this that Christ came, and how can we act in any way that makes them feel less than fully welcome?

This is a real dilemma. Often what happens is that the church's official teaching is proclaimed, but we look the other way. We call this 'the pastoral solution', but it can look simply dishonest. Should we firmly proclaim the traditional sexual ethics and risk distancing people from Christ? Or should we be more accommodating, with the risk of just surrendering a moral vision?

What the Gospel says about sex

The way forward is again to go deeper. We must dig down until we get to the fundamental debate that underlies the superficial disagreement. What does the Gospel say about sexuality's deepest meaning?

At the Last Supper, Christ gave us his body: *This is my body and I give it to you*. We can only understand our sexuality in the light of this utter self-gift of Christ. Rather than battling away at the level of permissiveness versus insistence on the rules, we should strive for a Eucharistic understanding of what it means to live sexuality as the reverent gift and acceptance of our bodies.

When conversation gets stuck and dialogue seems impossible, then dig down deeper, until you reach the bedrock of the Gospel. You may not agree but you will be able to talk.

Polarisation is wounding the life and the mission of the church. Healing division requires of us, first of all, that we understand the distress of Catholics who are not like us. We must get some sense of their root shock, their loss of a feeling of being at home in the church. We must open our minds and imagination to what they endure. And when conversation seems to be getting nowhere, then we need to go deeper, until we reach a level where our fundamental insights and intuitions may be reconcilable. ■

Fr. Timothy Radcliffe is a former master general of the Dominican order. Taken from an address given at the Los Angeles Religious Education Conference, April 1, 2006

The true sense of communion

Theologian Philip Marshall contends that the call to Christian communion is nothing less than a call to serve others, especially the most needy

What is it that ultimately constitutes human happiness? At its most profound, happiness occurs when a person experiences some kind of a breakthrough into connectedness – with Creation, with another person, or with God. Humans are not made to be alone. We exist to 'be with' another; we exist for 'communion'. Our ultimate destiny is to be happy with God forever. Our destiny is not to live alone, ekeing out our lives crushed by guilt feelings or weighed down with the burden of obeying rules.

An ancient word to describe this state is *shalom* or 'peace' – peace in the deeper sense and not mere absence of conflict or hassle. It is peace that comes through living in right relationships. We capture this sense in the Mass when, just before sharing the Sign of Peace, we pray that Jesus give us 'the peace and unity of your kingdom'.

This state of *shalom* is characteristic of the first Millennium of the church's existence. Christians strove to live in harmony and love with their fellow human beings before God. The opposite state is *sin*, which happens when a person turns away from God and from people into solitary communion with self. Sin is a state of broken relationships rather than merely broken rules.

The church today still needs to call people back into communion; especially from situations of conflict, discord, disharmony and deprivation. Nothing is more characteristic of the message and life of Jesus Christ than restoring loving communion. His mission was first to the poor and dispossessed, to restore their belonging to each other and to society. "I don't want sacrifice", he says to us, "not smoking bulls – but restored relationships".

When the leper approaches Jesus (*Mk 1*) and implores him for help, Jesus groans from the depth of his being. "Of course I want to heal you"; and the man is immediately restored to his people. The letter to the *Ephesians* sums up Jesus' mission, that a divided world be made one through the blood of the Cross of Christ.

However, in the Second Millennium the church became much more implicated in the political world. It was the world of Christendom – a world of hierarchies and authority, of the Imperial model where virtue consisted in obedience. The church became institutionalised.

One of the fruits of Vatican II has been the re-emergence of the sense of the church being *communion*. Wherever shalom is torn apart, the church is commissioned to go in and be a 'sign and instrument of peace'.

The fundamental reason for this mission to restore human relationships is to be sought at the very heart of reality itself. God lies at the heart of all things, and God is 3-in-1, bonded by love. So love precedes being itself. At this deepest level of reality God and Truth and Love converge in one. Community (and relationships) lie at the very heart of reality because it is in the image of God who creates and sustains it.

This eternal truth was made flesh in Jesus Christ. Essentially, he lived this dangerous message of truth, which Jeremiah had lived before him and Martin Luther King has done in our own times: a truth which brought all three of them persecution and death.

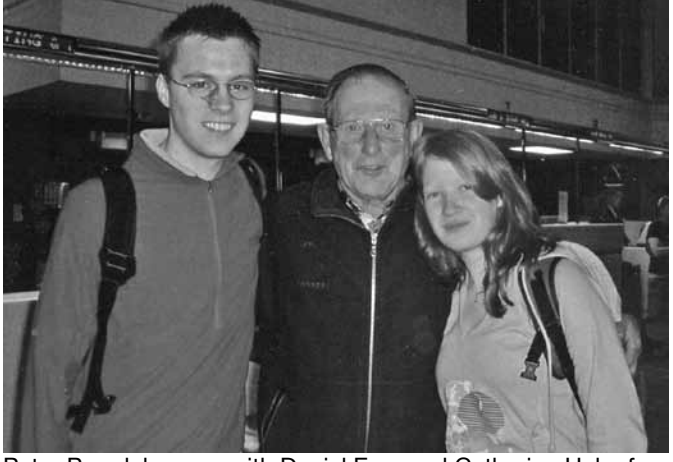
Throughout its history the church has been chary of embracing this reality. We have been seduced by an illusion that if we 'cosy up' to one another, then this is all that it means to love as God has loved us. It is never enough. It does not raise its voice against the oppressor, the rich and powerful. If you do that, you will get hurt.

Yet this has constantly been the prophetic vocation: the vocation of Jeremiah, of Amos, of Jesus Christ. It is the fundamental vocation of the church. What we are called to is to dialogue fearlessly with what lies at the heart of the world's predicament. We have to beware of being stuck in the cul-de-sac of moral issues. To be anti-abortion is okay – but it is not enough. When the church speaks prophetically, it will be told: "get back in your pews; you don't belong in the real world!" The 'real world' sees the church as irrelevant and prefers it to stay that way.

The vocation to live and preach *shalom,* therefore, is something more than hiding in church. If we are faithful to the gospel call, we will leave the safety of the pew and follow Jesus into dangerous spaces. The call is: "no peace (*shalom*) without justice". And then truth, love, justice and peace (*shalom*) will converge into one. ■

Fr Philip Marshall is Principal of the Adelaide's Catholic Theological College. From a lecture delivered at the ACPA Conference, Adelaide August 2006

For many years one person has inspired generations of young parishioners at Sacred Heart parish, Dunedin. Peter Paardekooper died on 4 August, one year to the day after farewelling his young friends en route to World Youth Day (see right)



Peter Paardekooper, with Daniel Eyre and Catherine Helm from Sacred Heart parish – farewelling them at Dunedin airport

World Youth Day – one year on

Daniel Eyre, from Sacred Heart parish Dunedin, was one of 87 from New Zealand who a year ago went to World Youth Day. Catherine Helm and Rachel Cooney also went from Dunedin. On the way they spent time in Turkey visiting some of the places where St Paul preached and journeyed.

"We visited to Gallipoli, says Daniel, "and joined up with an Australian group and celebrated a Mass together, remembering the Anzacs who lost their lives there in 1915. That was a very spiritual moment. I had two great uncles who died there.

Daniel, with Catherine Helm and Rachel Cooney (*l to r*), at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli

"Then on to Ephesus, one of the best preserved Greco-Roman cities, where Paul spent a long time and wrote one of his letters. We also visited the traditional house of Mary. I prayed there for my two sisters, one of whom was pregnant at the time. We celebrated Mass and sang the Maori hymn, *Mo Maria*.

"Then to Greece. In Athens we visited the Areopagus where Paul preached: one of the priests invited me to read Paul's words from his New Testament, which was a special moment for me. The great Temples and all the ancient ruins bring the place to life."

Eventually the group arrived in Cologne and met up with the rest of the Kiwis who had been spending time in a German parish. Daniel was fortunate to be chosen with a Christchurch girl to be part of the *International Liturgy Group*. There were representatives from 71 countries, and they were involved in all the public liturgies.

"On the first Sunday we went to Cologne Cathedral. The theme chosen for World Youth Day was *We have come to worship him*, recalling the pilgrimage of the Magi to honour the infant Jesus. In Cologne Cathedral the relics of the Magi are honoured.

"After we were there a few days the Pope arrived, sailing down the Rhine on a barge. Forty of us were able to travel with him, carrying national flags. Then, I was one of six young people, one from each continent, chosen to flank the Pope, three on each side, as he moved from the boat to the Cathedral through the welcoming crowds.

"I was able to speak with him briefly. I told him where I was from – and he told me he would be coming to Sydney next time! I said to him: "Lead us with courage and with love". Then he gave me his blessing. It was a great moment. I felt privileged to represent the whole New Zealand group.

Daniel and Pope Benedict in Cologne

"In Cologne there were nearly a million pilgrims. The Saturday Vigil Mass took place in a huge field outside the city. The papal altar was on an artificial mound in the middle, and the Liturgy Group were able to be up there with the Pope. So we had a great view of thousands upon thousands of people, a sea of lit candles and gently waving national flags. It all looked so peaceful, although on the ground it was not quite like that! The Kiwis were quite close to the front, but I believe there was a lot of pushing and shoving.

"The Pope said to us: 'Here in Cologne we discover the joy of belonging to a

Salesman and Saint

Peter Paardekooper (6.10.1929 – 4.8.2006)

Fun(d)-raiser – yes, with and without the 'd'. That was strikingly obvious from the crowds that gathered to celebrate his funeral and honour this dynamic, yet genuinely humble man. Sincere, honest, straightforward: he knew how to edge us all on (usually gently) in the direction of his vision.

The Vigil Service started at 7.30 pm. The theme was joyful. Peter himself prepared it for us while waiting expectantly to be reunited with his wife, Anne, in heaven. Afterwards, we gathered around the open coffin.

Young people – he never called them 'children' – could be seen standing on tiptoe, clinging to the edge of the coffin, looking admiringly at the one who had influenced their lives so much. Others sang to him in the beautiful tones of their local language.

His family had two marquees erected, one for the overflow from the church for the Requiem Mass at midday with closed circuit television, but needed already for the Vigil. The other was to extend the parish hall for the refreshments afterwards. Both were very necessary.

Peter never let money stand in the way of any cause he saw as worthwhile. That included *Tui Motu*. He would advertise it in detail at the end of Sunday Mass. An appreciation of the articles in the current edition would be followed by "Such good value. Only five dollars. If you haven't got the money, take it and read it anyway."

Alive and active, Peter was primarily a community builder because he was a family man. His natural family were all present at his funeral, to three generations. They were always close to his heart.

But he also made the parish his family. He could be seen standing outside the church every Sunday before Mass, greeting parishioners by name and welcoming new parishioners and visitors to the parish. There was so much more, like the parish weekends, at Teschmakers, Oamaru, which he led for many years.

Community for Peter meant building up the body of Christ in its widest dimension. Christ came for all; so did Peter. He welcomed ecumenical events in North East Valley, like Taizé Prayer and the Stations of the Cross and fund-raising for any good cause.

Peter and his treasured wife, Anne, came to New Zealand as a young married couple among the many who came from Holland seeking a new life in that post-war period. The Dutch immigrants supported each other and formed a further community in Peter's life.

He worked at a variety of jobs over the years, but finally before retirement he was remembered as the whistling door-to-door salesman selling brushes. The brushes are now long gone, but the whistle remained to the end.

He was utterly devoted to the youth of the parish: Young Vinnies, Duke of Edinburgh awards, lifeteens, all manner of groups. He knew what young people would enjoy and would encourage them to go even to international gatherings the other side of the world if it would be an inspiration for them. He would find the money – run a raffle. Money was never a problem to Peter.

A man of faith: "If it's worthwhile, then go for it!" How many youngsters in the parish heard that message and will always treasure it! ***May he rest in peace***.

Tony Davies IC

family as vast as the world, including heaven and earth – the past, the present, the future and every part of the earth. In this great band of pilgrims we walk side by side with Christ. We walk with the star that enlightens our history.' That really summed up what we all felt.

"For me, the whole experience was greater than the sum of its parts. The highlight was the people we met. Christ is in people. If I struggle sometimes to find God, I can recall some of those wonderful people. And Christ is present in them, both Kiwis and those of other nationalities. And I certainly intend to be in Sydney in 2008."

At the World Youth Day Vigil Mass

Peter, our good friend

Peter Paardekooper was the driving force behind our pilgrimage to World Youth Day.

His energy, ambition and his famous sales skills – but more importantly, it was the foundation of prayer, Scripture and the love of Christ he'd built in us over many years giving the trip meaning.

Daniel Eyre

What every child needs is love

Cecily McNeill interviews Ewen Laurenson, founder of the Open Home Foundation. His message of love for children in need has spread across the world

The *Open Home Foundation* has been in existence in New Zealand since 1977. Ewen Laurenson and his wife were running a foster home for Social Welfare for teenage children. "Then one day," says Ewen, "I read of an American called Bill Bair. He was inspired by a Scripture passage to 'take care of orphans and widows in their need'. He argued that this work of rescue should not be done through the sort of institutions I was helping to run but by the Christian community itself – ordinary men and women opening their home and hearts to those in need.

The beginnings of *Open Home*

"So we set out to do this. It was the start of *Open Home*. We went outside the Catholic church to other Christian churches. The work grew and spread. There are now 14 centres in New Zealand. With government assistance *Open Home* is providing significant care for children at risk. In 2000 we were caring for something like 300 children at any one time."

Later Ewen was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship to study overseas and this prompted him to extend the work of *Open Home* beyond New Zealand. The ideal Ewen works on is that every child in the whole world should belong to a family where they will be safe and loved. The work takes on a different expression in different countries.

In Africa, for instance, there are 13 million orphan children in sub-Saharan Africa alone – the result of AIDS, malaria, war and poverty. The need is huge. How can anyone hope to meet it? "We try to respond through the community and the Christian churches", says Ewen. "We have been able to extend our work to Uganda (established in 2000) and Zambia (in 2003).

"We went to Manipore in North India in 1991. Since then we have established a small presence in Calcutta. In 1999 we were invited by World Vision to Romania. We sent a representative there, and he stayed on to set up a work supporting abandoned children. We have also had a small involvement in Tajikistan in Central Asia enabling some 500 children to be resettled from big institutions back into the community".

In New Zealand *Open Home* works where possible to return at risk children to their families. Foster care is usually short term; the emphasis is more on family reconciliation. In Uganda and Zambia, however, the parents are mostly dead. "There we have to seek to place the children with grandparents or with their extended families. We have no concept here of the size of some of these African families – owing to the very high parental death rate. We try to support and empower these surrogate parents: standing beside the foster parents so that these children will have some dignity of life. It's so different in those poorer countries – yet ultimately the aim is the same: to enable children to have a family and a home".

Responding to human need

"The invitations to extend the work overseas have been individual and often by chance. But *World Vision* has also been instrumental in taking us to new places. It is important that people see us as non-denominational, working for Christ rather than for one church. We start a work because someone invites us: we have never gone out to advertise. People catch our vision. It grows when a person feels called to do this work. Our task is to advise them and stand with them. The same principle applies to our international work.

"The old African saying is that it takes a village to raise a child. Raising each

child is the work of more than one adult. The ideal is mother and father supported by extended family and the broader community. If any factor is missing, then our aim is somehow to help furnish a network of love and support. The Christian community can do so much simply by walking alongside such families.

"At home the NZ Government provides us with much of our financial support. But overseas we have to seek sponsors for families, and we raise the cash here in New Zealand. One way is to help provide poor families with the skills to support themselves. We also have a strong prayer network, because our work is founded on prayer. Everything we have done is by the grace of God."

Ewen speaks with special feeling about the current situation in Africa. "What touches me more than anything today is the plight of the African children. There is extreme poverty in India, but there is also a lot of wealth there. In Africa, however, that scale of wealth just doesn't exist. Life expectancy in Zambia is only 34. In Uganda it is a bit higher. Another huge problem in northern Uganda is the abduction of children to become fighters in the so-called *Lord's Resistance Army*! 20,000 children have been taken and suffered appalling cruelty. Some two million people have been displaced because of the activities of this rebel group.

"I visited some of the camps and saw the terrible predicament of these refugees. Meanwhile the scourge of AIDS is carrying off millions of young adults in the prime of life and malaria kills many more. The childhood of so many African children is blighted by all these troubles.

"Endemic poverty seems to be the main underlying reason. The world largely ignores Africa. It doesn't trade with Africa. Lusaka, the Zambian capital, has a population of two million. Half of those would have less than a dollar a day to live on. That would be typical. Uganda is a green country and those who have a bit of land will survive. But in a city like Lusaka people can only live by small trading. Hence the grinding poverty and the low life expectancy.

"In Uganda the government has been proactive in trying to fight AIDS, promoting the ABC programme (abstinence; being faithful; using condoms – in that order). The spread of AIDS has been arrested there. But there is a lost generation of parents. In Zambia too the government is prompting abstinence and faithfulness. The use of condoms is seen as a backstop. It is not a 'safe' option – it is only 'safer'. Condoms do not stop the spread of STD or promiscuous behaviour. Indeed they promote it.

A visit to Rwanda

"A few weeks ago I paid my first visit to Rwanda and I was deeply moved. Only 12 years ago a million people were killed in the civil war between Hutus and Tutsis. We were invited by PHAR (the 'peace-building, healing and reconciliation' programme). I witnessed a process of reconciliation where offenders who had murdered members of the other tribe and had served time in prison were brought back to face the bereft relatives.

"One mother had had three children killed by one man who tied them up and threw them into a river. Yet the woman was prepared to face him and forgive him. It wasn't easy for her. I felt tears running down my cheeks as I watched her! This is one programme among many in Rwanda. It is all founded on the word of Christ – the gospel of forgiveness.

"They would like the *Open Home Foundation* to work in Rwanda too. But we haven't got to that stage yet. We will try to provide some training.` The people we have trained in Uganda will hopefully go to Rwanda.

"Every time I go to Africa I meet people who have suffered much, yet their faith is alive. The guardians of the children in our programmes will sing and dance for us when we visit. They have the faith. Yet here in New Zealand we, who are so sophisticated in many things, lack the one thing necessary.

"In New Zealand," Ewen concludes, "we often have to minister to people who have no faith. But in Africa, if they are not Christian, then they are Muslim. They are believers. Our teams are Christ-centred. Prayer is part of our work. If the people we serve also have faith, we have God in common. But even if those who seek our help are without faith, we are prepared to care for anyone God brings to us."

The Open Home Foundation

how you can help

Many children and young people need:

- families able to open their hearts and homes to them.
- prayer partners who will pray for them.
- sponsors – whose payments will enable them to belong to a family, receive good health care and attend school.

We would welcome your interest.
Please contact the Director,
Ewen Laurenson, Open Home Foundation International
at *ohfint@paradise.net.nz*
or write to *P O Box 13 862, Johnsonville, Wellington*

Singing a new song

Cat Stephens strums again

Libby Purves

In my twenties I loved Cat Stevens. I wore out a lot of vinyl and tape listening to *Wild World* and *Peace Train* and *Another Saturday Night*, and snivelling along to the *First Cut is the Deepest.* In my stable, parental forties I rediscovered him and marvelled at how snobbish the rock and pop historians always are on the subject of his heart-on-sleeve, questioning, almost-naff lyrics and plaintive husky voice.

When Cat converted and turned into Yusuf Islam a quarter of a century ago, vanishing into Muslim family life and educational philanthropy, I was as puzzled as most. When he kept it up for 25 years I was impressed. This was no Madonna-Kabbalah-freak nonsense in which the subject veers between slutty excess and English rosery in a perennial cycle of self-reinvention. Cat clearly meant it. Good on him.

But curiosity burned; and I cannot be the only connoisseur of religious matters who tuned eagerly to his big interview with Alan Yentob on a recent edition of *Imagine*, BBC TV's popular arts show. It was a revelation. This gentle, bearded figure in white was self-deprecating, mellow, amusing and benign – Rowan Williams without the agonised intellectualism. The musical peers who paid tribute to his early days were, delightfully, Dolly Parton and Bob Geldof. Anyone who can get those two singing from the same hymn sheet is special.

Anyway it was riveting, particularly about his giving up of music when he converted. "Music", he said gently, "was my religion. I was a sort of monk." But, said the interviewer, it was music that delivered you to the point of conversion. "Yes," said the renamed Yusuf Islam. "Then it let me go." He turned away from the manic world of pop because, as he put it, "competition, greed, fornication – these things surrounded it, and I had to get away and do the change".

But the shocking thing was that he decided that music and instruments would henceforth have no place at all in his life. He gave away his guitars. He knew – and Muslim scholars agree – that there is no firm ban on music in the Qu'ran. Yet he felt that he must "retreat to the safest point, the literal meaning, as far as you can get". So he denied expression to his main talent.

Geldof was furious. "How can he get closer to God", he enquired, "with this talent, and not express that proximity *through* it? That's not do-able. Islam, and every single religion, has always sung to God!"

Old memories stirred, nunly echoes of mortification and renunciation. I remembered it being explained to me that while fleshly pleasures – fine food, wine, marriage, dancing – are not sinful as such, it is necessary for the monastic life to renounce them, as a free gift and gesture of submission to a Higher Will. It was like the nunly 'custody of the eyes', denying the merry human instinct to dart glances at every passing novelty; like hair shirts and disciplines and all the spiky stuff that so upsets Dan Brown.

It isn't that it's wrong to enjoy earthly things, the rubric goes, but without them you can focus on the heavenly. There could hardly be a more un-modern attitude: express it to most people and they all but spit. "Life is for living! Pleasure is not wrong! Oh, that horrible life-denying, death-worshipping, creepy Catholic attitude – ugh!"

I am not, in the musical context, particularly convinced of the mortification-renunciation thing. All the same, it is interesting. Things that go against the boring modern convention of frantic hedonism always are. And even more interesting is what has happened now to Yusuf Islam. Twenty-five years after he turned away from music, his son left a guitar on the couch, and... "I picked it up and, behold, I still remembered the chords..." He was filmed playing quietly to himself and singing a new song, and it was more than touching.

He has, he says, stepped away from literalism and accepted that the guitar has a Muslim history, that it is not evil, and that indeed it is his duty to promote his peaceful, moderate brand of Islam by singing another album. "When I learnt something better, I moved," he says. "We must never take the position that we know it all. God may show us something we did not know yesterday."

Wow! Hang on to that one. I don't know why my thoughts veered off on to the Vatican and women priests, sanctification of gay unions and toleration of condoms, but they did. Yusuf might not agree in those areas – but heck, once you pick up a guitar again, anything can happen.

Libby Purves is a regular columnist for the London Tablet.
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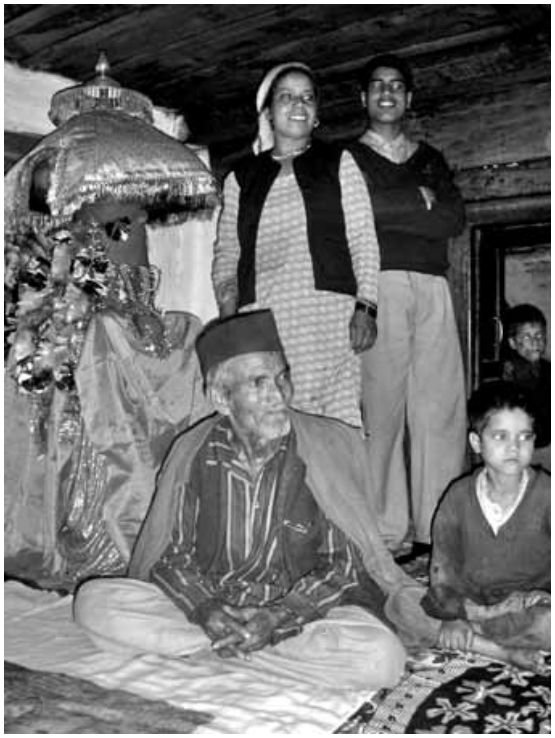
A mother's journal...

Kaaren Mathias

It is monsoon here in Himachal Pradesh. The mist sits low in the valley around us, tendrils clinging to the trees. It rains every day for an hour or five. Heavy, pelting and sometimes drizzly and light. The river outside has turned to a foaming coffee latte torrent. In the last three weeks we've had one half-day of sun.



Or should I start with "I'm very grateful for umbrellas, raincoats, a room big enough for a four-year old to swipe a cricket bat around in (if he remembers to use the soft tennis ball) and that rain doesn't mean cold as well." Hard times are usually relative. Most of our neighbours are also inside with small children for these two rainy months. Most of their houses are smaller and darker with fewer books, toys, paper and paints. Even worse, some of them have a television. Yesterday we made newspaper hats and bag and painted them. Three year old Savitri from next door had dropped by for some worm medicine and loved joining in. She hadn't used a paintbrush before. Living in this land of much beauty and much poverty, the contrasts are more acute and visible than inequality in New Zealand, although Aotearoa has plenty of that too.

Last week we were invited to visit Kishan Singh's place. We met Kishan a few months ago while his brother was recovering from tuberculosis and both were staying at our clinic. He lives 30 km away – usually a three-hour bus ride. We were able to get there in a jeep. Then it's a one hour walk down the hill to his village.

It was misty and rainy (again) but we were all glad to go on an outing. We noticed the inevitable fairy jewels in spider webs, Sharhirah took a photo of a particularly nice white flower, and we told a long story about a slug called Sloop and saw several hundred of his relatives. We all slipped and slid in the mud. Rohan only asked for a carry three times. At Kishan's wooden house looking over the misty hills, we were welcomed through the three-foot low doorway into the inner room.

The household devta (god) sat regally in a corner – swathed in shimmering orange and yellow fabrics. The dark room was lit by a naked light bulb. Grand-dad sat cross-legged, smiled, and told how he'd built this house 50 years ago. We talked about how low the price of cabbages is this year – just one rupee a kilo for farmers selling to the market. They told how they hire mules to take their produce up to the road-end. A bus goes from there once a day. Another brother sat on a wooden trunk. Outside many village children pressed their noses against the plastic and glass to see in.

Kishan Singh started massaging each of our lower legs. His wife and brother joined in. Kneading and squeezing our calf muscles after the walk down. It felt intimate and slightly embarrassing in this land where men and women don't ever touch each other in public. Kishan squeezed my calves hard until it burned – it felt good afterwards. Then he smiled and moved onto four-year-old Rohan. He giggled and tried to pull his legs away. Then asked if his arms and back could get rubbed as well. Prema, our Himachali health worker and housemate, explained this massage is what they always do when visitors come to their home. She paused and then said "It's like in Jesus' time – washing guests' feet after they've walked a long way."

Cups of sweet milky *chai* followed and then fried parantha filled with spicy potato – and slices of fresh apple from their trees. Our children laughed and tickled and sat on knees. Their exit from the room sliding on their bellies like slugs may not have been a cultural norm but Grand-dad smiled and stopped me when I tried to pull them onto their feet.

As we left into the drizzle, we were each presented with a pair of brightly coloured hand-made slippers. The last stitches were put into the smallest pair as we pulled on our muddy shoes and raincoats. Colourful, generous hospitality on a drizzly day. Generous as the sky pouring rains falling onto this steep land whether we need it or not. ■

Kaaren Mathias is a mother of three living and working in a village in Himachal Pradesh. She is focussed on keeping her kids happy, improving public health and enjoying the beautiful surroundings

Eucharist . . .

food for the journey to freedom

Glynn Cardy

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night,
Alive as you or me:
Said I, but Joe you're ten years dead;
I never died said he.

In Salt Lake, Joe, Great God, said I,
Him standing by my bed;
They framed you on a murder charge,
Said Joe but I ain't dead.

The copper bosses framed you Joe
They shot you Joe said I;
Takes more than guns to kill a man,
Said Joe I did not die.

Joe Hill ain't dead he says to me,
Joe Hill ain't never died;
Where working men are out on strike,
Joe Hill is at their side.

And standing there as big as life
A-smiling with his eyes.
Said Joe, what they forgot to kill
Went on to organize!

From San Diego up to Maine,
In every mine and mill –
Where working men defend their rights
It's there you'll find Joe Hill.

I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night,
Alive as you or me:
Said I, but Joe you're ten years dead;
I never died said he.
I never died said he.

There is obvious Christic allusions in this ballad eulogizing Joe Hill, a working class hero, who was killed in 1915. Like Jesus he was concerned about injustice. Like Jesus this concern rallied the forces of wealth and might against him. Like Jesus he was killed. Like Jesus he lives on, immortalized in song and deed.

Let's imagine that Joe had been with his friends the night before he was arrested. Let's imagine that he'd taken a pint of beer and a chunk of hard tack, likened them to his body, and shared them round. And let's imagine Joe told them that every time before they go out on the picket line, every time before they stand up to injustices, every time before they fight for what is right, they are to eat and drink and remember the spirit – that is Joe's spirit, and the spirit of their forebears who struggled, and the spirit of those standing beside them.

This ritual is about re-membering, bringing together the past with the present, and the dead with the living. It is a ritual that empowers people. It focuses them on the tradition of protest of which they are a part. It focuses them on the cost of that protest. And it focuses them on the dream of life lived free of oppression, hatred, classism, and prejudice.

I don't know very much about Joe Hill. I do though know his song. And I have met his spirit and joined with it. I know a lot more about Jesus, been taught his songs, and have met and joined his spirit too. While every spirit is unique, there is a resonance between these two spirits.

Listen to one of our Eucharistic prayers:
"Here today, through bread and wine, we renew our journey with Jesus and his disciples. We renew our unity with one another, and with all those who have gone before us in this place. We renew our communion with the earth and our interwovenness with the broken ones of the world. We take bread, symbol of labour, symbol of life. We will break the bread because Christ, the source of life, was broken for the excluded, exploited and downtrodden. We take wine, symbol of blood, spilt in war and conflict, symbol too of new life. We will drink the wine because Christ, the peace of the world, overcomes violence."

This is a call to political action. This is a call to stand with Christ on the picket lines of history – everywhere oppression is rampant, freedom is suppressed, and bread is not shared. The spiritual is political, it can be no other. This Eucharistic act re-members the past and binds it to the present in order to build the future. It is holy, and it is potent.

The biblical antecedent of Eucharist is the manna from heaven story. Manna, the food of liberation, is found not in the Big Red sheds of Egypt but in the wilderness beyond Pharaoh's control. Manna is bread that is to be shared, not stored for profit. It is bread that comes courtesy of God, not from the machinations of the market with more landing on the palates of the rich than on the plates of the poor.

It has served the interests of the ruling classes to de-politicize the Eucharist and turn it into an individualistic private act of devotion. With our sins of disobedience confessed we were to kneel and bow our heads to God, as we would to the king. We were to receive of the king's bounty and go forth quietly to live subservient lives. We dressed our bishops and priests like royalty: "Yes, m' Lord, you know best." From Constantine on the paramount political function of the Church has been to sanction, and thus sanctify, the power of the state.

As God said to Moses: "Stop grovelling and get moving. I want my people to be free. I don't want to hear about your shortcomings and guilt. I don't want you to wallow in it. Saying sorry isn't going to free my people. Decisive, confrontational, planned action is. When you act, you'll find me acting with you. Together we will walk out of slavery into freedom.'

It is no mistake that Matthew's Gospel pictures Jesus as the new Moses. It is also no mistake that Constantinian Christianity removed Jesus from the picket line, stuck a crown on his head, and plonked him in a starry heaven – as far removed from working class people as possible.

The Eucharist has also been de-politicized by debate. Is the bread and wine real flesh and blood, transubstantiation, consubstantiation, or symbolic substance? Who can receive it – divorcees, children, gays and lesbians, Buddhists and Muslims, anyone? Such disagreements still divide the Church, diminish our potency, and serve those who fear our power.

The Eucharist is marching food. Think of it as a high-protein energy bar for those communities that passionately burn for justice. It brings us individuals, all the little spluttering, erratic flames and the torches that we are, into one bonfire. Together we can light up the sky bringing hope to those in darkness.

Eating is a communal act more than an individual one. Some days as individuals we can't even amble to the clothes line let alone stand on any picket line. Yet we belong. We belong to a community that stands for justice. Newborn babes belong, folk stricken with ailments belong, the brave belong, the weak belong, and even those who don't believe can choose to belong.

For too long the high-protein power bar for the visionary Jesus movement has been reduced to a pious after-dinner mint for individual penitents.

We need to recover the potency of the Eucharist. It is God's gift and it's divine. In eating we come together. In solidarity there is healing. With healing comes the ability to re-vision. With renewed vision comes the passion to plan and act. With action we live our prayers.

The Eucharist calls us to action. Not for action's sake, but for all the forsaken. It is a holy meal for the sake of the whole world. ■

Glynn Cardy is parish priest of St-Matthews-in-the-City, Auckland

The parish – a living cell

This moving passage in Georges Bernanos's novel *The Diary of a Country Priest* will, I believe, have found an echo in the hearts and minds of many Catholic priests worldwide in all the changing circumstances and fortunes of their ministry.

"Just three months to-day since my appointment to this parish of Ambricourt. Already three months... This morning I prayed hard for my parish, my poor parish, my first and perhaps my last, since I ask no better than to die here. My parish! The words can't even be spoken without a kind of soaring love... But as yet the idea behind them is so confused. I know that my parish is a reality, that we belong to each other for all eternity; it is not a mere administrative fiction, but a living cell of the everlasting Church.

"But if only the good God would open my eyes and unseal my ears, so that I might behold the face of my parish and hear its voice. Probably that is asking far too much. The face of my parish! The look in the eyes... They must be gentle, suffering patient eyes.

"I feel they must be rather like mine when I cease struggling and let myself be borne along in the great invisible flux that sweeps us all, helter-skelter, the living and the dead, into the deep waters of Eternity. And those would be the eyes of all Christianity, and of all parishes – perhaps of the poor human race itself. Our Lord saw them from the Cross..."

Alan Roberts' plea for the apostolate and prophetic actions of the laity to be fully valued (TM August) is entirely sound. Yet it remains important for the ordained ministry to cherish the insights that Bernanos, as long ago as 1936, portrayed so well for us.

Denzil Brown
(retired Presbyterian minister)

Making space for one another

Paul Andrews

By the time you read this in the September *Tui Motu,* I may have moved. The job I've had for six years, as rector of Manresa, ends and I may well have said goodbye, sadly, to this house, to the view of green lawn as I breakfast, and the company of the diverse brethren, the mystic, the carpenter, the historian, the gardener, the media man, the manager and so on. Sadly, because I like them, and we give each other space.

Space was not something I thought about when I took my first vows as a Jesuit. Yet it was somehow built into the way we lived. We slept six or more to a room, with only enough space between the beds for a curtain and chair. We were silent. In the noviciate they called it Major Silence. For lonely young men who had left their families, and sometimes wept into their pillows, that silence could be a protection, a not unfriendly space which helped you to live with your feelings. During the day, as we toiled outside with shovels, wheelbarrows, pickaxes and hoes, we came to know each other with the assurance of people who have chosen to follow the same dream.

It was an introduction to religious life, with its curious mix of close companionship and space. Whatever about the stresses of the celibate life when you are in the prime of life, I'd have to witness that as you grow older, the companionship of good and long-tested friends is a blessing and a joy. You learn to relish them while respecting the limits and avoiding nosiness or unwanted intrusions. To judge from the number of nuns who move out of community in order to live on their own, I suspect that men Religious respect one another's space more effectively than women.

Space is needed in the community life of Religious, and it has an equally vital place in marriage. Kahlil Gibran mentions it in his poetical piece about marriage: *You shall be together even in the silent memory of God. But let there be spaces in your togetherness, and let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Sing and dance and be joyous, but let each of you be alone.*

As you look at the couples you know best, your parents, children, sisters and brothers, that question can be revealing: what is the mixture of intimacy and space in the marriage? Of course it changes with time. A couple's first delightful intimacy may give way to feeling crowded, especially after a disagreement. If the disagreement is serious, even the intimacy of making love may fail to heal the soreness.

A recent meeting pushed me to think hard about space. I've known the family for many years, a talented couple with bright, affectionate children. As in many marriages, things were not as good as they looked; and they have gone through strange ups and downs. Both Jean and Fergus (fictional names, obviously) had interesting jobs before they married in their thirties. They worked hard, and prospered. But as the years passed and crises arose, fierce arguments between them left a deep wound on the family. Fergus in particular would become explosive when faced with the sort of crises and arguments that are the stuff of family living. There was a period when I thought the marriage was doomed.

When the children had grown and left home, the parents, retired now from their work, felt on top of one another in the empty house. Both of them were good problem-solvers, and once they had worked out what was wrong, they found a solution. They divided the house in two. Now for the most part they live separate lives. It works. They respect one another's space. They

have interests in common, not merely in the children and grandchildren, but in projects that involve them both. So they are often together both inside the house and outside. If one is sick or indisposed, the other will automatically step in to help. The bond that brought them together in the first place has had a chance to strengthen again. It is not the marriage of the love-songs, but it has brought a measure of happiness to both Fergus and Jean.

What was it that worked in this case? Partly that they really are capable of living separate lives. They have separate sources of income, so are not quarrelling about money. Both of them can cook and cater for themselves. They love their children and share their delights and worries. Both of them have a sense of God as the third person in their marriage.

In books about marriage, you will rarely find sections on how to divide the house in two. That might seem to be an admission of failure. But marriages come in all sorts and shapes. Fergus and Joan were embarrassed at first about their new arrangement, and I watched it with intense curiosity: it seemed to offer a new shape on an old institution. It is not something you would recommend to a young couple; but it takes account of the need for space, which is deep in all of us.

We know how animals mark out and defend their territory, birds by their song, mammals by their smells. Children have an animal feel for their little patch: they do not like others invading their bed (or side of the bed), their drawer or cupboard or chair, or, if they are lucky, their room. That need persists even in the intimacy of marriage. Even loving adults need room to stretch and be themselves.

So it is important to keep some space for yourself. After a day with the crowds, Jesus would head for a mountainside to spend the night alone with his Father. Many *Tui Motu* readers follow him from their computers, by seeking out the Jesuit website, *Sacred Space* (www/sacredspace.ie), which has offered many millions of workers an oasis of quiet and prayer in the middle of their daily routines. If you sense the desire to be alone, don't feel guilty. Make space for yourself. ■

David Russell Lange – one year after his death

Rev Ron O'Grady

To be appointed a Prime Minister is to receive the highest honour a country can give to one of its citizens. But there are times when it must seem a dubious honour. Political leaders need thick skins to survive the endless criticism. When they eventually die a peculiar process of canonisation will often occur.

In July, the New Zealand Labour party met for its 90th birthday, and it seems that 'sainthood' has now been conferred on three of its significant leaders: Michael Joseph Savage, Norman Kirk and David Russell Lange. Each made a unique and significant contribution to life in this country. Their vision helped to mould us into the people we now are.

There were similarities in their leadership. All three stayed in touch with the feelings of ordinary New Zealanders. Each was a compassionate leader and genuine in their desire to help the most vulnerable in society. Each had a unique ability to speak to the ordinary working-class New Zealanders in a language they understood. And each was attempting to implement the basic teachings of practical Christianity through their words and actions.

Of the three David Lange was the most overtly Christian. It was a faith instilled in his bones since childhood and the influence of his mother's deep Christian faith was profound. David Lange's understanding of Christianity was formed in his early 20s when he was a student in Britain and came under the influence of the great wave of Methodist preachers.

This was the kind of hands-on Christianity that made sense to the young David Lange. It was based on a realistic interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount. It took politics and social issues seriously and sought to bring Christian values into the mainstream of all the big issues of the time.

In the later months of his life he and I talked at length about Christian values and the meaning of life. We always prayed together so it seems appropriate that I end this short meditation with a prayer which I believe would sum up his beliefs:

God give us a vision of our country
As a land of tolerance where all races and creeds can live together in unity
A land of justice where basic human rights are respected
A land of compassion where poverty is unknown and oppression is ended
And a land of peace where order does not depend on force.
God help us to make this vision our reality. Amen ■

(Meditation given at Memorial Service Sunday August 13, 2006. Ron O'Grady is Associate Minister, Onehunga Co-operating Parish)

Jesus' Parables and Environmental Justice

Susan Smith

Jesus was not an ecologist because the New Testament, like the Old Testament, was written at a time when ecology was not an issue, although people were aware of nature. Palestinian fishermen would have taken note of the weather before setting forth on the Sea of Galilee, peasants would have been searching the skies or noting the actions of birds and insects before planting and harvesting. There would have been a heightened awareness about humankind's dependency on nature. I read recently many people in the United Kingdom would not spend more than five minutes outside every day. First-century Palestinians would have had done much better than that!

Even if Jesus were not an environmentalist or a paid-up member of the Palestinian equivalent of the Green Party he would have been well aware of nature, of the people's dependency on good harvests and good weather. Perhaps he even knew that much of ancient Greece was already trying to manage the first effects of deforestation because of its agricultural practices, and that North African grainfields were on the way to becoming desert.

Mark 4 begins with the well-known parable of the *Sower and the Seed*, and is shortly followed by the parable of the seed growing until it is ready to be harvested, this wonderful growth occurring without human help, and then we have the parable of the tiny mustard seed that becomes the greatest of shrubs providing shelter for the birds of the air. Jesus relies on nature as his entry point to teach about the coming of the Reign of God. The chapter concludes with another nature story, that of Jesus stilling the storm at sea. In other words, Jesus was in touch with nature and aware of its power for our good and equally aware of its potential for harm to humankind.

Mark 4 reminds us of our need to be aware of nature, and probably we New Zealanders are better at this than most people, although every so often we hear 'horror' stories about children thinking that milk begins its life in plastic bottles!! But as life becomes increasingly urbanized, the *Caritas*-initiated week on environmental justice merits our attention. Perhaps our biggest challenge today is to become more aware of the fragile character of our relationship with nature. It is not there for us to exploit for economic gain.

Recently I was talking with someone who was doing some maintenance work for us at home in Whangarei. I commented on the beauty of the Whangarei district with its wonderful beaches and bush, and yet most people drove through en route to the Bay of Islands or stopped before Whangarei at Mangawhai Heads, both places probably considered to be somewhat 'smarter' than Whangarei. He agreed and said he hoped it stayed that way as we did not want the place spoiled by property developers catering for a burgeoning tourist industry. Something to ponder, as John Campbell would say. ■

Dr Susan Smith is a Mission sister who teaches Biblical Studies at the School of Theology, University of Auckland

Through the eyes of a child

Josephs Story
Joy Cowley – illustrated by David Hughson
Open Home Foundation International, 2006
Review: Eric Allan

Children like Joseph have very hard lives, experiencing more hardship before they are five than many of us do in our whole lives. Joy Cowley has learnt much of Joseph's world and invites us to enter it. Hard times shape Joseph's understanding of his place in the world. He also has new times that reshape his world. He has a mother who loves him but is limited in her ways of care. His father is long gone. In Joseph's world enormous changes happen suddenly and without warning and in ways that are beyond his ability to comprehend.

This is a serious book that provides no glib conclusion, apart from affirming the power of wise love in the moment, and hopefully providing a young person with resources for the years ahead. Where life will take Joseph is unclear. At the same time he has time with a foster family of people who care for him.

They do not care for him perfectly – to do that they would have to really know him better than he does himself. They make presumptions and mistakes that distress, upset or confuse him. Their ways are different to many that he has known. Out of their care for him they can be thoughtlessly familiar, or confusing to him, although always from a position of best intent. They may not at times realize that here they have Joseph as Joseph knows himself. Not a child in need of care but Joseph, who eats and breathes and is a unique person, with a unique history albeit a young person.

This book speaks of the enormous expectations that we have of children. As one who has worked with many families preparing for or providing short term foster care for children, I valued this book. As one who is somewhat older than its intended audience, I wondered who will be its key audiences. While intended for children, in the best tradition of children's stories I think it will be appreciated both by adults and children, particularly those in foster families or those who are concerned for children facing great difficulty.

I also think that it may help to validate some children in longer term care as they make sense of their lives and the context in which they live. It will also be a useful book for many a parent who wants a shelf of books for young children which will entertain, but also contain important ideas. The specific ideas here may support people both young and old to understand some children who might seem to be very different to them.

Joy Cowley and *Open Home Foundation International* have provided an easily read, well-illustrated book which is also an important resource and will be very well used. Although it is a 'children's' book both readers and listeners will learn from this book. ■

Eric Allan is Director of Catholic Family and Community Services, Auckland

James Michael Liston, man of vision

James Michael Liston: A Life
Nicholas Reid
Victoria University Press
Price: $49.95
Review: Des McCarthy

To read this excellent biography is to see unfolding for the first time the full life of this remarkable man. The author has presented in exhaustive detail the story of James Liston's 95 years. Great research has been undertaken, and when faced with controversy both sides of the case are presented without passing judgment, the author remaining ever objective.

I enjoyed it, and in discovering the difficulties of his early years, both at home and abroad, I came to understand better the reason why he was such an enigmatic character. It had ever puzzled me. His subject for 16 years I was called "to give an account of my stewardship" on four different occasions. His eyes were kindly but his lips were a thin hard line.

No other person in the history of our country has exercised such continuous direct power and control over the lives of both laity and clergy. He was rector of the National Seminary, Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, for nine years, Co-adjutor Bishop of Auckland for nine years, and finally Bishop of Auckland for 40 years. The Dunedin priests didn't want him as their Bishop. Bishop Cleary of Auckland lost his high regard for him and wanted him removed from Office. Of course, as the book demonstrates, there were faults on both sides.

But what comes through is that James Michael was an autocrat, especially in regard to priests under his jurisdiction. Diocesan priests have a vow of obedience to their Bishop; he exacted absolute obedience which tended to make us all servile whether curate, parish priest or consultor. There was no discussion; it was all one-sided. He ruled the clergy by the Roman *imperium*, rather than the Gospel *diakonia*.

Yet it can be said the clergy had great respect for him and admired him for his industry – we knew he worked a good 17 hours a day even in his 80s. At that age he was still planning for the church, a man of vision. The general appreciation of the priests was that he was harder on himself than he was on us.

In pieces published in the book from interviews with various priests of the diocese, you can sense that the person is telling it like it was with some reservations out of loyalty and respect for James. That says something in itself. That era has long gone, but in some degree we were all part of it.

I think this biography does a fine job in bringing to life the James Michael that I knew, but it does more than that. His shortcomings are adequately presented, and justice is done to his many achievements. It's a fine study. ■

(Msgr Des McCarthy is retired in Cambridge)

Two environmental studies

The threat of tourism: challenge to the church
Ron O'Grady
WCC Publications Geneva

God's earth our home
Five studies based on faith and the environment
Anglican church social justice commission 47 pp
Price: $5 ea ($50 for 12 copies)
Reviews: Michael Hill IC

In the next 24 hours three million people will leave home to travel to a foreign tourist destination. In 15 years this is likely to rise to four and a half million. Tourism, once the prerogative of the rich and privileged, is now within reach of nearly everyone in First World countries. It has grown to be one of the world's major industries. It is certainly a major source of foreign revenue for New Zealand.

In *The Threat of Tourism* writer and minister Ron O'Grady describes the impact international tourism is having on the environment generally, on the world's wildernesses, heritage sites, tropical islands, coral reefs, not to speak of the human costs. The Jumbo Jet and the great Cruise Ship have brought the world's beauty spots into the backyard of people who once would never have afforded such luxuries. O'Grady packs this slim volume full of challenging statistics. Did you know that a tourist on a transatlantic flight produces as much 'greenhouse' emission in that one journey as the rest of his normal activities for one year. Tourism has already virtually destroyed the Caribbean coral reefs. Major culprits are the great cruise liners.

O'Grady addresses his book to the churches: it is a plea for 'ecotourism', that which firstly respects the environment which we are visiting. Tourism, he says, must become ecologically responsible, socially acceptable and economically just and viable. The voice of the church has been little heard, although he does single out Pope John Paul II as an honourable exception. One quote to finish: "our goal (in tourism) should not be the benefit of the privileged few, but rather the improvement of the living conditions of all. (2003)". Visitor and host equally. Amen to that.

The second even slimmer volume, *God's Earth • Our Home*, is a series of studies provided for a discussion group for use at a series of weekly gatherings. The studies are based of the writings of Dr Rowan Williams, the present Archbishop of Canterbury. Each session starts with prayer, readings from the Archbishop's writing, from Scripture and from other sources with discussion points for each. The sessions conclude with practical resolutions and closing prayer.

It is a veritable treasury of resource material for any group intent on embracing the challenge of environmental concerns. If anything there is too much material for each session – but that is a happy fault.

This booklet is to be highly recommended for church groups as a way of raising our conscientious awareness of the ecological crisis which is upon us. ■

Ecology, feminism and the Christian gospel

Ecofeminism in Latin America
By Mary Judith Ress
Maryknoll: Orbis Books. 2006.
xii & 243 pp.
Review: Susan Smith

United States born Mary Judith Ress, a Maryknoll Lay Missioner currently lives in Santiago, Chile, and was a founding member of the *Con-Spirando Collective,* a community of women working in the areas of eco-feminist theology and spirituality.

'Eco-feminism' is not an easy word to define! First used by the French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne (1920-2005) in her 1974 work *Le Féminisme ou la mort* (Feminism or Death), it refers to those ecological movements driven by women's awareness of oppression. In particular, it argues that both environmental degradation and oppression of women are inevitable in a world where patriarchal culture seeks to dominate human and cosmic life.

Ress argues that many Latin American women initially located in liberation theology a methodology and praxis that motivated them in their various ministries of solidarity with the poor. She generously acknowledges the importance of liberation theology, but along with other women activists gradually recognised that while liberation theology could serve to challenge economic structures that oppressed the materially poor, it failed to adequately respond to the reality of sexism in church and society.

Ress argues that a patriarchal mindset regards women and nature as resources to be commodified and exploited instead of being respected as two primary sources of all life. This led concerned women to move beyond liberation theology towards a theology that addressed both ecological and women's issues, as well as economic issues. She believes that what today's world needs is "a more adequate cosmology, a more appropriate ethics, and a more inclusive spirituality". Ecofeminist theology, grounded in a sense of the interconnectedness of all creation and therefore the sacredness of all creation, is being embraced by women who believe they are called to a holistic and healing mission.

She devotes much space to her consideration of Rosemary Radford Ruther, Sallie McFague and Gebara, feminist theologians who want to stay within the Christian tradition, but who recognise that it must be revisioned in ways that overcome its strong patriarchal bias and dualistic nature. I found this section particularly useful as perhaps the biggest challenge facing the contemporary Christian feminist is how to remain part of the Christian community which so often has treated women as second-class citizens.

Ress then devotes space to Latin American ecofeminist voices by documenting her transcripts of interviews with 12 Latin American women, some of whom work as academics and some who are engaged with people at the grassroots. I found this section quite moving, and there is much here that will resonate with the experience of New Zealand women.

One lacuna I noted is that Ress does not identify the Bible as one of her sources of ancient wisdom. Neither the Old nor New Testaments was written to provide an action plan for contemporary environmentalists, but recent Biblical studies recognise that there are Biblical texts which deserve the name, 'ancient wisdom', as contemporary women and men seek to overcome environmental degradation.

Though this work was part of Ress' doctoral work, it fortunately lacks the vast number of footnotes and 'heavy' academic style characteristic of much thesis-writing, and readers will appreciate both is succinctness and simplicity. ■

Tracing the origins of Hizbullah

Crosscurrents
John Honoré

The past is discredited, the future completely uncertain, the present unknowable – Elias Khoury

The State of Lebanon was first set up in 1920, its independence formally declared by France in 1941, but it has never been able to function as a cohesive state because of sectarian divides between its Christian and Muslim citizens. The latest incursion of Israel into Lebanon in a brutal war against Hizbullah has again left a devastated country, its citizens the victims, not Hizbullah.

Lebanon continues to be a pawn in Middle East politics, but its entrenched system of sharing power in the form of a Christian President, a Sunni Prime Minister and a Shia Speaker of Parliament is indicative of a governmental structure which is impossible to sustain with any surety. It is a compromise between the Christian leadership trying to rid itself of French influence and protection and the Muslim leaders seeking autonomy from Arab influence.

In 1967 the Israeli defeat of Arab armies and the subsequent flooding into Lebanon of Palestinian refugees embroiled Lebanon in the dynamics of the Arab-Israel dispute. Lebanon, with its capital Beirut once described as the Paris of the Middle East, fell apart. Lebanon's tragic and bloody civil war in 1975, which lasted for 16 years, epitomised the divisions between Muslim and Christian and deepened the divide between the two.

Israel's 1982 invasion in which over 11,000 Lebanese, mostly civilians, were slaughtered led to the militant political movement Hizbullah. It was a direct response to the invasion. The military resistance to Israeli occupation lasted three years and resulted in Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Hizbullah aimed to establish an Islamic republic, ruled by Islamic law. It won representation in Lebanon's parliamentary system, believing that reform is better engineered from within than imposed from without.

Hizbullah therefore is an integral part of Lebanon's social and political structure and cannot be left out of any peace negotiations. For Israel to demand that Hizbullah disarm is both provocative and unrealistic. Unless Israel is able to reach political agreements with the Arab world that the basis for a peace settlement in the region could be a return to its 1967 borders (UN Resolution 242), then Hizbullah and Hamas will remain implacably opposed to the State of Israel.

Zionist agression

Peace in the Middle East seems a forlorn hope. The violent response by Israel to the capture of two of its soldiers by Hizbullah has destroyed any possibility of having Lebanon as a genuine neighbour. The brutal massacre of women and children in Qana and the destruction of villages, roads, bridges and homes will be remembered by generations of Lebanese.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that something is terribly wrong with the State of Israel and its society. Is Israel a civilian or a military state? The unpredictable military rage directed at Arab populations in Palestine and Lebanon is symptomatic of extremist, self-destructive right-wing politics. The Zionist state of Israel is tearing the heart out of the Middle East and alienating Jews around the world. More and more saddened Jews are troubled by such barbarism and are bravely critical of Israel's actions. The world identifies Jewish institutions with Israel and this is wrong. Judaism is a world apart from the savagery of the militaristic nationalism being practised by the state of Israel.

How can peace be negotiated in such difficult conditions? A Jewish Australian academic argues that there must be a "groundswell of persuasion", not only among Jews worldwide but all nations, to convince Israel that it cannot wage incessant war against their neighbours. It is contrary to the beliefs of Judaism.

Israel must realise that its future lies in coming to terms with its neighbours and relinquishing its dependence on America. America's support of Israel is viewed as a negative influence on all relationships in the Middle East and basically it is for the maintenance of American hegemony. Israel is part of the Middle East. It is not an appendage of the White House. To acknowledge this, is confirmation and proof of Israel's right to exist.

Tui Motu Stadium

The Editor pointedly suggested that I announce to the world the thrilling news that Dunedin's Carisbrook, *The House of Pain* and venue of rugby and scarfie insurrections, is going to be rebuilt closer to *Tui Motu* offices. *Tui Motu* has been offered naming rights. The project is to do with the Rugby World Cup in 2011 when, alert readers will remember, this writer will be in Uzbekistan. Apparently everybody in Dunedin is thrilled and willing to contribute towards the astronomical cost of support for the Rugby Union – meaning either new grounds, or no more international rugby.

The shift will enable a closer coverage of the gentle game of rugby by the Editor himself (a keen rugby fan) in the absence of a knowledgeable column writer on the subject. *Tui Motu* has already been approached for a contribution towards the cost of $135 million, and the editor pointedly suggested that a noise like money from Christchurch would be appreciated. This was met with a stoney silence which the editor, in his wisdom, rightly interpreted as being unlikely. However, good luck to all rugby followers – here's hoping Dunedin can afford it. ■

Progress on the new Mass texts

The recent approval by the bishops of eight different English speaking countries of the proposed translation of the Order of the Mass means that the publication of a new Missal in English has inched forward towards publication.

Receiving such approval was in the case of one extremely significant episcopate a near thing. A large number of American bishops looked likely to vote against the text, perhaps so many of them as to deny it the two- thirds majority required. But it had the backing of the Roman authorities and as good Americans the bishops concerned were aware of the principle that you can't fight city hall. Opposition was withdrawn on the understanding that a number of individual points in the text deemed unsatisfactory would be re-considered.

A basic problem has been that in 2001 the Congregation for Divine Worship issued in the ironically named *Liturgiam Authenticam* prescriptions for translation that many consider have hindered rather than advanced the work. For example, only one translation into English would be approved. This was in great part for the convenience of the Congregation. Many of those putting together vernacular texts in Third World languages have limited competence in Latin. They cannot work from the Latin text. Their translations have to be made from a text already produced in English. The Congregation did not want its supervision of matters complicated by the existence of a variety of English translations,

Bishop Arthur Roche, the Englishman heading ICEL, the body charged under the Congregation with preparing the translation, has told us that ICEL is keeping it eyes on 'International Standard English'. Just what this creature is the bishop himself admits is hard to define. No account has been taken of the point made by our Cardinal Tom Williams, that the Oxford Press produces a Dictionary of New Zealand English that runs to almost 1,000 pages, solid evidence that there is not one English language across the world. No wonder that, as Bishop Roche admits, some English people say the new ICEL texts are too American and some Americans say they are too English.

That is the dark side. But an account recently provided by the Bishop of the progress of the work of translation gives reason for cautious optimism. Within the constraints imposed by *Liturgiam authenticam*, care is being taken to provide a translation that will be accessible as well as solemn and profound. Work has moved on from the Order of the Mass to the Proper of the Seasons. We are likely to be less wedded to the current wordings in the Proper than we were to those of the body of the Mass. The variety of styles of expression in the Latin prayers of the Proper, drawn as they are from many different sources, is to be reflected in the proposed English translation. If the texts end up in some ways British and in some ways American, maybe that expresses where we are in New Zealand, so often drawing on both those cultures to put together something distinctively our own.

Above all, let us not get matters out of proportion. If we have to replace our current response to the celebrant's greeting with the proposed "and with your spirit" it is not the end of the world. We will soon get used to it. There are far more important matters to get our teeth into, whether within the church community or in the wider world around us. If people want to play with words, let them. For us it must be a matter of getting on with the realities of life. ■

Humphrey O'Leary

Fr Humphrey O'Leary is rector of the Redemptorist community in Glendowie, Auckland

Reality check

Eve Adams

Discipline. Such a difficult word. It taunts our faith journeys like a firm school ma'am, reminding us that commitment and action are vital companions to lofty ideals and promises. Discipline practices like worship, meditation, prayer and so on, grow our relationship with God and keep it alive. Perhaps I have been focused on this because for two weeks I have sat by my husband's bed as he has been quite ill. Nothing like a bit of reality to wake up the senses and send you into deep conversation with the creatrix.

A world without a weekly church attendance can so easily slide into ambivalence and personal agendas that do nothing to feed a relationship with God. That has always been one of the benefits of church membership, that it carries your faith along as part of something bigger than yourself. It provides a ready made discipline with all the trappings of satisfaction and commitment that go along with it.

So what happens when you opt out of that formal membership? It's certainly harder in many respects. There is no outside expectation of me, no one who will miss me if I don't turn up, no need to read the lectionary Scriptures if I don't have to. It can be so seductive, so easy to disappear into my own spiritual cocoon. It can become unreal.

And so I've found that discipline has become more imperative to me now than it was before. I can't rely on a Sunday catch up. In fact I've found that without Sunday church to focus on, every day discipline has taken on a new meaning. It may sound clichéd but it's more to do with recognising that I am now largely the shepherd of my own faith, (with a little bit of help). If I don't grow it, don't push the boundaries, don't make the time, no one will.

Without Eucharist, I must find others to break bread with. Without preaching, I read more spiritual writings; some new, some old to challenge my thinking. Without a formal community and institution I must find others to talk and walk with, some similar in thinking to me, some not.

At this point I squirm and shake my head because it can be more time consuming and demanding than church ever was. And to tell you the truth I fail often. Days pass when I don't think of God, when I don't make the time to pray, but what else is new. I'm human and it was no different inside the church. It requires discipline, and if nothing else it has forced me to dig deep about what I believe, how much I'm really prepared to put into it and at what cost. Not always comfortable questions when the only person watching is me and you know who. ■