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PEOPLE OF THE TREATY
WHAKAWHITI WHAKAARO CONSULTATION

BICULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS
Manuel Beazley, Tui Cadigan, Richard Kerr-Bell and Rowan Light

CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS
Thomas O'Loughlin, Judith Salamat, Susan Smith and Colin MacLeod

Plus YOUNG VOICES
Jack Derwin and Shar Mathias

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Cover Photograph
by Alex Green on Unsplash

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Imagination, Consultation and Consensus

It's compelling to see mana whenua in action — when the people with sacred connections to the land through their ancestry take a stand on its use. We've seen it before in our country — at Parihaka, Bastion Point, Raglan, Whanganui — and now at Ihumātao in Auckland. It can ripple through us as people of the Treaty, like Pentecost.

Personally we may favour practical solutions such as using the contested land to house people. We may dismiss the protestors as a small group of trouble makers. We may feel confused by media reports. But this protest is not a passing enthusiasm. The group has been camped on the land for years. Iwi, local government, police and many groups have been involved. So far there is no resolution but consultation is progressing.

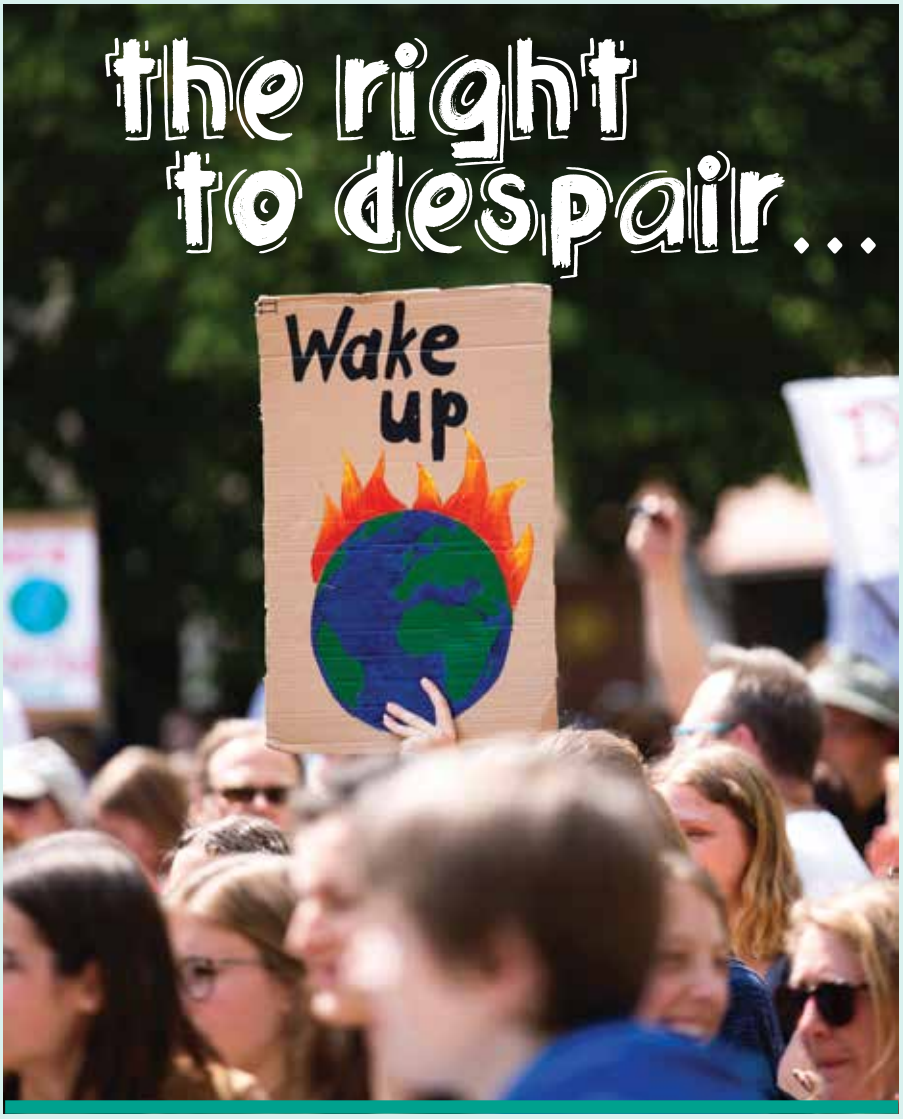
What is like Pentecost about this kind of protest is that those acting with mana whenuatanga are bringing the sacred and spiritual into our secular and commercial conversation and decision-making. As people attuned to the Spirit we, like Māori, can appreciate that the sacred belongs intimately, publicly and assertively in our lives together as a nation. We have Māori to thank for uncovering the shallowness of private religion and reminding us of the truth — that we rely on the wellbeing of the land, that sacred relationships must be honoured, that some compromises are a step too far and the consequences can damage our nation's spirit. And we can recognise God, the hospitable heart of creation, in these truths. Yes, we badly need more housing and suitable land to build it on — but at any cost?

Sometimes a prophetic disturbance stops us from taking the pragmatic option. It can buy us time to become better informed. It can offer new and imaginative scenarios to work with. It can nudge us from our certainty towards humble questioning. When changes are going to affect us we want to be involved in the consultation process from the beginning. Then, even if the final outcome isn't exactly what we wanted, we'll be able to see how it was shaped by our participation.

We thank all our contributors for sharing their wisdom, research, experience, faith, imagination, art and craft in this 240th issue. They offer us new ways of thinking of ourselves as people of the Treaty and of participating in processes of consultation that affect our national and church lives.

And, as is our custom, our last words are a blessing.

the right to despair...



Cheap criticism of the school strikes for global justice and the largely young members of Extinction Rebellion forgets one thing: it's the very future of these young people that is at stake. Their day-to-day environment in school or tertiary education is one of constant learning and unlearning. They don't have the luxury of sitting in their favourite chair endlessly rehearsing comfortable prejudices — *Stammtisch* strategists, as the Germans call them. These young people have got it. It's they who will have to live with the disintegration of civilised life (lethal heat) that our generation seems bent on ensuring.

It's because of us that they are in despair. We adults have the leverage, the handle on power, the influence, the vote, but our short-term, philistine perspectives steadily deny the young any hope of a half-decent future. We continue to assume entitlement to our four-wheel drives, our overseas trips, our upgraded bathrooms. We have earned it, haven't we?

So one key component of society today is a full-blooded intergenerational crisis, created as much by the vast engines of the multinationals as by the pathetic political leadership on the international scene. We roar forward as if there is no tomorrow. And, like Henry Ford, we know all history is bunk. Nothing exists beyond the satisfactions of the moment.

So thank God New Zealand begs to differ. Here we do seem to have grasped that times are changing. Sustainability is less of a slogan and is steadily becoming a programme. We are getting cycleways in place. The trouble, though, is that all this is an incremental creep. Unfortunately, as last week's Breakthrough Report from Australia made clear, this won't hack it. A total gear-change is required.

We desperately need to catch the infection of despair from the young. Despair is unfashionable, universally seen as the prerogative of the weak-minded. And it can, of course, be incredibly dangerous. In the hands of demagogues like Duterte and Farage it drives good people to absurdity and inhumanity and worse. Without a whiff of despair, however, we never get fundamental change.

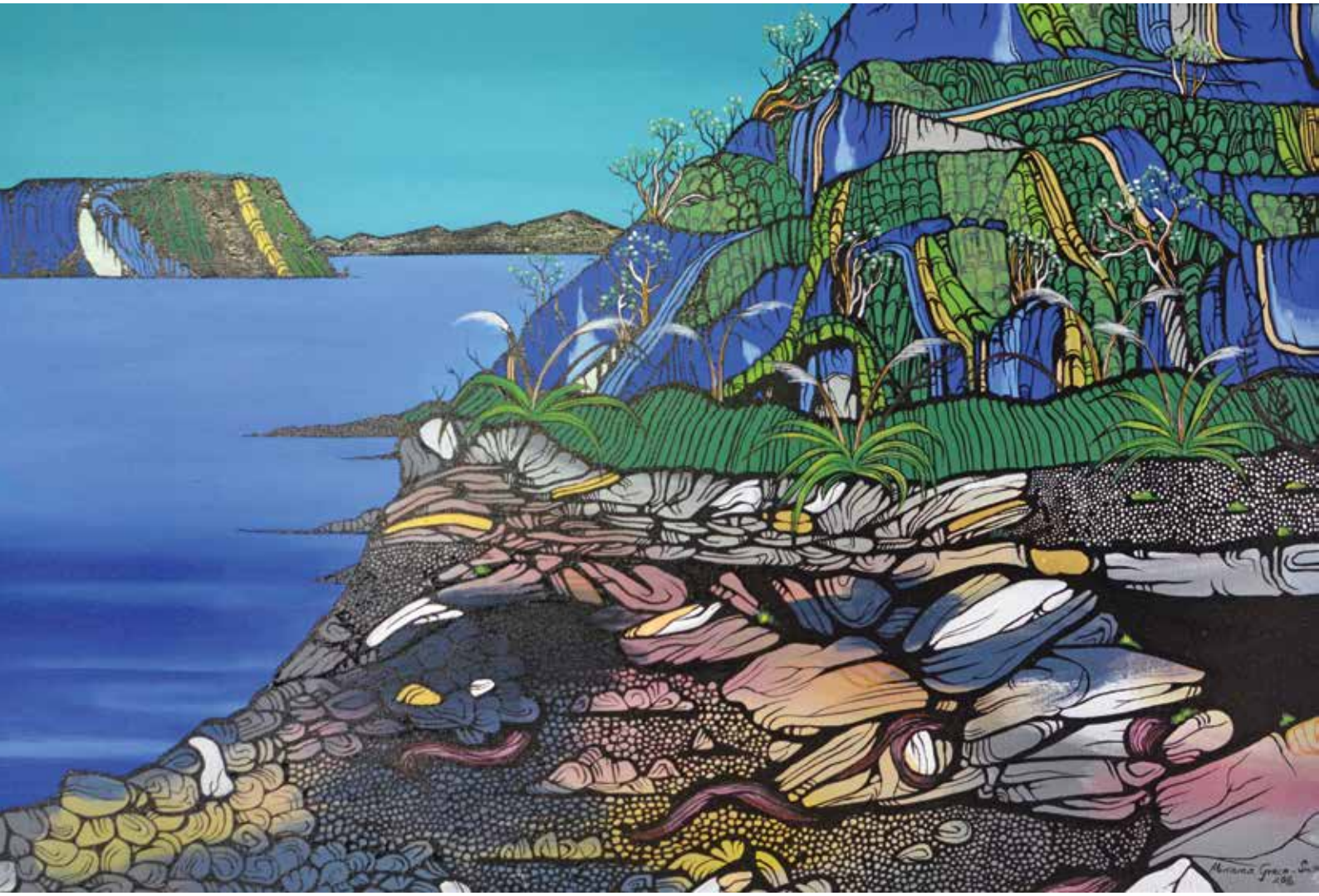
The long line of Hebrew prophets knew this. In the 1980s Peace Movement, which changed the face of New Zealand forever, the dire warnings of Helen Caldicott and the despair workshops of Joanna Macy were fundamental to the success.

We humans are subtle and intransigent beasts. To transform our incremental creep towards sustainability into a genuine turnaround there is no way around the bitter taste of despair. It is the flip side to any genuine hope, as every profound religious or cultural thinker knows. Naturally we are all conservatives, hanging on to the devil we know. Smart-arsed cynicism then armours us against believing that anything can ever change for the better.

A doable programme of sustainability will undermine much of what we take for granted at present, all these assumptions of entitlement. Just look at the TV advertisements for big, fast, expensive cars: Live your ambition! The hopes cherished by Extinction Rebellion and School Strikers menace all that. No wonder they meet with such furious opposition.

What ritual hikoi do we need to ground us again in the elemental things that alone make life worth living? How can we begin to plant metaphorical trees for coming generations? How uproot the habits of generations? How nurture the new humanity the Gospel speaks of? My hunch is that without the whiff of despair, without facing down the menace of hope, we are just whistling in the wind.

Peter Matheson is a peace activist, a Church historian, Emeritus Professor of Knox Theological College, Dunedin and author.



WE ARE *Tangata Tiriti*

MANUEL BEAZLEY **explains our relationship to the Treaty of Waitangi and encourages us in our rights and responsibilities as people of this land, Aotearoa New Zealand.**

Biculturalism is an important component in the studies to qualify for most professions in New Zealand. But it strikes me that very few graduates seem clear on what biculturalism actually means. For me, being bicultural means a relationship between two peoples. This relationship is based on a shared history and a commitment to a perpetual renewal of this relationship through successive generations.

The Treaty of Waitangi — Māori and Crown

In Aotearoa New Zealand, our bicultural relationship has at its heart Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Te Tiriti brought together two entities. But the two entities party to the Treaty are not Māori and Pākehā — they are Māori and the Crown, in the person of Queen Victoria as represented by Governor William Hobson. This distinction is important. It means that our bicultural relationship is not founded on race or ethnicity but on shared ideals about who we are and who we are to become.

In practical terms, as a Treaty partner the Crown represents all people who through the Crown have made Aotearoa New Zealand their home. I think of these people as tangata Tiriti – people of the Treaty. If we think of te Tiriti in this way, our bicultural relationship cannot be

about Māori and Pākehā, it must be about Māori and "me".

Relating to Te Tiriti

If tangata Tiriti see themselves as people of the Treaty they will ask such questions as: "What's my relationship with Māori?" "How much te Reo Māori can I speak?" "How much tikanga Māori do I know?" "Do I know the Māori history of where I live?" "Who is the local hapū or iwi?" "Where is the local marae?"

And, as tangata Tiriti, Māori will also have questions we must ask ourselves about our commitment to the bicultural relationship. "What is my relationship to people of other ethnicities?" "What do I know about their tikanga?" "How do I work with government agencies to provide successful outcomes for my whānau, hapū, iwi?"

But the million dollar question for all of us is: "Do I want to; am I committed?"

Tangata Whenua — People of This Land

Another aspect to our biculturalism is our sense of belonging. The saying goes: "if you're not where you are, you're nowhere." If we are to be truly bicultural in this land, we must acknowledge that all people as tangata Tiriti are in fact also, tangata whenua.

To be tangata whenua is to be a person or people of the land. The food we eat and the water we drink are from the land — provided for us from THIS land Aotearoa New Zealand. We live in THIS land as tangata whenua. It is THIS land that holds us as tangata whenua. Because we are here now, we can be nowhere else. We are tangata whenua where we are right here.

Mana Whenua — Spiritual Relationship to the Land

There is a distinction between being tangata whenua and being mana whenua. Being tangata whenua describes our physical connection to the land. Mana whenua describes our spiritual connection to the land.

Mana whenuatanga describes a special relationship to the land based on whakapapa and kaitiakitanga. For Māori, the land is an ancestor of humankind, the earth is mother. Whānau, hapū and iwi have stewardship of their ancestral lands which places certain rights and responsibilities on them.

While tangata whenuatanga can be claimed by all who live on and off the land, mana whenuatanga is reserved for those who claim whakapapa and kaitiakitanga.

This example may clarify the relationship: I am a Māori living in Otara, South Auckland and I can claim tangata whenuatanga but I cannot claim mana whenuatanga here in this part of Auckland. That honour is reserved to hapū and iwi such as Te Aki Tai, Tainui and others.

> *Our bicultural relationship stands on the foundation that we each have rights and responsibilities to each other and that this land is our common home. This is what te Tiriti O Waitangi tried to achieve for all of us.*

My ancestry comes from the Hokianga in the north of the North Island. There, I can rightfully claim to be mana whenua, because of my whānau whakapapa and kaitiakitanga in that area.

Our bicultural relationship stands on the foundation that we each have rights and responsibilities to each other and that this land is our common home. This is what te Tiriti O Waitangi tried to achieve for all of us. The fulfillment of te Tiriti cannot be left solely in the hands of politicians, or to the legislative processes of our local and national government. The fulfillment of te Tiriti lies with our desire to be tangata Tiriti and tangata whenua.

GLOSSARY

Te Tiriti o Waitangi or te Tiriti — The Treaty of Waitangi

Māori — indigenous persons of Aotearoa New Zealand

Pākehā — New Zealanders of European descent

Tangata — People

Tangata Tiriti — People of the Treaty

Te reo Māori — Māori language

Tangata whenua — People of the land

Tikanga Māori — Māori customs and protocols eg, Powhiri ritual of welcome

Whānau — Extended family

Hapū — Subtribe (several whānau make up a hapū)

Iwi — Tribe (several hapū make up a tribe)

Whakapapa — Genealogy

Mana whenua — Spiritual connection and relationship of Maori to the land because of genealogy and guardianship

Mana whenuatanga — Special spiritual relationship of Māori to ancestral land which brings rights and responsibilities

Kaitiakitanga — Wholistic and respectful stewardship and guardianship of land including landscape, vegetation, water, birds, animals, reptiles and insects, resources, atmosphere.

Painting: *Taiao 1* by Miriama Grace Smith © Used with permission www.miriamagracesmith.com

Manuel Beazley affiliates to Ngapuhi and Te Rarawa iwi of the Hokianga, Northland. He is the Pastoral Assistant at St John the Evangelist Parish, Otara, Auckland.

Learning From Experience

TUI CADIGAN shares the elements needed for whakawhiti whakaaro, a good consultation process.

Iwi Māori must surely be the most consulted people in all of Aotearoa. Generation upon generation of Māori women and men have been born into the struggle for full recognition of their rights under te Tiriti o Waitangi, following in the footsteps of tipuna who never gave up the fight for justice. When change has come it has been in tiny increments — and with a battle for each.

In an effort to address outstanding violations of te Tiriti, the Crown consulted with Māori at a series of hui. One outcome of these hui was that Crown entities became legally required to "consult" Iwi around health, education, environment and other key issues that affect Māori. Unfortunately, this consultation is not always done, and rarely done well.

I worked for three years as Kaiwhakahaere of Kati Mahaki Ki Makaawhio my Hapū Rūnanga; and my experience was mainly of disappointment and frustration. There has rarely been satisfaction from sharing of our expertise and historic cultural knowledge. I think most organisations operate a policy of "consult and ignore" — enough to check the box marked "consult with local Iwi" but not to measure outcomes for Māori.

It isn't only civil organisations or agencies that need to up their game in this area of consultation in the relationship with Tangata Whenua. I am Katorika from birth and a member of Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy for 30 years — and their relationships with Māori would struggle under the spotlight of a Treaty audit. It is often assumed that the adoption of key ancient cultural rituals, such as powhiri and mihi whakatau, is a sign of progress, but violations are only compounded when they are insensitively and improperly used — wherever and whenever. And silence as a response from Māori should not be read as a sign all is well.

What Then Is Consultation?

What does good consultation look like? We know the results of bad consultation: Consider the recent publicity for Oranga Tamariki around the removal of Māori babies from their whānau. We need to acknowledge that there is a deep- seated reluctance to accept that Māori resources are geared to deal with these issues. This has resulted in poor performance from agencies, and it is Māori tamariki and whānau who suffer the consequences.

I have been involved with Te Rūnanga o Te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa for the 30 years in one capacity or another. I am now Te Kaiwhakahaere/ facilitator of our hui as a consultative group appointed by Te Huinga o nga Pīhopa Katorika o Aotearoa New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC). In our hui we discuss the needs, hopes and aspirations of Katorika Māori within the Hāhi/Church.

We are a mixture of kaumatua, wahine, and tane from across the six diocese with an appointed Pihopa in attendance. We have been focused on an ongoing dialogue, "Being Māori — Being Katorika" for several years — both strands are critical to our identity.

There is a mutual respect that exists when we meet and our whole relationship is about consultation and advice. At times NZCBC ask for our advice on a specific matter and at other times we raise a concern regarding an aspect of pastoral care for our people. We don't always agree but in an atmosphere of mutual respect and prayer we continue to dialogue with hope.

We draw strength from the knowledge that the Catholic Church came to Aotearoa originally for Māori. And we are aware that we have whakapapa within the Hāhi and we are committed to the process as an advisory body. We do not have the power to determine direction but

we do have the best grasp of Māori pastoral needs and we can shine a light on that for the NZCBC to act upon.

We are the group that reflects the Māori perspective as we have both wahine and tane in our group and a diverse tribal membership.This balance of views and experience enhances our discussions.

Get People Engaged at the Start

The time to engage with the stakeholders/Iwi/parish/Crown is at the very start of the process. I emphasise this as a kaumatua of Poutini Kai Tahu descent with considerable experience in consultative processes with multiple organisations over many years.
If engagement starts down the track after a plan has been agreed, when the finance people have determined what resources will be allocated and what the final outcome needs to be, it is an exercise in futility.

Those involved need to know that their opinions are valued — and that even if their ideas aren't adopted in the end, they weren't ruled out before they were heard.

In my opinion, fear and power are two key factors that hinder good consultation.

The Right Intention

The right wording is crucial. When a document uses expressions like "this is a proposal for the future direction of this organisation", I know immediately that considerable work has already happened to set the direction before any engagement with the broader group of stakeholders, including Iwi, takes place.

The vital missing ingredients are words such as "draft" or "discussion paper" — words like these indicate that there is openness to other points of view and proposals or amendments.

The paper that sets out to confirm what a small group has put together and wants rubber stamped by the masses is flawed and lacking in integrity of intention.

The desire of the consultation must be to engage as many as possible of those who will be affected by any change.

A good Māori process encourages everyone to give their thoughts, however bizarre they may seem. Shutting people down only builds frustration, — and frustrated people eventually boil over into anger, or — worse — disengage altogether.

A Good Facilitator

Also vital is a good facilitator. A good facilitator is not indoctrinated to any particular point of view. In my experience very few facilitators have the skill to carry that off without showing a glaring bias.

In the professional era the facilitator and those who called the group together for consultation need to ask themselves one question: What do I have to fear from an open process? Those who opt for an open, inclusive process have the greatest chance for success.

> *The time to engage with the stakeholders is at the very start of the consultation process. If engagement starts down the track after a plan has been agreed, resources allocated and what the final outcome needs to be, it is an exercise in futility.*

It is impossible to please everyone, but compromise is a sign of courage and willingness to risk. Whoever finds themselves in a position of power in a consultation process needs to tread softly to avoid being seen as abusing this power.

Careful Preparation

Preparing is also important — the gathering of balanced opinions and knowing the pros and cons. Do not fear difference or the unknown. And remember, it takes courage to hear the breadth of opinion within the gathered community. But knowing as much as possible about what the group thinks is an advantage.

Ingredients of Good Consulting

After many years participating in consultative processes, I have learned the essential elements for success.

There must be a proposed plan to begin discussions. Prayer as part of any discernment is vital. Those instigating the consultation need to share their information with stakeholders — last minute suprises must be avoided.

The facilitator must be professional and independent from the proposing group.

Documentation needs to be written in plain and unambiguous language.

There must be sufficient time in the process — all who want to contribute orally or in writing need to have the opportunity. Allowing time for all to be heard will bear fruit when it is time to make a decision. We invite all to come to the table with openness, courage, hope — and the knowledge that a compromise may be the best outcome.

And stay positive: despite the best intentions it may not go the way we hoped.

And remember that the last word is never really the last word! Māori know this better than anyone — we've been dealing with the aftermath of the "last word" of Te Tiriti o Waitangi since 7 February 1840 — the day after Trititi was signed.

GLOSSARY

Kaumātua — Persons of status within whānau

Wāhine — Women

Tāne — Men

Pīhopa — Bishop

Katorika — Catholic

Hāhi Katorika — Catholic Church

Rūnanga — Assembly

Oranga Tamariki — NZ Government Ministry for Children

Tamariki — Children

Painting: *Tui 4* by Reina Cottier ©
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www.facebook.com/reinacottierart

Tui Cadigan affiliates to te Hāpu o Kati Mahaki ki Makaawhio and is of Poutini Kai Tahu descent. She is a member of Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa — Sisters of Mercy.

"Whakarongo ake au
Ki te tangi a te manu
E rere runga rawa e
Tui, tui, tui, tuia
Tuia i runga
Tuia i raro Tuia i roto
Tuia i waho
Tui, tui, tuia
Kia rongo te ao
Kia rongo te pö
Tui, tui, tuia

I listen I listen,
where up high a bird flies
Its cry rings out
Sew, stitch, bind it together
From above
From below
From within
From outside
Sew and bind it together
During the day
and the night
Sew, stitch, bind it together"

Participating with Understanding and Respect

RICHARD KERR-BELL **reflects on three aspects of consultation that will involve us in our bicultural heritage.**

I believe that all of our learning and understanding of another culture adds to our ability to listen and understand better. It does not make us experts nor does it give us a shared experience of the story of another but it can give us insight into the value of difference.

The main point of biculturalism in Aotearoa is that there are two parties. From the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, they are Māori and everyone else represented by the British Crown. Understanding this provides a context for bicultural relationships and consultation.

As indigenous peoples organised in whānau, hapū and iwi, we have mostly been able to retain the historical traditions and practices of our ancestors and their language, despite colonisation and legislation directly and indirectly designed to remove these. They have become a gift for all people in the bicultural relationship. They ground us all in the land, on the land with people who are of the land binding us together in Aotearoa.

Tihewa mauri ora!

Working with Whānau

Several examples come to mind when I reflect on my own bicultural relationships in everyday life. I'm often called on to lead rituals and explain a deeper meaning in our connections with the land.

I was asked to do a whakawātea, or clearing of the house, for family friends. The family were descendants of Catholic immigrants from Europe who had married into Kai Tahu Whakapapa. They described the impact an area of the house was having on whoever occupied a particular room — the person experienced becoming depressed and having an emptiness about them. They'd also noticed that their horses became disruptive when they came near that part of the house.

So they called and I came. I too became aware that one of the rooms and the adjoining space felt harmful and oppressive. As I moved about the home and immediate property, I felt that some atrocity had occurred and those who had suffered remained trapped in their trauma in some way.

In the ritual we acknowledged the

pain, injustice and the lives affected. The family later communicated that they now experienced a calm, a new peace and were all able to move on from whatever had affected them. This is an example of bicultural relationships — a mutual respect and understanding of the gifts each brings.

I have been called many times to lead, advise or participate with whānau in processes that are important in their lives. These include blessing of a new house, removing or clearing a space of negative spirits or energy and attending an area where a death has occurred.

Consulting with Groups

A critical element of community work is to take an open mind and heart into the meeting or conversation. Each person brings a different perspective, priorities and for some, a different way of meaning-making in the world. So openness is vital to ensure each person, whānau, or group feels and trusts they can participate equally. The last thing we want is people to feel that they are not heard or valued.

Consultation requires patience, a preparedness to listen to the collective intention, to clarify who the decision-maker(s) will be, as well as the values that will underpin the decisions. Clarity around the process is the starting point.

And it is vitally important to bring our authentic selves to the process. Nothing is more destructive than a lack of congruence between what we feel and our words. We all need to be able to respect and trust the truth. And as we discuss with one another, we need to listen for possibilities on which we can agree — so we can find a pathway together.

I cannot stress enough — do not call a process consultation if the decisions presented are not open to amendment. It is essential that the key stakeholders or advisors are included at the very start of a project and all the way through.

Accountability, Reciprocity, Participation

I've found three principles are essential for consultation.

First is accountability to those we are working for and with, to their whanau and community.

Second is reciprocity: if we are not giving anything back materially, we need at least to be present and give our best to the process – even to preparing the kai.

And third is participation by making suggestions and working in such a way that is inclusive of everyone concerned.

GLOSSARY

Mihi whakatau — arbitrations

Tangihanga — funerals

Karakia — prayer

Whakawātea —clearing of the house

Tikanga Māori — customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context

Kapa Haka — Māori cultural performing group

Te Reo Māori — Māori language

Tangaroa — ancestor with influence over the sea and fish

Tane — ancestor with influence over the forests

Papatūanuku — Earth mother

Tikanga in the Community

I'm often asked to lead mihi whakatau, tangihanga, karakia, weddings and whakawātea in the community. For many people these are first experiences of tikanga Māori.

For example, recently I was invited to lead the ritual that acknowledged, blessed and cleared from negative influences a newly renovated office space for an accounting and advisory firm in the city. The invitation to do the blessing at the opening came through my football team manager. The firm had some Māori staff and a past partner was of Kai Tahu descent, so they recognised the opening as a spiritual event and not just business as usual.

On another occasion I supported my wife and students in a ritual around the preparations of a Catholic college kapa haka group. My niece, who works in the college, gave the welcome and introduction. I then explained the process and the reasons for it and gave a brief translation of the karakia I would use. I prayed in te reo Māori, starting by acknowledging the beginning of all things, God and Tangaroa. Then I prayed a Trinitarian blessing upon the water we used for the clearing. I mihi to Tane in the materials they would use and Papatūanuku upon which we stood.

We moved around the space clearing anything negative and retaining all that was loving, creative and life-giving. We acknowledged those who first walked on the land, the mana of Kai Tahu Whānau whānui (wider Kai Tahu iwi), the ancestors of the settlers and the many who have since worked or travelled on or over the ground we were standing on.

Then we gave thanks for the gifts passed down to the young performers and their use of them to uplift all people of Aotearoa. The kapa haka group sang before a karakia on the kai which we all ate enthusiastically, especially the children.

I realised that for most of these young people it was their first participation in tikanga of the land. Through their kapa haka group they will grow in understanding and participate more in the future.

Whakamutunga — Last Thoughts

Our hope for good bicultural relationships lies in the many communities, marriages, children and opportunities in our whānau, communities, Churches and society. Faith invites us into bicultural thriving and by speaking, listening and being authentic we will grow in understanding and appreciating each other more. I te kore ki te po ki te ao marama — from the nothingness to the night to the full light of day.

Painting: *Ancestral Guardians*
by Darcy Nicholas © Used with permission
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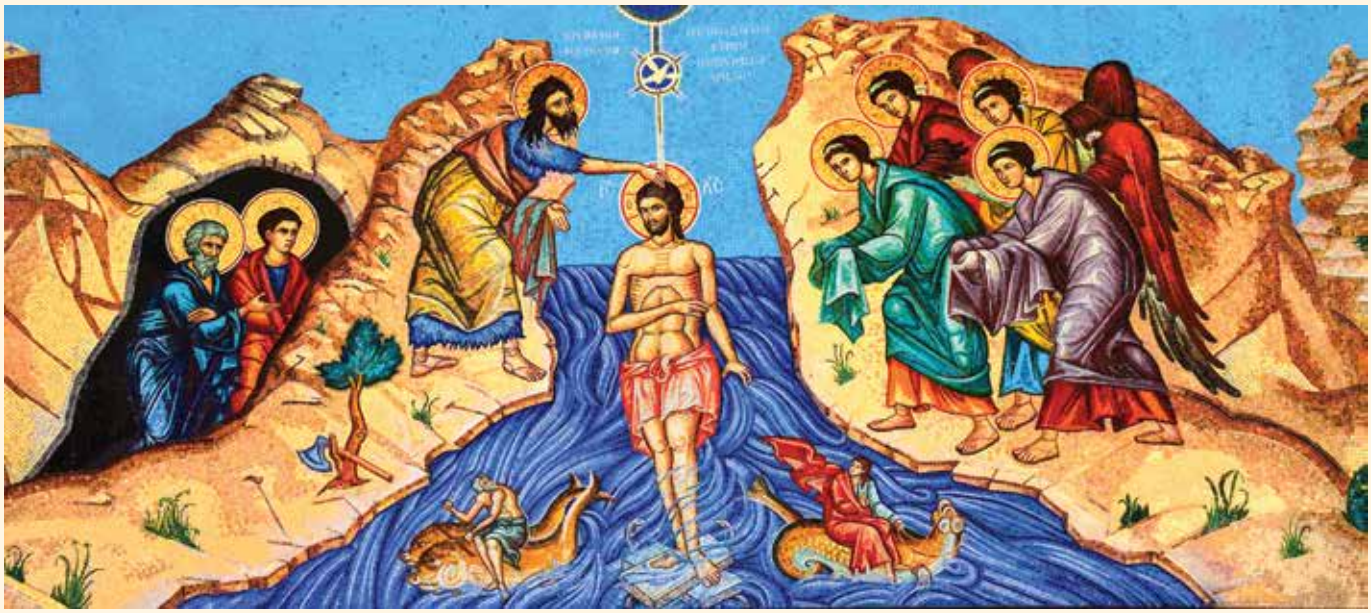
Richard Kerr-Bell is the Kaihautu Wairua/Mission administrator for the Sisters of Mercy Incorporated Ministries. He's been involved in education for over 23 years.

MINISTRIES IN THE COMMUNITY

Ministry belongs to all the baptised, writes THOMAS O'LOUGHLIN, and reclaiming that understanding might change the need to close parishes.

Meet any group of Catholics today and within minutes someone will mention that their diocese or local area is undergoing a "re-organisation": parishes are being combined; the ordained ministers being spread more thinly around communities, and the access to gathering for Eucharistic activity being curtailed.

The process is sometimes given an elegant name but this does not hide the reality that it is driven by two key factors: fewer and ageing priests.



Moreover, there is little prospect that this situation, even with the addition of priests from India or the Philippines, will change any time soon.

In answer to this, we need to reflect on the basics of ministry and not merely imagine that what has been the paradigm of ministry in the Catholic Church since the early 17th century is either set in stone or in any way ideal. Rather than being an ideal it was instead a pragmatic response to the Reformation which, in terms of Trent's vision of "the priesthood", was perceived as an officer-led rebellion that was to be prevented from recurring.

Liturgical Ministry

Every religion and Christian denomination has religious leaders who take the leading roles at its rituals. Moreover, ritual requires expertise, and the amount of expertise required is usually a direct function of the length of the group's remembered tradition. But there is a binary model at work here: a sole minister or small ministry-group which acts, leads and preaches/speaks/teaches on one side and, opposite them, a much larger group that attends/listens/and receives ministry. We see this model in a nutshell in the statement: "the clergy administer the sacraments".

This is a valuable and widely appreciated model because it fits well beside other expert service providers in society, such as medics providing healthcare to the rest of the community, and so full-time "ministers of religion" are aligned by society, and often by themselves, with those other experts. Because society needs a "chaplaincy" service, we have a justification for the clergy and their liturgical ministry within society.

Discipleship as Community Service

In stark contrast to such highly structured notions of ministry or priesthoods, Jesus was not a Levite; his ministry barely engaged with the formal religious expert systems, and when those structures are recalled — eg, Luke 10:31-32; John 4:21 — they are the objects of criticism or presented as transient.

Moreover, while Jesus was presented as appointing messengers/preachers (apostles), there is no suggestion that these were thought of as ritual experts. And, while leaders emerged in the various early churches with a variety of names it took generations for those patterns to be harmonised between communities and then systematised into authority structures.

There is no suggestion in the first-century documents that leadership at the two key community events, Baptism and Eucharist, was restricted in any way or the preserve of those who were community leaders, much less a specially authorised group. The link between (a) leadership of the community and (b) presidency at the Eucharistic meal would not be forged until the third century, and only later again would "the history of its institution" by Jesus be constructed.

The Church within Society

It has long been an illusion of the various Christian denominations that a study of history could provide either a blueprint for ministry or a conclusive answer to issues relating to ministry that have arisen in later situations.

Not only does this quest fall victim to the anachronism inherent in all appeals to a perfect original moment,

but it assumes that ministry as it later developed was not itself the outcome of multiple, often conflicting, forces in particular societies, as well as adaptations by Christians to well-known inherited religious structures.

So, for example, the clerical system, within which was/is located liturgical ministry, for much of Christian history related originally to the political needs of the Church as a public body within the Roman Empire. Given that there was no "original" plan for liturgical ministry in the Church and, as a result of centuries of disputes, there are many conflicting views about what constitutes someone within ministry, so it is quite impossible to produce a systematic basis for liturgical ministry.

However, given that ministry occurs and is needed, we can set out some criteria that can help individuals and communities to develop a pragmatic theology of liturgical ministry.

Criteria for Ministry — Baptism

Every specific ministry is a particular variation of the ministry of all the baptised, and in Baptism there is a radical equality: "there is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

This radical equality is a characteristic of the new creation brought about in Christ; therefore, any subsequent distinctions, such that particular ministries are not potentially open to every baptised person, are tantamount to a defective theology of Baptism by which all ministry is brought into being.

So, by making further demands for "signs" of particular divine election as indications of suitability for ministry fly in the face of the incarnational dispensation seen in Baptism.

Likewise, regulations that restrict ministry to particular states of life — demanding celibacy as a condition for priesthood — have to be seen as an undue concern with the status of certain ministries implying that Baptism is merely some basic entry requirement for "Christianity" rather than that which creates the new person who can minister, and in that new creation no such distinctions exist.

Similarly, the notion that women, as such, can be excluded from ministry on the basis of some pragmatic historical appeal, fails to take account of the fundamental role of Baptism in all Christian existence and action.

Community Ministry

The second criterion is that we must also respect the awareness that all action and ministry by Christians is Christ-ian in nature.

Christians form a people, a priestly people. We conceive of worship on the basis that our priest has come to us and is with us as a community.Therefore, where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, he is with them (Mt 18:20), and so their actions together — such as celebrating a meal — take place in presence of the Father, because Christ, present among us, is always our High Priest. This theological vision has important implications for individual Christians who find themselves performing specific acts, ministries, within the Church. Within Christianity, the ministry is that of the whole community.

Every specific ministry is a particular variation of the ministry of all the baptised, and in Baptism there is a radical equality.

Language and Priestly Ministry

It is also worth remembering that language plays us false in understanding "priestly ministry" in particular. The Old Testament *cohen* (priest), performed special tasks on behalf of the rest of Israel. This was rendered in the Septuagint by the word *hiereus* — a word commonly used for pagan temple officials — and then, later, into Latin by *sacerdos*. The early Christians did not use these words for their leaders: *hiereus/sacerdos* belonged to Jesus alone in the heavenly temple. Christian leaders were designated by their relation to the community: as the one who oversaw, led or served it.

Our word "priest" is etymologically from the word "presbyter" but conceptually it relates to the sacerdotal functions. Once this had occurred they had to ask what made them different and what special religious quality did they have that others did not possess: the answer came with the notion of a power "to consecrate", and then this power (itself the subject of rhetorical inflation) became the basis of "ontological difference" between them and "ordinary Christians".

After more than 1,000 years of these confusions in Christianity, it is very hard for many who see themselves as "ministers" in a church to break free of this baggage. Tradition can be like a great oil tanker turning at sea: it takes a long time to overcome inertia, and for the ship to answer the helm!

Where Do We Start?

In every community there are those who have the skills that have brought that group together and given it an identity.

The task is to recognise these actual ministers and to facilitate them to make that ministry more effective and fruitful. Some will have the gifts of evangelising and welcoming, others the skills of leading in prayer and the offering of the thanksgiving sacrifice of praise, others the gifts of teaching, others of reconciling, others for the mission of each community to the building up of the kingdom of justice and peace, and some will have management skills. None is greater and none is less!

We need to heed Paul's advice to the Church in Corinth (1 Cor 12:4-13) around 58 CE as he presents ministry as the working out of the presence of the Spirit in the assembly.

If his statements reverberated through our discussions today we might need to talk less about "closing churches" and "combining parishes" and move on to the more fruitful task of discovering the wealth of vocations that is all around us. But there is only one certainty: the future will not be like the past; and when the present seeks to recede into its past, it is untrue to its own moment.

Thomas O'Loughlin is Professor of Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham.

Discuss, Listen, Trust

COLIN MACLEOD **outlines the processes of consultation a Dunedin pastoral area engaged in before deciding to form a new parish.**

I believe one of the most challenging Gospel passages is when Jesus tells Simon to "put out into the deep" (Luke 5:4). I see it as a confronting metaphor of change. The security associated with being on familiar, solid ground, or at least close to the shore, is replaced by an uncharted "unknown". Yet, like it or not, we are called to the deep. This is my reflection on our putting out into the deep — a journey from a single parish to joining with one other and then combining four parishes into one new parish.

The First Shock

Our parish lost its resident priest in 2003 and our new priest announced our "engagement" — his word — with the adjoining parish in which he lived. He would continue living in his presbytery and ours was to be rented out. We were not happy about this, but in Bob Dylan's words we felt: "The times, they are a-changing."

And the changes continued: The bulletin switched orientation from *our* "portrait" to *their* "landscape" with both parish names in the header. That was a major issue — with angst and actual tears. We had lost our identity! I later heard from the other parish that most of their information didn't seem to make it into the bulletin. They felt as hard done-by as we did!

The two parish councils came together for their first meeting in 2004, and as well as covering the nuts'n'bolts, spent time talking about how things felt. Our priest described the extra workload, others the different state of finances, the benefit of one "plant" over the other, the presence or absence of a Catholic school, the change in Mass times and the grief or blessing of having a resident priest. The conversation was cyclic, often returning to the same points, meeting an impasse and then moving on. But it was early "dialogue" and through it we began to get to know one another.

Both parish councils agreed that we were not the parish. We needed to support others in coming to terms with the engagement too. We organised a combined "social" — a dance in the other parish's church. Around 120 people came along, talked, and danced to a band made up

of parishoners from both sides. We had a raffle and a pot-luck supper. It was brilliant!

More Changes

Then our priest retired which caused bigger changes. Our new parish priest lived way over in another parish about 4.5km away. His ministry now included our two parishes and two other parishes besides.

Parish Councils Take the Lead

Quite quickly our parish councils decided to be proactive and co-operative rather than resistant. Although we believed that "the church is the community, not the buildings" in practice that was difficult for us all. Each parish held to their own buildings — and we didn't really think about those of the other parishes. Renovating, selling and demolishing came later.

For two years we held combined meetings with representatives of the four parish councils rotating to a different parish each month. The host parish prepared the agenda and meeting summaries and chaired the meeting.

And the individual parish councils continued to meet to cover the day-to-day needs of their local communities. Then, to help our priest, we decided to all meet at his large presbytery, in different rooms on the same night, and come together at the end. Eventually, this became a formal pastoral area council.

Looking Back — What Helped?

Looking back now I can see several things that helped us change.

Coming Together

First we consciously kept returning to the centrality of our shared faith in Jesus Christ. We created opportunities to get to know one another — socials, combined Masses, picnics, meetings and we introduced a four-week small group programme, Crossroads, to take place in people's homes across the parishes.

Speaking, Listening, Informing

Once we'd acknowledged that change was necessary, we chose to look for a way to be "more than we were" rather than less. We made an effort to hear one another's "voice". For example, we had some meetings immediately after Mass in the church, where we broke into small groups and addressed specific questions like: "What is your greatest fear about this change?" "What might be better in this future?" We wrote down and considered what people said.

We listened to those who were hurting and angry and endeavoured to hear their wisdom to help map the path ahead.

We were honest about what was happening. We published summaries of meeting minutes in the bulletin and shared information about the issues, the reasons and decisions being made.

Once we'd acknowledged that change was necessary, we chose to look for a way to be "more than we were" rather than less. We made an effort to hear one another's "voice".

Building Mutual Trust

The bishop and priests shared the journey but let the pastoral-area council lead the process. Our priests didn't claim to know the destination any more than we did. There was a high level of trust.

Talking Together at Home

It was perhaps *Crossroads*, a four-week, home-based discussion programme we designed based around the Gospels, which helped us come to know one another, accept the changes and begin creating a new combined parish together. Each week had a different theme — the experience of loss; a place to begin; difficulty and conflict; creating the future.

We mixed up participants so that each group had people from the four parishes. Although we didn't record the conversations, much of our emerging understanding flowed from these groups. We weren't very successful in getting young people along, but then they also said combining parishes just wasn't a problem for them.

At the end of the four weeks we celebrated with a Youth-Mass, a well attended social at the local Rugby Club and a three session "mission" on Catholic spirituality and theology. Finally the whole pastoral area gathered for Mass in the Catholic high-school auditorium, followed by a huge shared lunch and a one-hour meeting where almost everyone voted to formally ask to become "one parish".

Property Decisions

After that decision we had to deal with the practicalities: renovating a community-friendly pastoral centre; refurbishing St Patrick's basilica; demolishing or selling the other three churches; building sacred spaces for the Catholic schools that no longer had a church. It all took much longer than we had anticipated, but we knew where we were heading and why.

Naming Ourselves

As the basilica renovations drew near completion we asked people to suggest names for our new parish. We then voted and adopted Mercy Parish – Whānau Aroha as our name.

During the process, sadly, we lost some good people. But so many feel a sense of belonging to Mercy Parish because of the journey we shared in getting there. There's still lots we are working on.

Looking back I can see that we were comfortable near the shore, and although we were forced out into the deep, I feel that in the deep we learnt to put down our nets and appreciate the catch — a new unity in faith.

Painting: ***Under One Roof*** by Elenita Dumlao © Used with permission www.bestofdavao.com.ph

Colin MacLeod lives in Dunedin. He is director of the National Centre for Religious Studies.

FAITH
TAKING ROOT IN NEW SOIL

JUDITH BALARES SALAMAT **shares how her faith has grown through the relationships and opportunities she has had in Aotearoa.**

"I grew up in a devoutly Catholic family. I still remember the time when my siblings and I would take turns in leading the family rosary before dinnertime. I grew up seeing my mother reciting novenas at nighttime or early morning and myself joining her sometimes."

I can vividly remember those six-o'clock family rituals in the Philippines when I was five years old. I reflect now on how those experiences affected me and my family, uprooted from the Philippines eight years ago and learning to be at home in New Zealand.

Moving to New Zealand wasn't my first experience of living overseas. I had lived (and studied) in Australia for two years and visited and tasted the cultural flavours of other countries as a part of my work and academic experiences. But it is only here in New Zealand that I have lived as a resident in an adoptive country.

Looking back, I can describe my social, cultural and religious community in very different terms from how I would have 30 or so years ago. Then, I lived in a totally Filipino community in my native city and barangay — now I have a Church community not only comprising some of my compatriots but also people of many other ethnicities. We come together with our different skin colours, languages, foods, occupations, preoccupations and religious and spiritual backgrounds. As a community, we are like growing seeds — we have the promise of flourishing.

Growing and Transplanting Faith

I remember the family prayer times when I was little. We had good memories to be able to recite those long prayers. As I got older, I started to focus on Bible-based prayers and biblical passages. I led spontaneous prayers on special occasions, read the Bible with a small group and

made Bible reading and reflection an everyday practice.

I continued this focus in New Zealand and perhaps by fate, also broadened it. I joined a Church community and participated in the events and activities — a series of recollections, regular cell-group Bible studies and sharing, outreach programmes and informal outreach experiences with Filipino and other migrants. I've realised that I belonged (and still do) to a Catholic community of many cultures.

In the Philippines, I frowned upon Bible study groups as I thought of them as gossipy and critical. But in New Zealand, I feel differently. It may be because God seems so much closer now that I live far from the rest of my extended family, out of my comfort zone and with all the experiences and pain of separation, anxiety, inadequacy, together with the adjustments to the climate, people and environment. This separation and adaptation make daily life seem like a spiritual experience — "living-out God's way" every day.

We have been introduced to Māori prayers and rituals. These practices signal that the Church values our bicultural context and helps new migrants to New Zealand to engage with Māori.

Growing New Relationships

As I mature spiritually, I become more focused on the things that provide me with a stronger relationship with God. I find I am less focused on doctrine and more interested in being myself with God. I think of faith as "holding on to what we hope for, being certain of what we cannot see" (Hebrews 11:1).

Now, I think of my spirituality in two ways: first, my relationship with God is nourished by rituals such as the daily family Bible reflections and prayer sessions, and our cell-group sharings; and second, my relationship to a bigger community of believers and others. This means that I also perform my work with spiritual values and a sense of mission. I think of my work as ministry. It is comforting to know that my fellow group mates understand and also practise what I believe in. And at the end of each day, I think back to see how my work, the way I've related to people, and the attitude towards my role, have pleased God and have been for God.

We found that the Church also honours the other cultures in this country. For example, we've often had the Prayers of the Faithful read by representatives of the ethnicities in our community. This practice is a welcoming and inclusive gesture and reminds us all that the Church is made up of people of many different cultural backgrounds.

As I become more at home here, I realise I'm focusing more on building relationships — with God, with family, with community. It is through these relationships that I find meaning in daily life here. Faith and family have always been central to my life, but now, as a migrant/adoptive child of New Zealand, they also provide an unbroken link to my past — I am in a different place and a different culture, but my faith and my family remain constant.

Loss — A Gainful Experience

From my migrant perspective, my understanding of faith is about believing in the unknown and calmly listening to that "voice in the wilderness". I'm like those others who've experienced loss — a job, a family member, or failing a test. We've all suffered loss. However, we triumph when we believe that although we suffer loss, and always will, our loss is experienced within a framework of divine love — of God.

Introduction to Māori

Just as a gardener doesn't know if the seeds will germinate and flourish, I didn't know what was in store for me and my family when we came to New Zealand. I have found, appreciated and absorbed some practices here in New Zealand that have helped our family to be at home here.

One is our contact with Māori mainly through the liturgy. We have been introduced to Māori prayers and rituals — for example, a pōwhiri as the introductory rite of Eucharist. We've had the reading first in te reo Māori then in English, we've sung the hymns in Māori.

These practices signal that the Church values our bicultural context and helps new migrants to New Zealand to engage with Māori.

Nourishment of Many Cultures

My faith has grown in New Zealand. My Filipino faith —my primary root — has taken its secondary roots in New Zealand soil. I feel like a transplanted plant blooming because of the prayer and nurturing of my Church community as well as many other people. I feel as if I've joined a common faith journey now where "we hold to what we hope for" as we participate in God's mission on Earth.

It's taken a while for me to understand the important emphasis on "bicultural" here because I'm one of the many cultures in New Zealand. As an immigrant, being in New Zealand is a bicultural and a cross-cultural experience. I've learned that it is by participating and working together — with Māori and other cultures — that we build community. We'll continue to respect and honour te reo Māori in the liturgy just as we'll respect and honour one another's different faith practices in community. As migrants from multiple cultures with a strong faith in Christ, we understand the "cross" as we grow together.

Judith Balares Salamat is a literacy and numeracy tutor for adult learners and primary schoolers in Kāpiti. This role contributes to her faith-journey.

Power for Life

From where do they come, these seeds of violence
In what hard ground, what barren soil are they sown
Who can be tempted to eat their bitter fruit?

Like a cancer it grows from stored resentments
Generation after generation passing on the brokenness
The pain of the oppression, the injustice, the poverty
Feeding the desire for revenge, the thirst for power.

In the misuse of intelligence,
In the abuse of human rights,
the scene in the garden is reenacted
as man competes with God for power
as he uses death in a misguided search for life.

The big violence is only the sum of all the small violences
That live in the brokenness of each of us.
It can only take root in the critical thoughts of the mind
In the self deprecating feelings of the heart.

But, hope, to recall "the darkness cannot overcome the light"
Peace is possible with the healing of hearts
The positive energy healing unleashes
Transforms the energy of violence into power for peace for life.

— Barbara Cameron

Our Shared History

New Zealanders, barely clear of the centenary of the First World War, find themselves in rougher waters with another debate about our national past.

2019 marks the 250th anniversary of the arrival of Captain Cook at Tūranganui-a-Kiwa/Poverty Bay in October 1769.

Although Abel Tasman had returned to Dutch authorities in 1643 with tales of the "moordenaers" (murderers) of "Nova Zeelandia", 1769 marked the first encounter between Europeans and tangata whenua. Like many such meetings of worlds, this encounter was marred by misunderstanding and violence. The *Endeavour* crew responded to perceived threats of violence with musket-fire, killing at least eight Tūranga Māori.

Cook went on to circumnavigate the North and South Islands, meeting with Māori at the Bay of Islands where, with the help of Tahitian navigator and translator Tupaia, he developed a much more fruitful relationship with tangata whenua.

The first pōwhiri accorded to Pākehā was performed. Gifts were exchanged. Cook compiled the first cartographic map of the coastline and catalogued the distinctive animal and plant life.

Reviewing our Narratives

Certainly, Cook was one of the great explorers of his age. But his voyages foreshadowed the 19th-century wave of colonisation which saw the decimation of indigenous cultures across the globe.

In recent times, we have been encouraged into one of two views of Cook, both equally reductive. Either Cook is a "syphilitic pirate" and "imperial vanguard murderer", or he is the Great White Hope and shining herald of progress.

Now, 250 years later, we have an opportunity to remember that historical narratives like the Cook encounter are constructed — put together over the years to suit particular tastes and politics.

We now have a chance to think of 1769 in a fresh way — to use the past to understand our relationships in the present and, through a particular narrative or story, shape our future.

The Government has allocated over $20 million to mark the anniversary. A flotilla of waka and other ships, including an *Endeavour* replica, will visit four of the main Cook landing sites, starting in Gisborne. Should we be dedicating time and money to the commemoration of such a seemingly divisive moment in New Zealand history?

Setting aside the narrative of "discovery" offers a richer story of cross-cultural encounters between Europeans and tangata whenua, marred by tragedy, but also exchange.

I think that to make this 250th anniversary meaningful to New Zealand — to construct the story we want to tell about ourselves as a nation — we need to unpack the three stories at stake.

The first is the story of the encounter between Cook and Māori in 1769.

The second is how that story has been told by some New Zealanders over the past 250 years.

The third is how that story could be told in the future.

Māori Story of Encounter with Cook

The Māori story of the encounter at Turanganui-a-Kiwa has too often been forgotten by historians. Encounters make demands on both sides of the cultural divide, drawing on established ways of thinking about the world and also fashioning new ones. 1769, for example, reconnected Māori with their Polynesian heritage. It also provoked reflection on who they were as "Māori" — what was ordinary — as opposed to "Pākehā", beings who came from another, external place.

Story of Cook's Place in NZ History

The controversy in 2019, however, is less about Cook the explorer, a man of his time and place, and more about the way in which his image and memory has been used at different times in New Zealand history.

Interestingly, the first monument to Cook's 1769 landing was raised in Gisborne only in 1906. The 150th anniversary in 1919 was a similarly local affair.

The excitement and pride of these commemorations located New Zealand in a grand story of British civilisation and progress.

Later, the 18th-century Cook was re-imagined in the 20th century as "the first of a Pākehā pantheon of deified ancestors" (to use James Belich's famous phrase), who augured an imperial destiny.

The statue dedicated to James Cook in Christchurch, the city in which I live and work, is a good example of this story. The handsome Carrara marble monument was commissioned in 1928 by Matthew Barnett, a self-made businessman. The Governor-General, Lord Bledisloe, unveiled the statue in 1932. Photographs of the ceremony show the monument draped in the Union Jack, bestriding Victoria Square.

Lord Bledisloe celebrated Cook's 1769 arrival as the first and foremost of "three outstanding landmarks" in the history of New Zealand, followed by the arrival of Christianity and the signing

of the Treaty of Waitangi. This story, in Bledisloe's view, would advance "the effectiveness of Empire partnership", putting Pākehā at the helm of national history and centring New Zealand's story as a British nation.

Bledisloe and his audience interpreted the meetings of 1769 through mid-20th-century ideas of race and empire. Hapū and iwi perspectives were ignored. It was, in effect, the complete inversion of what took place in the first encounter: Māori were now forgotten in what was a thoroughly imperial production, with British New Zealanders as the protagonists.

Broadening the Narrative

The collapse of the British Empire over the 1950s and 60s, however, called into question those stories that gave meaning to New Zealand British identity.

The bicentenary of Cook's landing in 1969 was markedly different from earlier imperial celebrations. A parade through the centre of Gisborne featured a giant representation of Cook's head, followed by a model of the *Endeavour*. Fireworks and religious services were also part of the celebrations. Naval visits from Britain, Australia, the United States, and Canada, and Vampire jet flybys, gave the commemoration an international flair.

The 1970 Royal Visit of Queen Elizabeth II placed the Cook anniversary in a broader discussion about New Zealand's story after the Empire. Traditional performances emphasised Māori as a "prehistory" to the arrival of a triumphant European society.

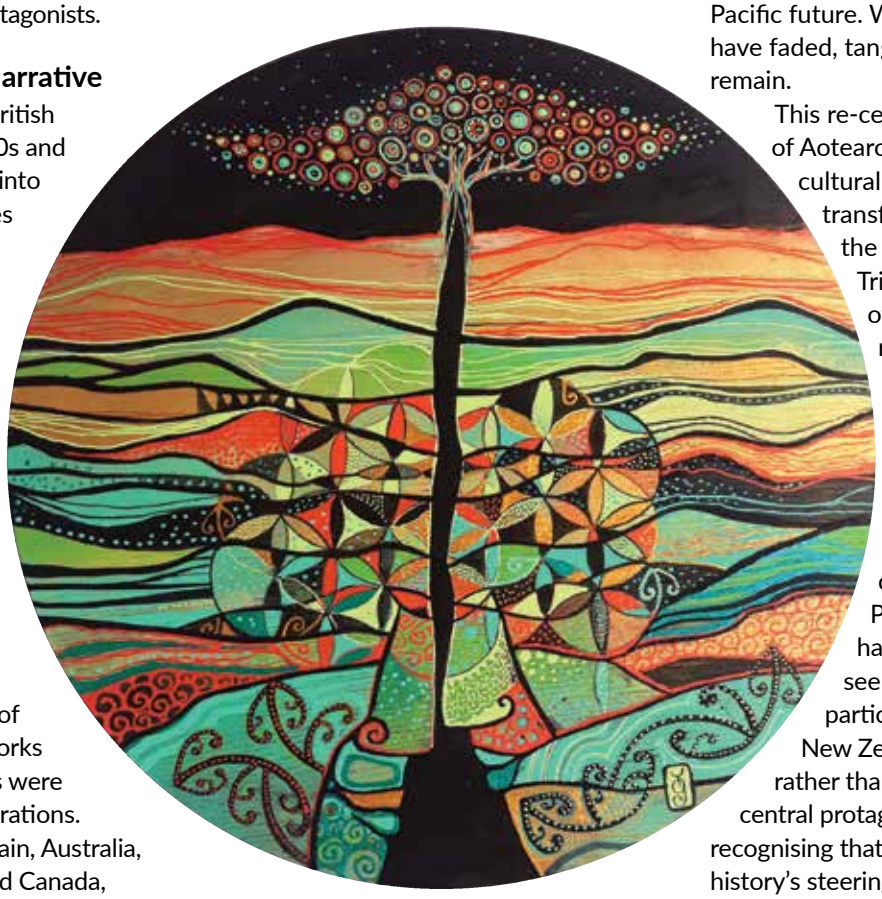
Challenge to Include Māori

National introspection, however, collided with Māori activists who focused on Cook as a symbol of a shameful colonial past and the omission of Māori voices from the history of New Zealand.

Collaboration in Telling Stories

Now we have a chance to do things differently — collaboratively. "Tuia 250 First Encounters" is a collaborative project between government and hapū and iwi. Tuia meaning "to weave or bind", is drawn from a whakataukī (proverb) and karakia (prayer) that refers to the bonds established between people when they work together. Joined with a European concept of time, the programme reflects a richer heritage.

Gisborne, with its layers of commemoration, will see a new commemorative project between local communities. Te Hā means "sharing of breath" — as in the exchange of life during a hongi. Rather than a one-sided story of triumphalist "discovery" that eschews debate, a digital platform will emphasise different stories and perspectives.



Celebrations of racial and imperial progress, as Lord Bledisloe emphasised in 1932, ring hollow for us today. So does the 1969 story of European discovery. Despite the search for a putative indigenous Pākehā identity, championed by the late Michael King, New Zealand's story is rudderless.

The 250th offers a new direction and a chance for a more truthful telling of the 1769 encounter. Setting aside the narrative of "discovery" offers a richer story of cross-cultural encounters between Europeans and tangata whenua, marred by tragedy, but also exchange. Some events will be led by iwi and hapū, who will share their accounts of Cook and their own voyages.

A Shared History Shaping our Future

Most importantly, 1769 was the beginning of our shared history. Cook represents a European episode wedged between a Māori past and a Pacific future. While imperial stories have faded, tangata whenua histories remain.

This re-centring of the story of Aotearoa is part of a wider cultural and constitutional transformation, reflected in the work of the Waitangi Tribunal; the changing of place-names; the re-evaluation of public commemorative monuments; and a greater emphasis on the national practices of mana and tikanga.

With the 2019 commemoration, Pākehā New Zealanders have a chance to see themselves as participants in Aotearoa New Zealand's deeper history, rather than burdened as its central protagonists. This means recognising that we are no longer at history's steering wheel.

This is the first, difficult step towards a truly shared story, drawing strength from the relationships and meetings of the past as we head into the future.

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Rowan Light is an historian at the University of Canterbury who specialises in the history of memory and commemoration in New Zealand.

PEACE, JUSTICE AND QUAKERS

"When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13a KJV).

Quaker witness to peace and justice comes from their understanding of continuing revelation.

From the late 1640s, the founding Quakers were part of the English radical reformation. They trusted that "Christ has come to teach his people himself" and considered the other churches of their day to be apostate and their ministers "hireling shepherds". The Spirit "the true light which lighteth every [one]" (John 1:9) was their only guiding authority. They held that even the Scriptures were to be read, not on their own authority, but "in the light of the Spirit which gave them utterance".

Over the years since, Quakers have learnt to honour the Spirit in other Christian bodies, in other faiths and in human aspirations for good. When they became involved in the historic campaigns against slavery they collaborated with other Christians.

Quaker initiatives for peace and justice has changed over the centuries, shaped by the circumstances and cultural settings of their contexts. For them decisions and actions grow from experience, and from the search for guidance in both individual inspiration and from communal discernment. This is not an easy road, and Quakers have struggled bitterly with the tension between the two.

Unity in the Spirit to Abolish Slavery

The Quaker way is to listen to one another. We come to a decision when the body, or group, is clear it has unity in the Spirit. This unity differs in quality from consensus, and in its process and outcome is different from majority decision-making. (It is similar to discernment in the Catholic Jesuit tradition.)

Quakers have wrestled, and continue to wrestle, with a perceived conflict between an individual's and the group's "inspiration". At times the group recognises it has made an error. For example, by a long, careful, sometimes fierce process Quakers learnt that they should not own slaves or use the products of slavery, they should oppose the slave trade and should campaign for the total abolition of slavery.

Unity Against Child Soldiers

The search for unity in the Spirit can flower and bear fruit. A Swiss Quaker, horrified by reports of child soldiers, began collecting and circulating news cuttings. Eventually she

brought the “concern” to her Quaker Meeting in Geneva. This body forwarded it to the Switzerland Yearly Meeting. On discernment the Yearly Meeting accepted the concern, and brought it to the next world-wide representatives' meeting of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC). Representatives united in asking the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) to take action.

As an NGO with UN consultative status, QUNO worked with other groups to canvass Government delegations. In 2000 the United Nations adopted the Optional Protocol to the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, requiring signatories not to conscript under-18s or involve them in conflict, and discouraged recruitment.

It is a good beginning but there remains more work in implementing the Protocol and involving non-Government forces in accepting it, before the goal is met.

Coming to a Pacifist Stance

The unity of peace and justice reflects the experience of the first Quakers. A number had fought for the Parliament in the English Civil War. Commitment to peace and non-violence was led both by direct inspiration — "I told them I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars" (George Fox) — and by experience — "they said they fought for the gospel. He found as much ignorance of the gospel in its real, its spiritual acceptation, and of Christ, the glad-tidings of the gospel, as he had ever met with before” (early Quaker William Dewsbury).

The Quaker way is to listen to one another. We come to a decision when the body, or group, is clear it has unity in the Spirit. This unity differs in quality from consensus, and in its process and outcome is different from majority decision-making.

Quakers subsequently have differed on how, in conscience, to resist violence and force. Are we to recognise the right of the state to force? Are we to reject warfare, but not police coercion?

During the American Civil War some Quakers fought for the North to defeat slavery. And in WWII their opposition to Nazism posed similar challenges.

During WWI young Quaker men in Aotearoa New Zealand had to decide whether to accept conscription, to appeal, to seek non-combatant service, or to refuse any military involvement. The last option, refusal, could lead to imprisonment, though detainees, as members of a peace church, could well receive a slight indulgence. John Brailsford took a stand and "helped us think first of our fellow prisoners and to refuse all concessions that were not also granted to the outlaws from society serving sentences for crimes of a different kind from ours."

Involvement in Peace Relief

A testimony against war has involved individual Quakers in peace, relief and community organisations, such as Oxfam, CORSO, and the Alternatives to Violence Project Aotearoa. Quakers have supported the League of Nations, then later the United Nations.

From the 19th century Quakers organised efforts to relieve the suffering of war and disasters, including continuing concern for refugees. This was recognised in 1947 when the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Quakers for "silent assistance from the nameless to the nameless" during and following World War II.

Quaker Conscience in Aotearoa

We stand in the footsteps of giants. Can we in Aotearoa New Zealand live up to the faithfulness of our predecessors? Do we deserve to be named alongside Quakers in Rwanda and Burundi who work for reconciliation, friendship and community-building with those who massacred their families?

It was through experience and ongoing revelation that Quakers expanded their commitment to non-violence, just as experience and conscience in the first days gave an awareness of social justice. Because they asserted religious freedom, Quakers were imprisoned and there recognised the exploitation embedded in the penal system. It included the loss of property for refusal to pay tithes, being politically suspect, deprivation, social inequality and injustice. Quaker responses to these wrongs have changed in accordance with circumstances, cultures, experience and revelation.

Quakers in Aotearoa are slowly hearing the new (but ancient) calls to eco-justice, the integrity of creation. We may admire John Woolman's assertion in 1772: "as the mind was moved on an inward principle to love God as an invisible, incomprehensible being, on the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the visible world". But to live this principle is harder.

We know humanity is despoiling Earth, and we try to avoid despair and inertia. We find ourselves caught in the contrasts: we encourage the use of public transport and surface travel, but continue national gatherings. We send representatives to overseas gatherings and invite international guests here.

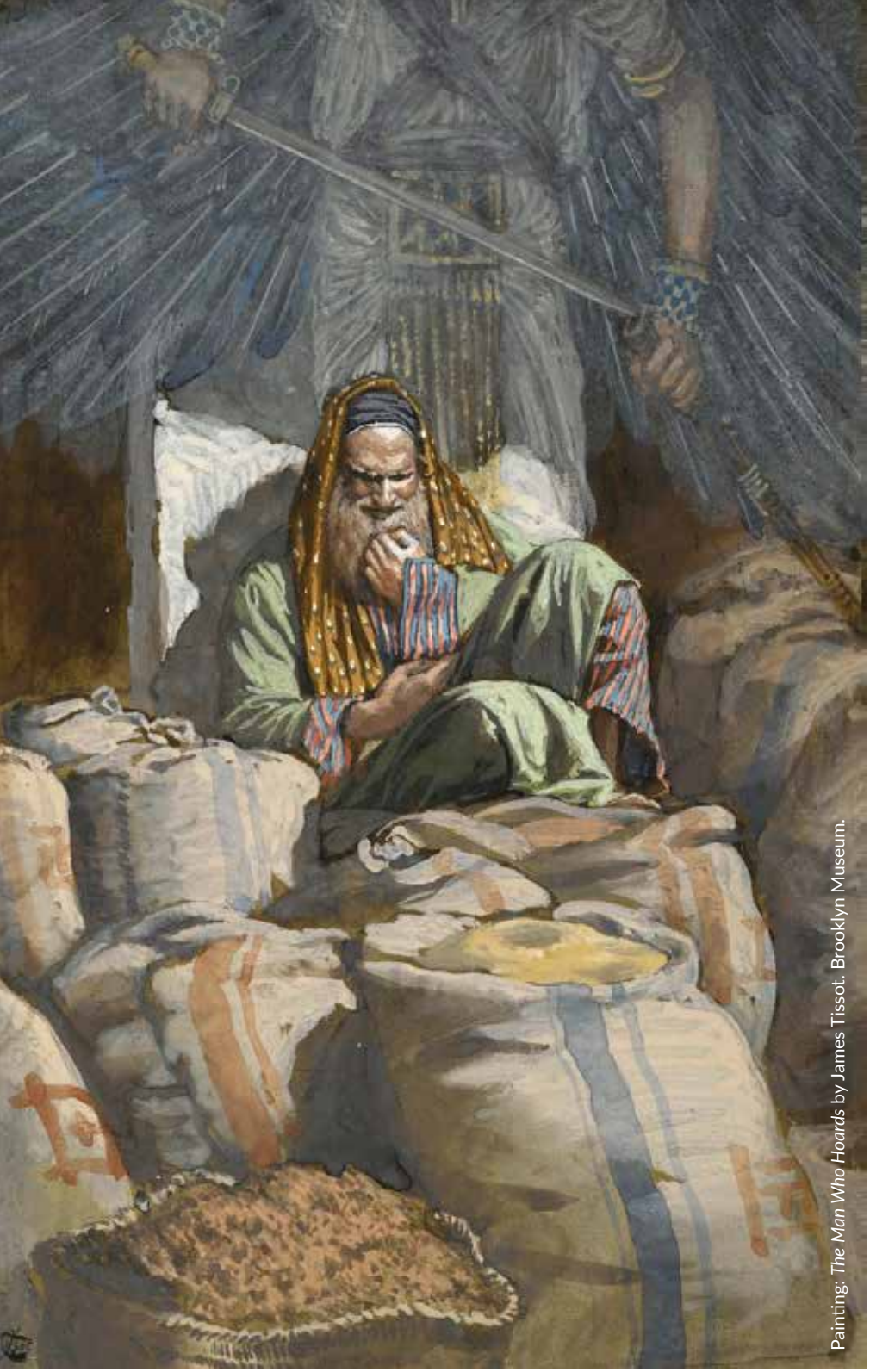
By way of some compensation, we serve vegetarian food at our national events, with health exceptions. We have donated money to young people campaigning for transformation. But somehow it does not feel enough.

A new call of conscience is whether or not to join activist bodies such as Extinction Rebellion — but this could perhaps undermine non-violence. It is not easy.

May we all continue to be led towards all truth.

Photograph by Zulmaury Saavedra on Unsplash

Elizabeth Duke has written on Quakers as a Historic Peace Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Painting: *The Man Who Hoards* by James Tissot. Brooklyn Museum.

Avoiding Foolishness

ELAINE WAINWRIGHT says that human centredness can distort our capacity to recognise that Earth's resources belong to all life.

Luke 12:13-21 Someone in the crowd said to Jesus: "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." 14 But he said to him: "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15 And he said to them: "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions."

16 Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17 And he thought to himself: 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' 18 Then he said: 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul: 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' 20 But God said to him: 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

The major feasts in our liturgical year are behind us and "ordinary time" stretches ahead until the celebration of the Universal or Cosmic Christ on 24 November. Each week we will read the Gospel of Luke which has the potential to draw us into new ecological perspectives.

Luke 12:13-21 on first reading is human-centred: divide the family inheritance with *me*; I will pull down *my* barns and build larger ones; and many other examples. This is something we can relate to. But in *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis warns against modern anthropocentrism as one aspect which makes us unaware of our effect on Earth.

Human-centredness characterises the world view of the Graeco-Roman world, namely that the head of the Roman household had power over and ownership of both the people and property belonging to that household. This plays out in the story. The first human character we meet (Lk 12:13) wants Jesus to intervene in a dispute over a share in the family inheritance. Jesus's reply: "for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions", is preceded by warnings: "take care", "be on your guard". Jesus is critiquing the prevailing world view where property and possessions were considered to be "owned" by the head of the household.

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

We can hear this critique of Jesus in our contemporary world. We are warned to be "on our guard against all kinds of greed" — stockpiling of food, comsumerism, privatising resources, hoarding. Indeed, the request of the man to "tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me" (Lk 12:13), could be a challenge coming from those who are denied adequate access to Earth's resources: food and water in particular.

Rather than have our attention absorbed by accumulating goods, we can be alert to the precarious hold we have on life — the call of death can come at any time.

These resources are the inheritance not only of the human community but of the whole Earth community. They need to be available equitably.

In the parable we see the perspective of unbridled human ownership, control and use of material resources. The man is described as "rich" — he owns and controls an abundance of material resources. The land itself is described as *his* land. The storage facilities are *his* and yet they are insufficient to store the crops that he describes as "*my crops*". His response to this situation of abundance is to demolish his barns and build larger ones to store the upcoming harvest.

Those who listened to the parable would have recognised their own situation in the story. The land that had once belonged to peasant farmers had been taken over by wealthy Romans — often absentee landlords or resident colonisers — like the landowner in the parable. They accumulated land and wealth, building up bigger and bigger estates, at the expense of the local people.

As we read the parable today, it can conjure up images of the extensive tracts of land owned and farmed by big companies who have the capacity to act like the "rich man" of the parable. In this way, a few become rich and like the man in the parable, are able to eat, drink, and celebrate their lifestyles.

The parable describes such an approach as foolishness because death can come at any time.

Rather than have our attention absorbed by accumulating goods, we can be alert to the precarious hold we have on life — the call of death can come at any time. Death is a part of life and goods are no insurance against it.

The parable critiques the accumulation of resources into the hands of a few. Rather food, clothing and a range of resources must be accessible to all in the human community. Indeed, such resources can have a dignity in their own right, not just in their usefulness to the human community.

Pope Francis said: "We cannot presume to heal our relationship with nature and the environment without healing all fundamental human relationships... Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God."

Government for the Public Good: The Surprising Science of Large-Scale Collective Action

by Max Rashbrooke
Published by Bridget Williams Books, 2018
Reviewed by Tui Bevin

BOOK

Government for the Public Good is a timely and helpful book given that confidence in governments like ours is low and the world's largest companies wield massive power. From a New Zealander's perspective, but utilising global evidence, this sweeping analysis of the role, effectiveness and possibilities of democratic governments explores how "more active government can help solve the big challenges of the twenty-first century".

Full of data, examples and analyses it focuses on the key areas of law and order, the environment, urban planning, basic infrastructure, health and education provision, and income, wealth and the economy. I was particularly interested in the discussions of innovative involvement of citizens in decision-making and public versus private ownership of public utilities.

While not a quick read, it is clearly written and free of jargon. Anyone wondering how we can manage the challenges of increasing inequity, climate change and developing a society where all can flourish will find plenty to ponder. The annotated bibliography and extensive endnotes will help readers wishing to look further. I don't know what I expected from this book, but I'm sure I didn't expect to find what I did: a feasible way forward to a just and sustainable future, and hope.

Awake to Serve

KATHLEEN RUSHTON **tells how the parable of the serving master (Luke 12:32-48) can influence our responses to injustices in our world.**

The gospel of Luke was written 50-55 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. The risen Jesus was expected to return. But he had not! A long section of Luke (11:14–14:35) which jars with and often offends today's readers addresses the question of how to live and make sense of this "in-between" time. Jesus is sharp and confronting — but there is more to it than this.

"On the way to Jerusalem"

In Luke 9:31, Jesus talked about his *exodus* – his departure. He "set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk 9:51). Until he arrived there, we are told repeatedly that he is "on the way"; in the countryside, passing through villages and towns, "on the way to Jerusalem".

Kathleen Rushton RSM lives in Ōtautahi Christchurch where, in the sight of the Southern Alps and the hills, she continues to delight in learning and writing about Scripture.

Jesus spoke the word of God to three different groups "on the way". To the crowds, he gave warnings and called them to conversion. To his disciples, he gave encouraging instructions. And to the Pharisees and lawyers who opposed and resisted him, he spoke mainly in parables of resistance.

Our reading has three parts. In the first part (Lk 12:32–34), Jesus speaks intimately and encouragingly to his disciples, "my friends": "Do not be afraid, little flock." God is determined to give them the *basileia*/the reign of God. If they are centred in God, nothing else matters.

In the second part, Jesus tells a parable (Lk 12:35–39).

In the third part (Lk 12:40–48), Jesus explains the parable after Peter asks: "Are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?" (Lk 12:41).

The Parable

This parable is one of those puzzling stories which turn the familiar into the radical — convention is subverted to bring about change.

Jesus gives a wonderful image of the master who withdraws from a banquet, arrives home and finds his faithful slaves are expecting his return. He dresses like a

11 August
RL 19th Sunday Ordinary Time: Luke 12:32–48
RCL 9th Sunday After Pentecost: Luke 12:32–40

slave himself, stands behind his reclining slaves and serves them with part of the banquet.

History *Behind* the Text

The parable has a context: a particular world with norms that are being challenged. Translators and others often shy away from the word "slave" as "servant" seems more acceptable. But in the hierarchically organised society of Jesus's time, there were rigid, clearly defined roles and relationships. The master would have belonged to the wealthy upper classes whose way of life depended on a slave labour force. The brutal punishments to which slaves were subjected are well documented (Lk 12:46-48). While the slaves in the parable behaved as slaves were required to — alert and waiting for the master's return — it is the master who shocks by stepping out of his prescribed role.

We can be awake to the reality of modern-day slavery and the various forms of trafficking of humans in our world which is all too real — the third-largest global criminal industry behind drugs and arms trafficking.

Theology *In* the Text

Disciples are to "be dressed for action" or to have their "belts cinched tight". It reminds us of God's direction to the Hebrew people on the eve of Passover to let their "loins be girded" for their journey (Exodus 12:11). In the heat of the climate, women and men wore long loosely fitting robes nearly touching the ground. Slaves and workers would tie a belt or rope firmly around their waist and tuck their robes up out of the way if they were preparing to walk a distance or do strenuous work. They were ready for action with "lamps lit". Today we'd say: "to have our boots on."

Two key words help us understand this parable. English translations usually say the slaves are "waiting" for the "return" of the master. But these words also mean the slaves were "expecting" the master who "withdrew" from the banquet to come to them. "Expecting" is more active and exciting than "waiting". And "withdrew" suggests that the master slipped out of the banquet before it was over.

So the master comes home, find his slaves "expecting" him "so they may open the door to him as soon as he comes". But instead of being tended to by his slaves, the master fastens his own belt like a slave and invites them to recline to eat (as was the custom). He comes and serves (*diakonēo*) them — meaning serving as if carrying out a sacred mandate, or ministering to them.

The parable begins and ends with: "Blessed are those slaves" (Lk 12:37, 39). The slaves do not earn blessedness by working or serving but through being what they are: ready, expecting, a happy, blessed presence in the household. Jesus is encouraging his disciples to be the same.

Spirituality *Called Forth* by the Text

The parable urges us to watch. To stay awake. It is about being like the slaves: alert to the present "sitting with reality, allowing it to work on us" as theologian Dean Brackley puts it. We are to be watchful and wakeful — contemplative. We can dismiss contemplation as a way out of the ordinary every day — a way to focus on higher things. But the parable turns this on its head: it urges us to be contemplative in our wakefulness to the moments of everyday reality. We are challenged to "dress for action" and "expect" to find the Risen Jesus in the ordinary things of every day. Watching and staying awake is prayer. In the parable, we contemplate Jesus ministering to "blessed" disciples just as we are called to find ways of ministering to those around us.

And what of that uncomfortable word, "slave", that translators shy away from? We can be awake to the reality of modern-day slavery and the various forms of trafficking of humans in our world which is all too real. The United Nations says people trafficking is the third-largest global criminal industry behind drugs and arms trafficking. Maybe, like the master of the parable, we need to consider withdrawing from the rich banquet of our lives — often furnished from slavery and exploitation — to attend to how we can support the abolition of slavery and trafficking once again in our world. That could be by learning about modern slavery and the organisations and government initiatives that are working against it. We can buy from those companies who conscientiously check that their supply chains and the entire process in the production of their goods is free of slavery. By speaking out against modern slavery and supporting the initiatives of those focused on freedom for all workers, we can minister to the poor who depend on us for the kind of life God dreams for them.

Turning to Knowledge We Once Ignored

By any measure, the world is changing rapidly. Life right around the world has transformed in ways that we couldn't have imagined just a few decades ago.

To think that a little more than two centuries ago, most of the world was totally unaware that the landmasses Australia and New Zealand existed and knew nothing of the people who lived here.

It's curious then, as the pace of technology bounds away, to see a slow return to indigenous schools of thoughts and ways of living.

Take climate change for example. Indigenous communities have done nothing to cause it and little to exacerbate it — but they are likely to be the most severely affected by it. They aren't part of the problem of climate change, but they are vital to the solution: the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) concluded more than a decade ago that indigenous knowledge is invaluable in combating it.

Studies have found that when forests are managed by incentivised indigenous groups they are looked after far better than by companies. They prevent deforestation and the likelihood of wildfires by implementing fire breaks, lighting controlled fires, and detecting the early warning signs.

Jack Derwin lives in Sydney and is a senior reporter at Business Insider Australia. His interests include all aspects of social justice particularly in the South Pacific region.

In Brazil, partnerships between indigenous tribes and fire services have seen the number of dry season fires more than halved.

Meanwhile the responses that indigenous groups have devised to new problems are ingenious. In Bangladesh, floating vegetable gardens are grown in response to increasingly frequent floods.

Closer to home, Australia is perhaps heading for a long-awaited indigenous revival of its own.

Aboriginal author Bruce Pascoe's 2014 book *Dark Emu* challenged the accepted history of the First Australians. Pascoe points to evidence that suggests that Aboriginal Australians were the world's first agriculturists, not simply hunters and gatherers.

The discovery of a 65,000-year-old seed-grinding stone with starch on it could well indicate that Australia's First Nations people invented bread by grinding native crops.

It is Pascoe's work demonstrating the utility of long-forgotten native flora that is the most promising for the Australian landscape. For example, native grasses have been shown to sequester carbon — and so there is potential to use them to reduce our carbon footprint. The possibilities are significant for our future.

There is potential, too, to teach farming practices that Aboriginal farmers would have used to cultivate the land, instead of trying to plough -— and in the process destroy — the little fertile land we have.

Beyond simple logistics and practices, there are other less tangible lessons for us to learn. There's the culture and spirituality that helps us to better appreciate the country we live in and the land that surrounds us.

Although I know there is further to go, I admire New Zealand's efforts towards incorporating Maori language and culture into the school system. Here in Australia we've barely started the journey — a greater appreciation for our Aboriginal culture and a more meaningful connection to the land that would result would do us no small amount of good.

To understand the significance of country (the Aboriginal term for areas of ancestral land), the stories behind landmarks, the interconnectedness of different lands, would all help us to better appreciate this shared home. It will hopefully be enough to curb our carelessness in destroying it.

Issues of a changing climate, drought, and a required transformation of agricultural practices are by no means easy challenges. But we cannot, as a society, always hope to simply innovate our way out of them. Instead, we must appreciate the wealth of knowledge we already have — knowledge which we have neglected for far too long.

Photograph by Christoph von Gellhorn on Unsplash

A NURTURING BASE

Photo: Autumn in Pando, Utah

Pando is a forest covering several hectares in Utah, USA. But it's not really a forest, it's a single tree with one root system. I'm an ecology student and Pando fascinates me for its own sake and for how I heard about it. It is an analogy in Rachel Held Evan's book *Searching for Sunday*. She talked about how the Church like Pando — many separate trees, but the same base. I like that idea of Church.

Recently a friend asked me why I continue to go to a church where most of the congregation have more conservative beliefs than my own. There are several reasons — many of which are related to the hassle of finding a new place to worship. But the real answer is something else.

The real answer is what I learnt from a wise person when I was struggling with the values of my church — a church where everyone agrees is a church with only me in it. What matters is Church as a community of people who love and care for one another, the world around them and who seek to follow Jesus constantly.

A Church doesn't get that right all the time. But the church I go to is trying. And for the moment I'm trying to let that be enough. I recognise the differences among us, and that God's love for every person I encounter is far bigger than my heart can comprehend. This doesn't excuse the Church as an institution, nor individuals within, who have caused great hurt and harm to people and need to be accountable. But it means that there's room for me to express my views and God doesn't mind.

Church is not an echo chamber where I'm surrounded by university friends of my age who think in similar ways to me. It brings me face-to-face with the unexpected. Sometimes I need to explore the beliefs I've been brought up with and work out why,or why not, they're true. This has led me to seek answers in books about spirituality, podcasts and people older and wiser than me in their faith. For example, after a heated discussion with a fellow volunteer, my grandmother gave me some great resources for interpreting what the Bible has to say about the role of women in the Church.

I have also had great discussions with my peers. Our topics have ranged from the evils and merits of capitalism, what Jesus would have thought about pacifism, to the role of women in the church and acceptance of LGBTQ+ people. I don't always give my opinion gracefully in these discussions and often wish I had more biblical understanding to back up my views. I might think that the Church should fully accept gay people, whereas my peers from Church may not. But I've found that these honest, respectful conversations have allowed me to think about other perspectives. And I remember that those in conversation with me also want to be Jesus's hands and feet, and most of the time that is enough for me.

Church is a Christian community that inspires me to grow in my relationship with God. It is not my sole source of spiritual nourishment, but I feel as if God is inviting me to keep open and learn there. I hope, too, that my friends can learn from me. God is big enough for all our exploring, and God's perspective is unimaginable. Like the "forest" Pando, what matters is our base — the love of Christ. So I'm learning to be respectful and let God's bigness handle the rest.

Shar Mathias enjoys reading, running, tramping, music and a lot of other things. She studies ecology and lives in Dunedin.

Veil Over the Light: Selected Spiritual Writings

by Joy Cowley
Published by FitzBeck Publishing, 2018
Reviewed by Ann Hassan

BOOK

Veil Over the Light is a selection of writings from beloved New Zealand author Joy Cowley.

The introduction takes the form of a conversation with Michael Fitzsimons. Cowley is refreshingly honest — about her fears (she speaks beautifully on the fear of death), the transformational experience of faith and her reservations about some aspects of Catholic teaching.

The book is divided into three sections: Reflections, Stories and Prayers. There is much comfort to be found in the Reflections: Cowley has a gentleness but also an enthusiasm for life which is catching. Plus the Reflections have an "open anywhere" quality to them — good for readers who like to dip in and out.

I especially liked the last of the Prayers, "Christmas" — homely and erudite all at once. And free of what we might call "holy gloss" — Cowley writes the way we speak.

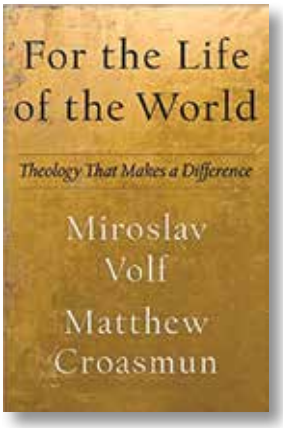
But the four Stories are my favourites. Cowley is an expert storyteller — she takes a broad view of everything, from her own personal experience to world religions — and knows how to lead us to understanding.

Veil Over the Light is an accessible read for anyone seeking spiritual sustenance. It is available online from Pleroma Books at www.christiansupplies.co.nz

For the Life of the World: Theology That Makes a Difference

by Miroslav Volf and Matthew Croasmun
Published by Brazos Press, 2019
Reviewed by Rocío Figueroa Alvear

BOOK



The authors describe this book as a real "manifesto". They challenge theologians and those committed to Christian education with a simple but essential question: is academic theology concerned about what matters in life? According to the authors, because theology fails to address fundamental questions of human existence it has become irrelevant. They propose expanding our understanding of the role of theology as "faith seeking understanding" to "a way of life that seeks to understand". Provocatively this book seeks to close the gaps between theology and spirituality, reason and action, and faith and culture. Theology ought not to be merely a theoretical science remote from world. Rather theology is or should be concerned with how people can flourish and propose ways to make this world God's home. The authors challenge theologians to explore ways to connect others with that which gives meaning to life. At the same time, they consider that the central theological task requires a certain kind of affinity between the life the theologian seeks to articulate and the life the theologian seeks to lead. While in other disciplines this affinity is not necessary, in the case of theologians it is fundamental for their credibility.

Well worth reading!

Listening to the People of the Land: Christianity, Colonisation and the Path to Redemption

Edited by Susan Healy
Published by Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand, 2019
Reviewed by Lynne Toomey

BOOK

This is a rich and multi-faceted book, with contributions from people with wide-ranging expertise and perspectives, skilfully linked by the writing, passion and knowledge of the the editor, Susan Healy. Given the themes, I had initially thought the book might be heavy-going. What drew me in was the beautiful front cover — so vividly alive with its promise of hope and positivity. And my first impressions were wrong: the book is as rewarding and colourful as the artwork suggests and eminently readable, too.

Although also addressing a wider context, *Listening to the People of the Land* asks us to consider and responsibly acknowledge the part played by Western Christianity in the colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand and the resulting harm inflicted on the Māori people. It's not about condemnation but more an analysis. It grapples with causes and effects and seeks an honest understanding of our history. A second aim is to search out, on an ongoing basis, how Christian Churches might help to heal and restore right relationship with Māori and the land by "listening to the people of the land" — learning from the wisdom of the Māori worldview and building on Treaty relationships. The future is about dialogue, not the imposition of ideas and structures. However, there is also the opportunity for Christians to "recover treasures of the Christian heritage" as we imaginatively seek to build a mutually beneficial future.

This is a beautiful and important book offering profound depth and hope. It is a book for all of us, particularly if we call ourselves Christians, to reflect on, be challenged by and act on.

Sometimes Always Never

Directed by Carl Hunter
Reviewed by Kevin Waldie

FILM

It is possible that this film escaped the notice of many. And that is a shame. It plays out just like a parable. Only after its 87-minute running time does the puzzling sequence of scenes make some sense. For it is then that we can connect this film with another familiar story, Luke's parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32). The match is not exact, but in my view this is an intelligent retelling of it, mirroring its key focus on compassion in family relationships.

Interestingly, there is occasional reference to prayer and a scene in which the older brother of the story prays the rosary. Despite the lack of other overt religious references it is the little points of connection throughout that indicate this film pays a kind of homage to life's spiritual dimension. It points beyond what is merely mundane in order to lift us out of pain or loss and restore us to joy in the gift of life as we should experience it.

The film's narrative line follows two lost sons, the younger one missing and the older one very much present but overlooked. Its main character is a father, played by Bill Nighy in fine form. His obsession with Scrabble has caused years of agony and separation. And despite winning at every turn, great loss is felt by everyone around him. The glaring absence of the boys' mother also adds to this painful situation. As this father searches unsuccessfully for his lost son, life is essentially being squandered.

However, it is through the older son's fortitude and in company with his wife and son that this story works towards a happy outcome. Although the older son (Sam Riley in a nicely judged performance) had worked hard, steadily building up a good family business, it is his own son's relationship with his grandfather that moves the plot to its fitting end. When the grandfather, a tailor by trade, advises the boy on dressing well and then provides the wherewithal, we see a change in direction for them all. This clothing scene gives the film its title, for it is important to know when the time is right to wear a sports jacket buttoned or unbuttoned.

Facing everyday realities courageously and nurturing right relationships loom large here. Physical and spiritual ailments do not heal themselves. But with true compassion at work things can be different. This film is a thought-provoking reality check for us all, an enlightening watch with a close affinity to the Prodigal Son.

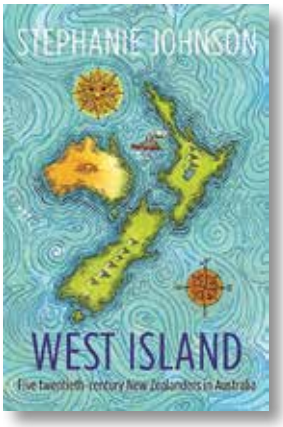
West Island: Five Twentieth-Century New Zealanders in Australia

by Stephanie Johnson
Published by Otago University Press, 2019
Reviewed by Anne Burke

BOOK

As one who has recently returned from living in Australia — the "West Island" — I was keen to read this book. It tells life stories but in a conversational style rather than a chronological series.

West Island opens with an engaging chapter about an imaginary function in Sydney. Each New Zealand guest is introduced with the story of their home in New Zealand and their initial life there. Stephanie Johnson then enables us to meet them again in Australia in a particular era. I found it intriguing how she situated each of them in the milieu they became part of in Australia.



I did not know any of the characters, but each became alive in the way they faced the difficulties and challenges in their new environment. I enjoyed how Johnson wove her own experience of moving to Australia into the book, highlighting the culture of "same" but "different". The Afterword raises the question about that relationship today.

West Island offers five very human lives of courage, resilience and creativity — and the contribution each made to life across the Tasman.

CROSS CURRENTS

by Susan Smith

Changes for Christchurch

I read with interest Bishop Martin's proposal to reduce the number of parishes in the Christchurch Diocese. I recognise the immense challenges the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes have meant for the Church there, but it is not just earthquake challenges that lie behind his proposal. It is also driven by a presumed shortage of priests. Of course, Christchurch is not alone in experiencing a shortage of priests, and perhaps it is time to consider responses other than the construction of super churches to which the faithful will travel so that a priest can say Mass for them.

Should we be considering more active ministerial roles for the laity as leaders of liturgies? Is what might be called the Constantinian model of big buildings the way into the future, or is the apostolic model of small local communities a better alternative?

The example of the geographically scattered Whangarei parish is perhaps helpful because there are at least six vibrant communities — the parish church in town and smaller communities at Whangarei Heads, Hikurangi, Ruakaka, Maungatapere, and Maungakaramea.

For more than two decades, thanks to the enlightened leadership of the priests ministering here, lay women and men have been leading liturgies in these communities one or two Sundays a month. At the same time, these communities love the priests coming out at least once a month for Mass. While clerics may presume that lay-led liturgies somehow diminish the centrality of the priest in the life of the community, this is simply not true. Whangarei's communities are happy with lay leadership, and also love those Sundays when the priest comes. In more than 20 years of living in Whangarei, I have known of only one priest who tried to subvert lay-led Sunday liturgies. Our priests recognise and affirm the importance of such ministries in the Church, and often comment on the strong community spirit in these outposts.

Catholic tradition holds that "grace builds on nature", and I believe that it is in natural communities that the Sunday Eucharist has its "source and summit" (*Lumen Gentium* 11), not in large purpose-built buildings where people, who may or may not know one another, gather so a priest can say Mass for them.

A Transformational Budget

In June, I participated in the Whangarei Child Poverty Action Group's seminar on the well-being budget. A particular highlight was listening to Māori youth talk about what they wanted from the budget. They spoke about education that suited their needs and the importance of healthy relationships.

When I read through the budget's highlights, it seemed more about the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff than systemic change. It is good that money is there for improving mental health, but why aren't the hard questions being asked about the underlying causes of mental illness? By 2021, the government hopes to reduce the number of children living in material hardship from 13 per cent to 10 per cent, and by 2028 to 6 per cent. Currently 3 per cent of superannuitants live in poverty which means that most don't, but the strong voting power of the "oldies" meant an increase in NZ Super earlier this year and $20 per week to help with energy costs during the colder months. Is this a sign of a transformational budget? Jacinda Ardern is riding high in the polls and has great political capital. She needs to use this capital for good — and sooner rather than later — through policies that ensure systemic change. That's what will be needed for her government to bring about transformational change in Aotearoa.

TUI MOTU InterIslands
The Independent Catholic Magazine Limited

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

The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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Address:
Independent Catholic Magazine Ltd,
52 Union Street West,
Dunedin North, 9054
PO Box 6404, Dunedin North, 9059

Phone: (03) 477 1449

Email: editor@tuimotu.org

Email for subscriptions: admin@tuimotu.org

Editor: Ann L Gilroy RSJ

Assistant Editor: Ann Hassan

Design & layout: Greg Hings

Printers: Southern Colour Print, 1 Turakina Road, Dunedin South, 9012

Board Directors: Neil Darragh (chair), Rita Cahill RSJ, Philip Casey, Cathrine Harrison, Agnes Hermans, Judith McGinley OP, Chris Loughnan OP

Honorary Director:
Elizabeth Mackie OP

Bank: BNZ 02-0929-0277471-00

We welcome letters of comment, discussion, response, affirmation or argument of up to 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge longer letters, while keeping the meaning.

DISCERNMENT IN BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Thanks for the excellent article by Rena Macleod (*TM* July) presenting an interpretation of violence in the biblical texts. How sad that this is not the dominant Christian view. Many Christians (including Catholics) have a different set of assumptions and conclusions about the Scriptures. For example, we have many who voted for Mr Trump, or nearer home, the man who is on trial for the Christchurch massacre who was motivated by a Christian ideology.

Nick Polaschek

LISTENING FOR GOD

While appreciating Helen Bergin's natural "suspicion" if a friend suddenly announced that God had told them to do something, it also brings to mind the experiences of Edwina Gateley on a three month "retreat" in the Sahara Desert. During that time Edwina recorded hearing God's voice many times. She wrote with some "trepidation" about what she had heard and her responses to the "voice". As a result of these experiences Edwina asks: "How is it that we believe in all the stories and revelations of the past as narrated in the Old Testament, but do not trust the revelations and the voice of God in the present? Are we afraid of visions and dreams, even though much of our faith tradition is based on so much of them, so that we do not believe God speaks today? Are we deaf to God's voice? Afraid of being dismissed, ridiculed or maybe considered a little mad?"

In saying all that, I think Helen is quite right to urge caution, to discern the truth of what we "hear". Am I talking to myself or is it really God's voice I'm hearing? We need to remind ourselves of the fully inclusive, unconditional love of this Mystery we often call God.

Pat Hick

BLIND TO THE GOVERNMENT'S HELL?

While I don't agree with Israel Folau's interpretation of the Bible, I wonder how many of those in the wider Australian community who've condemned him, and in particular those in the rugby union responsible for the punishment meted out to him, are also against their Government's policy of sending refugees and asylum seekers to the hell of Manus and Nauru Island? Maybe now there will be such a groundswell of opposition to that inhumane policy that the rules will be changed and people will no longer be condemned to the living hell created on those islands.

Barbara Cameron

DEMOTION TO LAITY

In "Cross Currents" *TM* June 2019 the demotion of priests convicted of sexual abuse to the lay status was implied as inadequate punishment "Cross Currents" *TM* June 2019. Since the Church has no civil authority it has no ability to penalise it's clergy in any other sense. I am left with the conundrum of what else are we to do? Even during the dreaded Spanish Inquisition punishments were carried out by civil authorities after judgments were made by that church body. By reducing clergy to laity the Church is stating this person is no longer recognised as an ordained representative and is offered no protection or defense from criminal prosecution. The history of hierarchy concealing and transferring abusers is shameful enough. This is a huge leap forward and to be applauded rather than denigrated.

Kevin Burn

Looking **OUT** *and* **IN**

A wonderful thing about children is that they ask a lot of questions. They are natural iconoclasts — they don't accept the norms our world is packed full of because they don't know them yet.

When my mother was staying with us recently our cat Kinney, in an act of teenage rebellion, jumped onto the dining table and set about eating from our plates. Nana, with my backing, "suggested" he get off. "Why?" the children asked. Mum and I gave answers all about how Kinney has his own delicious food, has no need to eat ours, if he's on the table he'll be tempted etc. But then came the question: "Could he, if there was nothing on it?" It was a sort of tree-falling-in-the-forest conundrum on a domestic scale.

The questions get bigger and trickier. Doesn't Kinney miss his mum and dad? Why do people die? Where do the birds go to sleep? What would happen in an earthquake? Why can't we wear track pants all the time?

For some questions all I owe is an eternal debt to Wikipedia. For others I think hard, and offer my response as a last word. But the trickiest questions — the ones I see coming with a sort of dread — can't really be so much answered as lived out.

Going into the supermarket, striding past a person collecting for a worthy cause without making eye contact: "Why didn't you put anything in their bucket?" Caught eating chips after the kids are in bed by one of them on a pit stop en route to the toilet: "Why aren't you sharing?" Being in a hurry, seeing someone we know in the distance but avoiding running into them for fear of the delay: "Why didn't you say hello?" Watching a news segment about the benefits to the environment of public transport: "How come we never catch the bus?"

These are the questions where I don't so much have to come up with an answer as be the answer. It seems like a massive responsibility and in the eternal busyness of everyday life the temptation to run away from the question altogether is almost overwhelming. Lots of times I do: "Because I say so." "I'm doing the dishes; ask me in a bit." In exasperation and/or desperation: "I don't know."

The latter reminds me of Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, who said: "The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly." Ouch!

No one can get it right every time — hypocrisy is always creeping in around the edges. But I am trying to answer more questions by doing, in the hope that I'll be less of a fraud. The best definition of sin I've come across is that it's a refusal to care. Our kids are fearless and unfettered: they're campaigning for climate action and mystified by racial prejudice. How awful to force them into a crumbling planet led by Donald Trump and Boris Johnson!

We adults are in charge, for now — though it doesn't always feel like it. Last night Kinney climbed onto my bedside table and with absolute insouciance drank out of a glass. On another occasion I'd have had recourse to a lengthy answer about glassware hygiene and the desirability of a household in which all members — human and animal — live according to agreed rules. Fortunately, I was the only witness.

Photograph by Felix Koutchinski on Unsplash

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

With tangata, whenua and Spirit
accompany us
doing what is right
in the right way
so that love is all in all among us
Creating God

From the *Tui Motu* team