



Tui Motu

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*Ecumenism – is it a broken
dream?*



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COVER: Brother Roger of Taizé, surrounded by young people

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..that they may all be one..

Pope John Paul has just celebrated 20 years as leader of the Catholic Church, and on p 6-7 we print a resumé of media comment. One of his most memorable achievements is his encyclical letter of 1995 *Ut Unum Sint* – *that they may be one*, a phrase re-echoing the prayer of Christ for the unity of believers.

“The believers in Christ cannot remain divided”, he says in that letter. “How can we proclaim the Gospel of reconciliation without being committed to the reconciliation of Christians? The lack of unity represents an obstacle for the proclamation of the Gospel... It is a matter of the love that God has in Jesus Christ for the whole of humanity. To stand in the way of that love is an offence against God.” (#1, 98, 99)

So why is the reconciliation of Christians not happening? Let me rephrase that question: why is it not happening at the official level? Pope John Paul himself gives us part of the answer when he says: “I thank God for the progress made, but Christians should not underestimate the longstanding misgivings, misunderstandings and prejudices, often made worse by complacency, indifference and ignorance.” (#2). As the TV cheese ad says: “Good things take time”. Nevertheless, one is tempted to conclude that at the official level ecumenism has ground to a halt. The fine words of the Pope do not seem to be born out by the actions of many theologians and bishops.

However, the cause is by no means hopeless. This issue of *Tui Motu* places a particular focus on ecumenism at the grassroots, here in New Zealand and

across the world. There is a strong movement of the Holy Spirit – of prayer, of cooperation in social action, of dialogue, of simply mixing together to establish true bonds of friendship in the spirit of Christ. We tell these stories in the hope that what is succeeding well in one place may inspire progress in other corners of the Church. Perhaps – who knows? – the example may ‘trickle up’. That would indeed be an occasion for blowing the Jubilee trumpet!

If there is one thing that ought to unite Christians, surely it is the Word of God. Pauline O'Regan eloquently describes the exaltation she felt in first experiencing this in an ecumenical context (p 14). She expresses her gratitude for what the Protestant Churches have done in safeguarding and treasuring the Bible over the centuries. It is a “jewel” to be shared. On the Catholic side of the great divide we have wonderful riches of spirituality to offer – not least our eucharistic tradition. The official line is that sharing Eucharist must wait upon doctrinal agreement. But could it be that it is precisely the sacrament of love – the *sacramentum unitatis*, St Cyprian calls it – that is the very means needed to bring traditions back together?

Meanwhile we can only lament the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' decision to withdraw from the Conference of Churches (see p 5). If the IRA and the Ulster Unionists can agree, if Netanyahu and Arafat can begin to work together, surely it is not beyond the bounds of possibility for the NZ Catholic Commission on Ecumenism to actually behave ecumenically. *See how these Christians love one another. Indeed!* *M.H.*

Tui Motu welcomes discussion of spiritual, theological and social issues, in the light of gospel values and in the interest of a more just and peaceful society. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although this does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

What future for Ecumenism?

He sat beside me at breakfast, introduced himself by Christian name. He was casually dressed, like me. We chatted, passed the meusli, and later worked hard together on a common task. No doubt we solved at least one of the world's problems that day. Soon after, we were together again at the opening of a Cathedral refurbishment. Dressed now in his formal Bishop's robes he apologised that we could not share the sacrament together. Ecumenism has its limits.

But such limitations are stretched and challenged when 'institutional' ecumenism is faced with people working together, laughing and crying together, putting common minds to work on a particular local focus. The disparity between the vigorous energy created when such people are together and the often ho-hum heaviness when institutions try to do something together, has come to mean that 'organisational ecumenism', through agencies such as the World Council of Churches, has lost a great deal of the impetus of a decade ago.

Mission nowadays is seen to be much more closely aligned with what we meet at our neighbourhood doors. Maybe we're in meeting overload. To my mind ecumenism has been taken over by institutions sometimes called 'parent Churches'. The word now seems to represent an organisational response to being together. By its nature such responses will always have to work within the rules of each partner in dialogue. For some of us, that leads to talk-fests focussing on points of agreement about more and more obscure things. It seems as if the sacramental nature at the heart of all our organisations is too hard for making concessions. And while this is happening in the name of ecumenism, people in neighbourhoods meet together trying



Christchurch Methodist Minister, Rob Ferguson, looks at the ecumenical scene from above and below – and raises some uncomfortable questions

to lobby for better conditions for their poor and disadvantaged, work together on school Boards, play bowls together, and discuss the way faith and life are entwined for them. So, which of these is ecumenism?

The disparity raises a problem for the institutional Church. Central Church organisations are accused often by those in the pews of being 'out of touch with reality'. What matters most: the maintenance of Church life – or people being neighbours to whomever they meet? Does 'the Church' matter that much? Have we come to a time in post-Christendom history when Church institutions are now so irrelevant to most of New Zealand society – and indeed to many within each Church – that they have to forgo their preciousness and discover again a faithful role of being Christian together? Are Church baggages of power structures, entrenched ways of doing things, and a series of 'precious' theologies actually so important that we will cling to them as if they are the only things that will save us? How much control and how much power are we each prepared

to relinquish in order that the whole earth of *oikumene* can be restored to health again?

Our answers are determined to a great extent by where we are in the Church. We clergy will logically protect our precious view along with our jobs. To neighbourhood Christian people struggling with issues of unemployment, or potholes in roads, the pontifications of Church councils matter little. The right words said by the right people in worship will not save my job, although they may alleviate my pain for a time. Ecumenism, at its heart, is a people's movement towards healing, wholeness and justice. There is a pragmatism about it, which is its life and its energy. We all live somewhere – location matters. That is where we experience the outcomes of any ecumenical theological discussion. The danger of organisational ecumenism is that it has lost much of its pragmatic cutting edge by removing itself from the frontline of the world's hurts and hopes, and becoming in many instances a discussion about the future of our own organisations.

Ecumenism is a conversation, not just with the partners in dialogue, but with the whole inhabited earth. When we stop limiting the meaning of ecumenical to 'inter-Church' or even 'inter-faith', and engage our listening with the whole created order, we will, I believe, engage in the only form of ecumenism that matters. But that will mean we adopt listening rather than talking roles for a while. It means giving up cherished ideas of our institution's importance and, for me, it means understanding some gospel words again – such as *saltiness* and *leaven*.

Is there a future for ecumenism? That depends on your point of view! ■

Dr Anna Holmes

Thank you for the excellent article on Dr Anna Holmes (*Tui Motu* September); and thank God for people like her. For me, and I suspect many others, she says it all.

Yes, we lay people do have a moral responsibility to speak out when we are unhappy with things, because, as defined by Vatican II, it is the people consecrated by Baptism, who are the primary constituents of the Church. Vatican II also stated that the Church was to return to being governed, not just by the Pope and Cardinals, but in full consultation with the bishops and their people.

The advice Anna gives for those of us who are 'hanging in there' to arm ourselves with a strong knowledge of Church history, is very good: as I have done this I have been amazed how Church laws and practices have come about. It has also made me understand why, years ago in replying to my questions of dissatisfaction about the Church, that wonderful priest Fr John Curnow said: "Years of brainwashing! Years of brainwashing!"

Elizabeth Goodwin, Hokitika

Resignation of Wijngaards

Thank you for the opportunity to read what John Wijngaards had to say on the occasion of his resignation from the priesthood (*Tui Motu*, October). His expressed desire to remain "a

letters



conscientious and orthodox Catholic" together with his determination to separate himself completely from the "conspiracy of silence" enforced by Rome, are encouragement indeed for many faithful people whose searching tells them other than what the institutional Church proclaims. There seems to be such a variance with Christ's teachings in some of the official teachings, particularly those pronouncements issuing from the *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith*.

The insistence of an authoritarian Church on total obedience and unswerving conformity has established a situation where genuine and necessary debate is being outlawed in the corridors of the Catholic Church.

Certainly though, Wijngaards serves as a light in what has become, all too often, a murky ecclesiastic darkness.

Desmond Smith, Torbay, Auckland

Your overseas feature *Distinguished Theologian resigns the priesthood* greatly saddens me, even as I recognise the truth and integrity of Fr Wijngaards' stand. His words in regard to the ordination of women are consoling in the light of the unjust excommunication of Ann Nugent by her Australian bishop for

her work in this area.

It is indeed a terrible indictment of the Vatican that it chooses to control the people of the God of love, with fear-conditioning tactics. I am reminded that earlier this Century an ordained minister, taking part in an experiment in blind obedience run by a Pavlovian psychologist, was prepared to take his subject to the point of death, because "the man in the white coat" required him to do so.

June MacMillan, Taihape

Obey the Pope – or leave!

I refer to the *Postscript* by John Honoré in the August edition of *Tui Motu*, and I would respond by advising Mr Honoré to consult the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 882, which is a verbatim quote from the Vatican II Constitution on the Church 22:

"The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter's successor, is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of unity both of the bishops and the whole company of the faithful... The Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, has full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church".

If the Pope has issued an edict, then all Roman Catholics are bound by it. If Mr Honoré or anyone else of similar persuasion finds it hard to take, then *leave* – there are plenty of other Christian organisations that will take them and him.

P.D.Lindsay, Upper Hutt

Promoter's Corner

Dear *Tui Motu* people,

Harpo Marx used to express grave concerns about any club that was prepared to have him as a member! Like most comedy there is a serious side to what seems a flippant remark. You would be concerned if an application for membership in some club was refused.

Subscribing to a magazine is a curious variation on this theme. No one is ever turned away. Membership is guaranteed! Most power resides thereafter with the subscriber who has the option of not renewing a

subscription: ie resignation. Such a decision is the most awful outcome for a magazine trying to establish itself in the marketplace. (I know such a thought has never crossed *your* mind). I know that there are occasionally fair reasons for ceasing to be a member/subscriber which I choose not to mention lest you think they might apply to you.

However, one situation deserves particular comment because it inevitably occurs from time to time. An article, letter, news item appears that you personally take objection to, and you

wonder whether you want to be a subscriber to a magazine prepared to print it.

Opinion across the spectrum is invited by *Tui Motu*, expected and usually welcomed. This editorial stance is expressed succinctly elsewhere in this issue. Some material in future issues will make you glad, some may make you mad. If the latter, stay and have your say. *Tui Motu* will be more interesting, more mature and better value for the community as a result.

Tom Cloher

Catholic Church withdraws from NZ Conference of Churches

On September 25 Bishop John Cunneen wrote to CCANZ (Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand) stating that the Catholic bishops had decided the Catholic Church would withdraw from membership of CCANZ. The reason given was the “continuing difficulties some representatives of some member Churches seem to have in giving effect to the revised Constitution”.

Bishop Cunneen emphasised that the decision had the unanimous support of the Catholic Bishops. He reminded the General Secretary, Ms Jan Cor-

mack, that he had written in May expressing concerns on “what the Catholic Church saw as an unwillingness on the part of some of the Executive of the CCANZ to abide by the intention and provisions of the Revised Constitution.”

This letter was received a few days before the CCANZ Annual Forum was due to meet in Auckland, 2-4 October. A response was sent to the Catholic Bishops in the form of a Resolution of the CCANZ Forum, expressing “deep sadness” at the Catholic bishops’ intention to withdraw.

“We ask the bishops to reconsider this decision,” the reply states. “There was a strong feeling from the Executive and the Forum that we wish to see the continuation of the valuable contribution made at all levels of the Conference by the Catholic Church. The Forum is also concerned that little time has elapsed for any evaluation of the successful working of the revised Constitution.. it has not been made clear to us where the specific concerns (mentioned by the Catholic bishops) were, so these have not been able to be addressed.”

A Conference of Churches

“In what way has the ‘Catholic Church’ decided to withdraw from CCANZ? It appears that the bishops have so decided and that the Commission for Ecumenism has also so decided. Are these the Catholic Church?

“..Why was there no consultation with the Catholics who are serving on various programmes of the Conference or with those who are employed within it or with those who over the years have served both the Catholic Church and the Conference of Churches with commitment and integrity? I understand that not even the delegates to the Forum were briefed on this decision until just before the meeting.

“Before the Catholic Church joined CCANZ there was much wider consultation and discussion. Why would there not be a full process of consultation in the Catholic Church before a decision was made to withdraw? The authoritarian nature of this decision leaves me and other ‘ordinary Catholics’ totally voiceless and disempowered. Is this what was desired or intended?”

Reasons for Withdrawal

“I cannot find sufficient grounds for the serious decision the bishops appear

to have taken... How have such concerns been addressed within the actual meetings of the Executive and in direct discussion with ‘some representatives of some member Churches’? ...The whole ecumenical endeavour world-wide is based on *dialogue*. Unless concerns are addressed when they arise and with people who are part of the discussion, dialogue does not occur... But not to raise the concerns, however difficult they may be, is to withdraw from the dialogue.”

response by
Elizabeth Mackie

Place of Constitution

“..A constitution will never solve all problems and a departure from the Conference for perceived ‘constitutional failures’ seems to be making the law more important than the people or the organisation that the law should support. ..It sounds as though the law has become an end in itself and nameless people are to be condemned in the interests of the purity of the law. This is not my understanding of what my Church has so powerfully taught in the past. Who acts in these matters? And by what process? The bishops’ letter gives the impression that the Catholic

Church has appointed itself judge of other Church representatives and found them wanting.”

Ecumenical practice

“From the very beginning I think that our Church has failed its members in this area. There is little emphasis on ecumenical formation at any level of the Church and little encouragement for engagement. Bishop Cullinane did prepare a booklet in the early days of the Conference to assist Catholics to understand and participate. But I fear that little was done in other dioceses...

“Perhaps we have more to learn than we accept or realise from the ecumenical experience of other Churches. ...where Catholics do engage seriously in ecumenical activities, they are excited, strengthened, encouraged and challenged. But this does not happen unless the engagement is real, whole-hearted, risky and for the long term. Maybe we need some humility to accept that we as a Church are in many ways still catching up.” ■

Elizabeth Mackie OP was Joint General Secretary in the early years of CCANZ and now works for Christian World Service which is under the CCANZ umbrella. These extracts from her letter to the NZ Catholic Bishops are printed with her permission.

Pope John Paul – 20 years on

An assessment of his papacy by the world's media

The impact which John Paul II has made on the Catholic Church and the world during his 20 years as Pope, has been highlighted by the media over recent weeks. Commentators describe him as “a great man, possibly a saint, certainly one of the most effective popes in history. But he is also a puzzle and a problem” (John Wilkins, editor of the London *Tablet*.) Reports about him often perceive a contradiction, which causes them to say: ‘on the one hand.. but on the other..’

His political role

The important part played by the Polish Pope in the collapse of Communism is only now being made public. In a BBC programme, *Rivals for Paradise*, key figures of the period spoke of the close cooperation between Presidents Carter and Reagan, and the Pope. Those interviewed included President Reagan’s National Security Adviser, Richard Allen, and his Ambassador-at-large, Vernon Walters; Vadim Zagladin of the Soviet Central Committee (1975-88) and Oleg Kalugin of the KGB (1981-89); Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican Secretary of State (1979-91) and Thomas Melady, US Ambassador to the Holy See (1989-93).

They agreed that a dramatic turning point was the newly-elected Pope John Paul’s first visit to Poland in 1979. No one was prepared for the reception he was given. It was clearly a mass anti-Communist manifestation which did not pass unnoticed by the American leadership. President Ronald Reagan realised that an alliance between US power and Vatican influence could spell the end of Communist control in Poland.

Lech Walesa, the Polish *Solidarity* leader, said: “If it was not for the Pope, the changes in the political system could not have taken place” – words echoed by Gorbachev himself: “Everything that happened in Eastern Europe would have

by
Jim Neilan



At his accession in 1978 John Paul is embraced by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, leader of the Polish Catholic Church and valiant opponent of Communism

been impossible without the presence of this Pope.” And so history will see Karol Wojtyła as having played a vital role in the greatest political upheaval of modern times.

On the other hand many question the unqualified support given to the United States by the leader of the Catholic Church. Co-authors of the biography of John Paul, *His Holiness*, Mario Polito and Carl Bernstein, were also interviewed by the BBC. They noted that not once during Reagan’s term as President

did the Pope ever criticise US policy and this at the height of the arms race and the Starwars programme.

The Papal Academy of Science produced a report critical of this programme, but the Pope vetoed its publication.

When the American bishops prepared a pastoral letter pointing out the dangers of Reaganomics they were told to water it down. A religious Sister from Nicaragua

observed that South American Catholics were angry with the Pope for encouraging Polish clergy to be politically active while he was publicly denouncing priests in S America who were fighting against the abuse of human rights. She accused the Pope of “cultural blindness”. “If the priests killed in the fight for justice”, she declared, “had been in Poland, they would have been canonised.”

As teacher and writer

No one, however, would deny John Paul’s remarkable energy as a teacher and a writer. He has produced 13 Encyclicals, the latest – *Fides et Ratio* (Faith and Reason) – released last month to coincide with his 20th anniversary. The common thread running through all these documents has been the restoration of the power of the Christian message in civil society. At the same time he remains open to dialogue with other religions and intellectual movements. He sees the Church as the fount of civilisation, the mediator of ethics – and even, the saving power in the marketplace.

“No one has done more to mount an ethical critique of global capitalism”, writes John Wilkins in the *Guardian*. “During his papacy the Catholic Church has everywhere confirmed its

concern for the poor. He has tirelessly promoted religious liberty, and the doctrine of human rights has become the platform of his preaching to the world."

Yet while John Paul is encouraging a kind of open dialogue between the Church and the world, many feel he is simultaneously discouraging it within the Church itself. An American writer, Richard McCormick, makes a pointed comparison between John Paul and his predecessors. In the opening speech of the Vatican Council John XXIII said: "Today the Church.. prefers to use the medicine of mercy rather than severity." Likewise Paul VI wanted people to be "convinced, not conquered." But McCormick notes that today "there is a coercive atmosphere which is counter-productive – it threatens ministry, sours the laity and divides the Church."

On the subject of the new Encyclical a *Guardian* editorial states: "It is an optimistic, generous document which, while unapologetically holding to Christian truth, believes that truth will be enriched by dialogue with other faiths – he specifically mentions the spiritual traditions of the East – and Western intellectual developments. But the record of the Church over the past two decades is strikingly at odds with

while encouraging dialogue between the Church and the world, he is discouraging it within the Church

Fides et Ratio. With a severity unseen for many decades it has singled out theologians who transgress the ideological boundaries for humiliating, even cruel, punishments... This is an extraordinary contradiction in one of the 20th Century's most remarkable men."

In recent times the Pope himself has expressed a sense of disillusion. His great hopes for Poland have failed to materialise. Chris McGillion, writing in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, notes



Cardinal Wojtyla (foreground standing) at the 1977 Synod of Bishops. Already seated behind him are Cardinals Vagnozzi, Willebrands (the great ecumenist), Albino Luciani – later Pope John Paul I – and Cardinal Basil Hume

how reaction to John Paul's fourth visit to Poland in 1991 was generally low-key. "Poles were looking forwards, not backwards, and the Pope found himself condemning much of what they envied in the West and castigating them for their gullibility, if not moral abandonment, in seeking to copy it... Since 1991, less and less has the Pope held Poland up as some kind of heroic example in a troubled world."

The *Guardian* points to other areas of disappointment – a "lack of success with the seemingly inexorable tide of secular, materialistic individualism. Mass attendance and vocations to the religious life continue to decline in Western Europe and N America. Latin America has been one target area for papal journeys, but the Church has suffered there one of its greatest losses since the Reformation. Lacking the priests to celebrate Mass, many Catholics have deserted to the Evangelicals and sects."

The future

With the Pope's evidently failing health speculation is on the rise regarding his likely successor. In a recent TV interview two American priests writers, Richard McBrien and Tom Reese, opt for the next Pope being an Italian in his 70s – a nightwatchman chosen for his ability to sit back and allow the contradictory pressures within Catholicism to find their own equilibrium.

Meanwhile John Paul II seems determined to fulfil the prophecy of his late Polish mentor, Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski: "If God has chosen you (to be Pope), he has chosen you to lead the Church into the next millennium."

Papal journeys are planned next year to Mexico, the United States and to Asia, and there is talk of visits to Poland, Turkey, Libya, Iraq and the Holy Land. As Jesuit Tom Reese says: "This Pope is going to be a very, very hard act to follow." ■

The Need to be Reconciled

The Oceania Synod in prospect

Catherine Hannan DOLC

This month the Oceania bishops gather in Rome for their first-ever Synod. Accompanying them will be seven women delegates, another first. One of them is Sr Catherine Hannan

Originally Oceania was to be part of the Asian Synod held earlier this year; but the needs of the Oceania region were deemed to be sufficiently distinct to merit having its own Synod. The Oceania Synod comprises all the peoples living in the geographical area of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands: those indigenous to these lands as well as the non-indigenous Europeans, now the dominant group in Australia and New Zealand, and ethnic groups from Asia.

A *Lineamenta* Paper has been drawn up entitled: "Jesus Christ and the Peoples of Oceania: Walking His Way, Telling His Truth, Living His Life". This discussion paper arose from a wide variety of groups. While there is a diversity of opinion, there is a strong consensus of concern regarding this Paper: that it is western and patriarchal and insufficiently reflects the local culture. It should have *Reconciliation* as its major thrust.

Pope John Paul has called for the millennium to be associated with the biblical concept of *Jubilee*, a time when people are freed from the burdens and injustices that have built up over the past and released from all the forms of modern slavery with which we bind each other today. He is urging upon the nations of the world and the international monetary agencies that the burden of international debt be relieved. We wish our Government to have the political will to encourage the reduction of debt

at a much faster rate with conditions that do not impinge so heavily upon the poorest of the poor.

However, *within* our country we wish to challenge the prevailing economic free market philosophy which is putting profit for the few above concern for the people. With political decisions based on this market-driven ideology, there is a deepening alienation between people in our society, with money taken from the poor on benefits literally being given to the rich in the form of tax breaks. Other issues include unemployment,



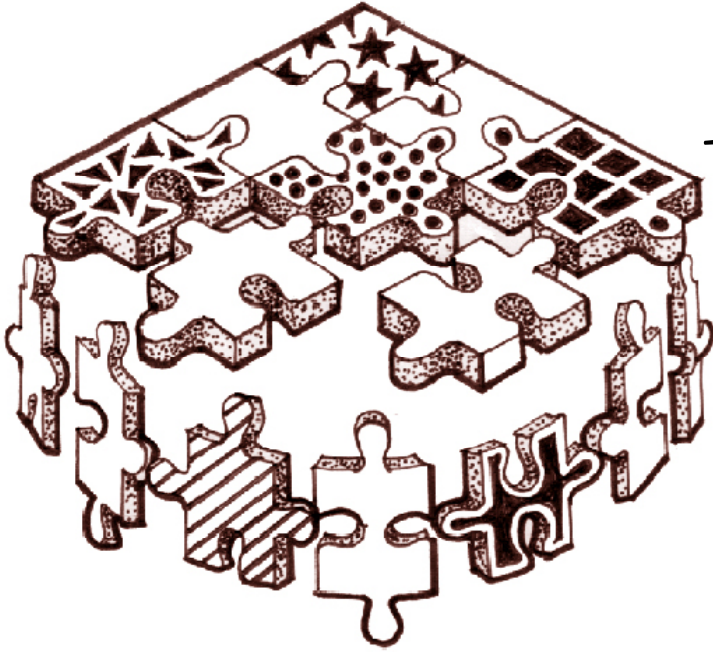
the running down of public health and housing schemes, the erosion of real participation by the community in political decision-making, alienation of our land and forests to overseas conglomerates, devaluation of the dignity of human life leading to tolerance of suicide, abortion and euthanasia.

If we are to be credible as a Church we also have to set our own house in order. We cannot challenge the world if we are not prepared to be challenged ourselves. There is a need for *reconciliation* of Catholics polarised by different interpretations of Vatican II. Some reforms proceeded without adequate education. But many took Vatican II and the implications for renewal very seriously, and are saddened and feel disempowered when renewal appears to have been reversed.

There is a need for *reconciliation* of the indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in all our societies. Aborigines in Australia, Maori in New Zealand and most people in the Pacific still suffer the dominance of colonial powers and feel that they are not greatly respected within society and the Church. There is a need for *reconciliation* of the official Church with the role of women in the Church, with former priests, with people with differing sexual orientation, with people who are divorced and remarried and are unable to receive the sacraments. Surely Jubilee is a chance to exercise Christ's creative mercy and love for all.

There is a need for *reconciliation* of those Catholics still practising their faith by attending Eucharist and those who no longer have the heart to do so. This is often a source of great discouragement between the generations. There is a need for *reconciliation* of Church law with the Eucharistic life of the people. We value the gift of celibacy in the Church, but the people also need access to Mass and the Sacraments; so we hope for ordination of married men, for the ordination of married catechists in the Pacific who have already shown that they sustain the spiritual life of their people.

There are two sides to the coin of Reconciliation: 'I forgive – and I am forgiven;' 'I reach out in love – and I allow myself to be touched'. Imagine what would happen to the world if all of us took the words of *Gaudium et Spes* to heart: *the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of every human person became mine*. Imagine what would happen to the world if from every pulpit, every roof and mountain top, in every household we could proclaim: 'You are forgiven' – without judgment, without condemnation. ■



Ecumenism

– alive and
well
at the

*... working together in
Christian Social Services*

Wanganui has something unique which no other town or city in New Zealand can boast. Its Christian social outreach is a co-operative venture between the principal Churches of the city. Instead of Presbyterian and Anglican and Catholic Social Services all running separate agencies, there is just one – Christian Social Services Wanganui (CSSW).

The City Missioner for Wanganui who heads CSSW is David Day. David's background is itself unusual. Born and raised in Lancashire, England, he worked as a shoemaker until emigrating to New Zealand. He was ordained as an Anglican Minister and at first he worked in parish ministry in Wanganui. Last year he was appointed City Missioner and inherited responsibility for Christian Social Services in the city. His wife is a Catholic, working on the staff at the Palmerston North Pastoral Centre.

He admits that before taking up this responsibility he gave "little thought to the needs and existence of CSSW, apart from donating non-perishables from our parish's Harvest Festival offerings...

The multi-denominational nature of CSSW never occurred to me. It simply didn't register. I never thought of it as a 'mission' – set against the traditional overseas 'missions' work or even the local parish evangelistic mission events.

"But now I'm aware and proud of the fact that CSSW really is unique in this country – as far as I am aware it is the only City Mission which is not denominationally minded. It is supported by most, if not all, the contributing denominational parishes – Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian – and there are healthy signs of growing interest among the other Churches, Baptist, A.O.G., Apostolic, Church of Christ, Hosannah. Other Churches may follow as we, at CSSW, establish personal contact with pastors and other Church leaders. My dream is for the whole Christian community of Wanganui to 'own' their City Mission.

"CSSW is presently in 'growth mode' because of the ever-widening gap between the haves and the have-nots in society. True especially of those living on a benefit, or on a low wage, as well as the ongoing lack of employment for

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the less skilled or less physically able.”

David notes that some New Zealanders may reject the notion that real poverty exists in this country. Nevertheless, such attitudes are on the decline. So, when CSSW appeals for a replenishment of the Foodbank stock the response has noticeably increased. “Individuals bring contributions to our office, organisations are committed to bulk food donations eg. bread, tinned fish, meat and packets of cheese. And there is a generous response to the local Rotary Club’s annual, city-wide, street-by-street food drive (which brings in a mountain of tinned and packaged foods).

David has become aware that while organisations like CSSW depend primarily on prayer and charity, more and more time has to be spent on how to apply for funding, which is a skill in itself. There is a variety of funding agencies each with its own philosophy and ‘target area’. This is not good news for caring agencies which are small and lacking the technology or expertise to be able to present a case effectively.

And what of the future? David Day looks out from his position as City Missioner on a society where there is an increasing sense of “hopelessness, loneliness and distrust”. The Christian faith is the “living answer”

there will also need to be the prophetic witnesses of public gatherings and



demonstrations such as the *hikoi* – to show that as Christians, “at least, we care”.

The vitality of the Church will spring especially, he thinks, from “small, intimate home meetings for sharing lives, for study and discussion on Scripture and faith, fellowship and prayer”. At the same time there need to be occasional gatherings for Spirit-lifting worship – services which are tailored to attract the unchurched visitor or seeker. People at large will once again come to take Christ, Christianity and Christians seriously when it is deserved and earned. It will happen through the witness of lives which are changed through faith – politicians, business leaders, entertainers, sportspeople, who are true Christian role models. ■

M.H.



CSSW, through Community Waged gardeners, manages several garden plots around the city giving work experience and producing vegetables for the Foodbank. David Day with gardener, Roger Farmer

“Among the people who come to us for help at the drop-in centre, there is a kaleidoscope of troubles: sadness, illness, financial stress, problems regarding transport, paying their bills, budgeting skills, poor quality housing. While this may breed good humour and a degree of comradeship in misfortune, there is also anger and disappointment that their lives have turned so sour. As human beings they are frustrated that there seems no alternative to *this*.”

to these problems; yet the institutional Churches are failing to attract, signs of growth are few and most Churches are struggling. The Church has become a cultural activity in which many people find a place only with difficulty.

David predicts that the Church of the future will survive only if it adapts. There will always be a need for public ‘hands-on’ witness through Christian social services. Alongside this charitable work



Discovering God Together

Mary Concannon describes an ecumenical venture helping lots of ordinary lay people in their search for God

Spiritual Growth Ministries is an ecumenical initiative which has grown steadily from very small beginnings in Gisborne 18 years ago, and has helped literally thousands of New Zealanders in their search for a deeper spiritual relationship with Christ.

The original idea was conceived by a small group of Presbyterians who wanted to promote spirituality within their own membership. But from the very beginning it was ecumenical although the organisation continues to be funded by the Outreach Budget of the Presbyterian Church. Shirley Pyper, a Presbyterian Minister who was one of the prime movers, went from Gisborne to a month's spirituality course at the Pastoral Centre, in Palmerston North. There she met Sr Mary Concannon OP, and Mary soon became involved, joining the Workgroup who steer the project in 1985.

Mary's particular concern has been the Spiritual Directors' Training Programme. This lasts for two years and is open to Christians of all denominations. It aims to form skilled directors who can work in parishes, in chaplaincies and in a variety of other ministries. People selected for training would be expected to have a grounding in the spiritual life, in Scripture and theology. They would need to have received some spiritual direction themselves and to have made a directed retreat. Initially the majority who sought training were Presbyterians and Catholics; but as time went on, trainees included all denominations including Brethren and the Salvation Army.

Currently there are 42 in training throughout the country. In the first year there are seven men and 15 women. Eight are clergy, but an increasing number of lay people are taking the course. In the first year group there are six Anglicans, six Baptists, three Presbyterians and one Catholic.

The course consists of five one-day events per year, a week together in Year One and a weekend in Year Two. There is an ongoing programme of reading, writing and practical work. The programme, says Sr Mary, is truly ecumenical. She relates the case of a Baptist applicant who found himself on the opening day in a small group of three. It was not until the end of the day he discovered his companions were an Anglican priest and a Catholic nun. He said, jokingly: "it took me several months to get over it!"

Although the Training Programme is strongly emphasised, there is also a growing list of other activities and events held throughout the country. These comprise home and parish-based retreats, as well as seven-day silent retreats held in different venues; spirituality weekends, guided weekend retreats; so-called 'wilderness retreats'

which offer a contemplative experience in a bush setting. A recent innovation is the 'contemplative tramp': this lasts six days and aims to allow the participant to pray surrounded by the beauties of God's creation, with some guidance. The contemplative trampler is 'praying through God's other book'!

There are also locally organised prayer gatherings – Taizé and Celtic, for example.

Mary Concannon suggests that one huge success of the movement has been the provision of experienced Spiritual Directors throughout the country, to be on hand to help individuals on their personal prayer journeys. She herself is immensely grateful for the richness of the ecumenical experience she has received. People come from radically different backgrounds, yet are united in their love of Christ. Somehow the different traditions cease to matter when people sincerely seek God together. She pays due tribute to the vision and continuing support of the Presbyterian Church in making the whole movement possible. ■

Mary Concannon OP has worked for many years in the area of Retreats and Spiritual Direction



praying through God's other book



Sharing the Word of God

I had my first experience of ecumenism when I was nine years of age. I was having a holiday in Nelson. I spent much of the time with a cousin of the same age who was bent on showing me all the sights of his beloved town. We stood one day outside the Nelson Anglican cathedral

by

Pauline O'Regan

and pondered the consequences of going inside. Finally, we decided to take the risk of being struck dead and went in. I remember the sudden quiet, the height of the ceiling, the rows of chairs. Chairs in church! It was too much. We tore outside and raced down the flight of steps to the street, not stopping until we were safely home. That was 1931.

After such an inauspicious beginning I can only thank God that I lived to have many beautiful ecumenical experiences in later life. Of them all none was to be as memorable and soul-nourishing as the one that occurred in February of 1976. On that occasion the New Zealand Council of Churches brought to Christchurch the renowned Scripture scholar, Hans-Ruedi Weber, the director of Biblical Studies for the World Council of Churches. Each of the member Churches of the NZ Council was given a certain quota of places for those involved in ministry and six places were set aside for the Catholic Church. I belonged then to a newly-formed community of three, and with Scripture beginning to unfold freely for the first time in our spiritual lives we were longing for direction in its study. When we heard of this seminar, we sent in all our names and prayed that one of them might come out of the hat. There has to be a certain significance in the fact that only three of the Catholic places were taken up, so to make the six, the three of us were all accepted.



We took up residence at the Redemptorist monastery and for the next ten days we walked the road to Emmaus, our hearts burning within us. Our fellow pilgrims came from every branch of the Church, covering the full theological span from Anglican to Quaker. But in that all-absorbing spiritual experience we came to know, once and for all, that there is neither Methodist nor Anglican, Baptist nor Quaker, Presbyterian nor Catholic, (and, I might say, male nor female) – all are one in the sharing of just one life, the life of Christ. At the end we came away with that great theological truth unspoken but indelibly imprinted on our consciousness for all the years to come.

Over the years since then, we have seen many of the methods that Hans-Ruedi taught us become more widely used. He showed us how Scripture can come alive through story-telling, drama, mime, role-play, dance and art. Tentatively at first but with growing trust in one another and confidence in ourselves, we broke through our near-total dependence on the one confining medium of verbal expression. Rather, we found that every gift given us by God is worthy of use in understanding Scripture and in passing the Good News on to others. He began his first lecture with a story: an old woman was sitting outside her

door reading the bible. A passer-by remarked, "That's a big book you're reading there," to which she replied, "I'm not reading this book. This book is reading me!" That became the theme of the seminar. He guided us in such a

Won't you

In our made-from-the-earth adobe brick church it is warm in winter and cool in summer, flowers growing and many candles. It is an open church, we don't hide away to pray. We look out at creation and can't help but be overcome with gratitude as we look up at the mighty mountains. The birds come and go, joining their form of praise with ours; sometimes we sit in silence and listen to their praising. The people outside can look in and see us praying together, and because we are so obviously enjoying the experience they want to join us and are welcomed.

It is a many-coloured and many-cultured parish. Trust is a very precious commodity. Because our cultural and spiritual differences are acknowledged and accepted, in fact we love and enjoy them. Each one of us is independent, has personal integrity; we value ourselves. We see love as a verb, actively offering whatever is

way that we learned that when we read Scripture it is, in truth, Scripture that is always reading us.

One day we were practising the use of that lovely, under-used gift, the imagination. Our small group had been taking turns lifting an invisible feather from the ground when Fr Ces Dennehy joined us wanting to know what we were doing. John Elvidge, teasing, told him that there was a huge rock on the ground and he was to pick it up. Who could forget the virtuoso performance we then witnessed? Father Ces heaved the rock into his arms, every muscle straining, veins standing out on his neck, knees buckling, blood rushing to his face. When at last he dropped his invisible burden, jumping back so that it did not land on his toes, the whole group broke into spontaneous applause, and the good Presbyterian who had proposed the exercise walked across the circle and embraced his brother. For all

those who could read the symbolism of that particular moment, here was a passionate, dedicated, great-hearted priest.

It was high summer and each evening we walked to the sea to swim. On one

*...a time to take our
respective jewels and
return them to each
other..*

such occasion Hans-Ruedi was dumped by a huge wave and lost his glasses. Everyone engaged in the search, to no avail. This was no ordinary loss. He could see virtually nothing without them. Pamela Gruber, secretary of the NZ Council of Churches, knew intuitively that there are some crises that have only a Catholic solution! She turned to Fr Kevin Burns and asked him to open up the Catholic network. Kevin rang Catholic

optometrist, Albert Rose, took him the prescription and Hans-Ruedi had his glasses first thing the next morning.

When it was all over, I came away with a lasting personal insight about the Reformation. In those 400 years of what seemed culpable separation, something had been happening by God's providence. It seemed to me that the Protestants had taken the Bible and safeguarded it as a sacred treasure, developing their knowledge of it, polishing it, holding it carefully as a precious trust.

We Catholics had done the same with the Eucharist. We were now at the moment in time where we would take our respective jewels and return them to each other with all the theological insights we had each developed and hoarded over the centuries. By sharing in that unforgettable seminar we had been privileged to be part of one such moment in the continuing history of God's people. ■

come to the water?

needed to those who may be grieving, disadvantaged in a financial, emotional or spiritual way. This extends out to include

My dream parish

Lorraine O'Hagan

our town and beyond.

We have fun. Occasionally we break bread together sharing our food and drink, the last time being when we were having our 3-yearly election for a new bishop. Isaac and Natalie had done a good job and we were sorry when their term ended but it was great to see them healed of past hurts and back doing the job he does so well. We make music, we use our bodies as well as our minds to praise God. It's an exciting, happening place. There is opportunity to consider challenges to change through education and the exchange of ideas. Teenage peo-

ple really stand out with brightly coloured hair and different clothes. They are exploring values, challenging our beliefs, society's standards, before they put on their cloaks of responsibility.

Babies and newcomers are welcomed into the community at the time of communal prayer, and the grandparent generation offer young families their practical support. When a member is sick or hurting, friends gather around them touching, praying and anointing. Our dead parish family are not forgotten. We gather at Easter to talk about them, cry for them, laugh with them as our spirits join in remembrance.

Tai Chi and Yoga are available for meditation. Our communal prayer is not a set piece, but is always centred on the Eucharist and mainly Scripture, but also words of inspired men and women. Music, singing, dancing are one way we glorify God and express our joy. We talk

about the reading, trying to see how we could live it out during the coming week. What is this person saying? We take the reading, worrying it like a dog with a cushion, trying to get at the stuffing, the core, then teasing it out and knitting it into our living. Each gathering starts with our talking to each other of how we got on last week; we reconcile each other, bless each other. We have in common our quest to find and become Christ to all we meet.

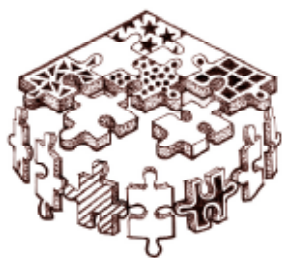
Our parish is life – living and giving. It is growing. It is a choice place. It is a deep pool. And we are all in it. Some are diving deep, searching the bottom for hidden treasures, some are soaring up, up right out of the pool in their joy and exhilaration. Some are splashing, laughing, teasing. Some are floating, thinking. Babies are sleeping, rocked gently by the waves. But we are surrounded by and bathed in the essential water that cleanses and renews.

Won't you come to the water?

(from a parishioner of St Mary's, Carterton)

Sharing Our Traditions

Patricia Stevenson, RSJ



A few years ago two Josephite Sisters, Patricia Stevenson and Lyndall Brown, formed a new community in Stoke, near Nelson. They called it Beth Mishteth.

Beth Mishteth – the *house of the community banquet* – was founded in the tradition of Mary Mackillop, who had a special sympathy for people in rural areas. This image of a banquet which evokes lavishness and liberality, reminded us of the universal call to wholeness and holiness which Jesus preached to rich and poor alike.

When we came to the Nelson province it was to be a resource. We were prepared to wait to discover where our ministry would lead us. Our very first gathering comprised women from a variety of denominations, and so we developed ecumenically.

Adults who fill the pews on a Sunday morning belong to one of two major groupings*. The first are those *still in the process of acquiring a religion*. Their identity comes from belonging to a clearly defined group. To be Catholic, or Anglican, or Methodist, gives them an identity. This is the 'tribal' stage, and is a vitally important stage of religious development.

But, to use the metaphor suggested by one member of our group, it is a 'walled garden'. The garden provides all that is necessary for spiritual well-being. To leave the garden, or even to open the

door, could threaten the security of the group. New ideas or different opinions are disturbing, so are to be rejected.

The second group are those who, formed in a tradition, are now open to the wider world. They see themselves as religious in a particular way. It is as if they are now comfortable to open the garden door, and allow passage between one world and another. Rather than being threatened by different spiritual paths they recognise the call to be in relationship with all those engaged in the religious quest. Other quests can be seen as valid without losing the value of one's own particular way. It would seem that it is impossible to have an ecumenical heart until this second stage has been reached.

Through our regular prayer together, our discussions and the enjoyment of each other's company, we seek to make available the treasures of the Christian tradition. Our focus is on our growth together as disciples of Christ; although people from different communities

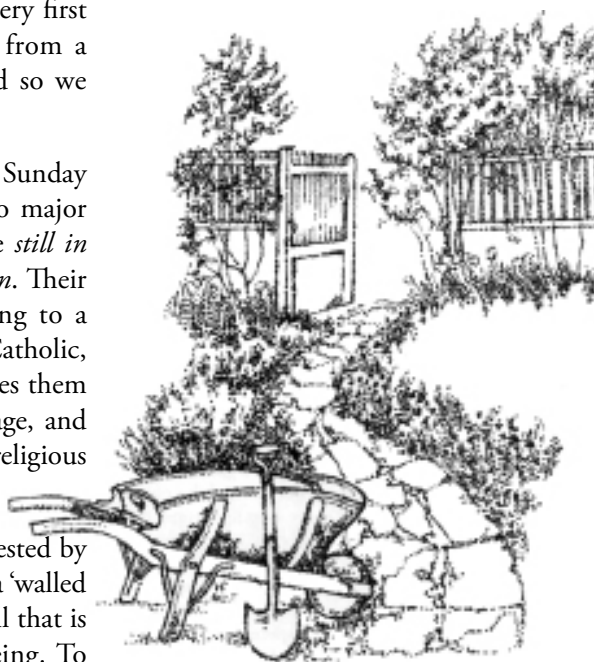
make up the group it is not our differences that interest us but our search for authenticity.

When I asked the group what ecumenism meant for them, one person quoted Joy Cowley's prayer: "In our diversity you are our common language, and when we meet you in each other there is recognition and rejoicing" (*Psalms Down Under* p 61). For some it was having a community which challenged them beyond the experiences of their formative communities. They saw the new group as offering possibilities for transformation.

One person saw the ecumenical nature of the group as a sign that what might be impossible to achieve at a denomination to denomination level, becomes possible when people meet at the level of mutual searching. As she expressed it: "I feel more at home with this group than I do with some members of my own denomination."

People who find themselves away from the active participation in their local parish life, can see groups such as ours as a way of keeping in touch with the tradition. We would not claim to be a 'basic Christian community' according to the common definitions, but our experience has given us an insight into possible future developments within the Christian Church as people struggle with outmoded ways of being community, with loss of meaning, with loss of Christian companionship.

Once again history is suggesting to us: *in the dark wait and watch – in hope that the new is emerging.* ■



* This distinction comes from Gabriel Moran's book *Religious Education Development*.

Taizé – Praying Together

Taizé is a little town in Burgundy in Eastern France. In 1940, at the darkest moment in World War II, a group of young Protestants gathered there to pray for reconciliation, and started to live a monastic life together under the leadership of Roger Schutz. Brother Roger, now in his 80s, still leads a community of many denominations including Catholic and Orthodox. Its mission of peace and reconciliation and the distinctive style of prayer and worship has spread throughout the world



My 'journey' to Taizé really began in the 1970s when a Brother from the community visited Dunedin. It continued through the years since then as I became involved with Taizé retreats at Teschemakers, with the monthly Taizé prayer times in Dunedin and with my use of the hauntingly beautiful chants during retreats or reflective prayer days. And here I was at 4 pm on Saturday August 29, 1998, stepping onto a huge double-decker bus in Birmingham, England, to begin the journey with 16 others, down to London, through the Channel tunnel and across France. We reached Taizé at 9 am on Sunday morning. The place was alive with young people – 5,000 of them who were heaving their packs into dozens of buses and giving a final hug to friends as they left after their time in this amazing place of peace and reconciliation.

Our adult group was warmly welcomed, allotted sleeping spaces and given meal tickets. Taizé is definitely a young person's place – adults do come and go – indeed one woman from Finland

(and a dear friend of the Community) had been coming for 31 years! But the young people come in droves, and many take their summer break at Taizé – cooking, running the shop, leading groups, managing the administration – all the necessary tasks involved in organising so many thousands of people. As I paid

Pilgrimage of Grace

Danielle Melton OP

my fees to a young Italian, Giorgio, then was led off to my barracks/bunkroom by a delightful French girl, I was struck by the enthusiasm, the warmth and the élan with which these young folk manage their responsibilities and organise the whole place.

Life is very simple at Taizé: each day begins with Morning Prayer at 8.30 am followed by a simple breakfast of bread, butter, chocolate – and coffee, tea or chocolate. I came to enjoy chocolate with bread and butter! It was provided instead of jam because during the summer the wasps are a menace. Scripture

study began at 10 am. Our leader, Br José Ramon, was Puerto Rican, fluent in French and English and possessing a whimsical sense of humour. He gave his reflections in both languages, while English or French speakers from any other of the numerous nationalities translated for their people. About 10.30 these national groups would go off together for discussion and sharing on the Scripture passages which were based around a section of Br Roger's 1998 letter entitled *Joy Untold*. I found these times rich and gentle as each of us listened to the others and broke open the Word from our varied experiences. A time alone followed, with Midday Prayer before a simple lunch.

When cleaning up was over the countryside waited to be explored. Everywhere from the hill on which Taizé is built, were fields of hay, cropping, animals or vineyards waiting for the last warm weeks of sun before harvesting. One very hot afternoon, I remember, our group walked down through the tiny village and found a cycle track which stretched along beside the highway.

We walked along this for three or four kms, sampling the blackberries and gradually becoming hotter and hotter! Then, round the next corner we spotted a cafe amidst a cluster of houses beside the road. It was such a relief to sit down under a wide umbrella and enjoy a long, cool beer!

Supper was a simple meal also and served, like the other meals, on a plastic tray with two plastic bowls, one for food and the other for drink, and a spoon only to eat with. At first, my home and boarding-school training baulked at this, but I soon became adept and quite unfazed at cutting or spreading with the spoon handle! We took turns at serving the food from the enormous containers. I felt like the queen of the soup ladle, dishing out bread, soup, rice or whatever, hygienically gloved of course, to hundreds of waiting hungry pilgrims. Sometimes it took three-quarters of an hour for the queues to go through, and the first would be lining up for seconds!

At 8 pm we gathered for Evening Prayer in the Church of Reconciliation, the heart of Taizé. It is a simple building, very large, able to accommodate thousands – yet a place of silence and peace. Several icons adorn the sides, but the focal point is the shrine of lights at the front with its brilliant swathes of red, orange and gold cloth, gently draped behind the arrangement of candles. As the bell rings to summon us to prayer, the 80 Brothers troop in, white-robed, from their various workplaces: printery, pottery, studio. They take their places at prayer stools in the centre with Br Roger at the back. He is frequently surrounded by small children who light the oil lamps and everyone's candles on Saturday evenings. I was touched by the way they came to Br Roger for a blessing; the loving reverence and respect with which he gently signed each child's forehead was, for me, a powerful image of God's compassion.

The prayer, as with everything else about Taizé, is simple; chants, psalms, intercessions, silence – a profound and lengthy silence: a silence which draws

you to "let go and let God". At the close of each prayer time Br Roger rises and with his tiny, smiling, skipping little friends, makes his way out. Several of the Brothers remain behind in the evenings to be available for a 'heart to heart' chat. The singing continues, sometimes for hours, but we are free to go; some of us to queue for a shower before bed, others to drink wine, beer, coffee etc. at Oyak, a tiny store on the edge of Taizé. It seemed to be the great unwinding place for the young folk after a strenuous day's prayer and work. Limit – one drink per person! I preferred that week to hold the silence and to reflect on the richness of such simple days, so climbed aloft to my bunk.

Watch a

I loved my week at Taizé with its gentle rhythms, the deep peace and the utter simplicity of life. Each time I speak about it, I can still hear the music, see the thousands of young people with their flickering candles and experience again the healing peace.

Footnote: If you are in Europe it is surprisingly easy to get to Taizé. From London or Birmingham there is the amazing bus service £99 return! All or any information you require can be found on the Internet e-mail. ■

email = meetings @taize.fr
website = www.taize.fr



Jesu! Remember me.. Taizé prayer is wrapped in silence and mystery, contemplation of the Cross of Christ, illuminated by the light of many candles.

and Pray

Taizé prayer

Taizé prayer groups exist all over New Zealand. In North-East Valley, in Dunedin, a group has been meeting together each month for Taizé prayer for the past ten years. It started simply with a small ecumenical prayer group who were introduced to Taizé music and worship by a Dominican Sister who had visited Taizé. For seven years the group always met at the same venue, the chapel belonging to Salmond Hall, a Presbyterian University hostel. However, in recent times the monthly

gathering has moved around the different churches in the Valley.

The core group who keep the movement going have a special concern to retain the 'purity' of the worship – to prevent it being slanted towards a particular cause, however good that may be. There is always an emphasis on peace and reconciliation and the monthly theme is often linked with the Sunday readings. The prayer time is quiet and contemplative. The group gathers by candle light round a simple cross and an icon of Christ. There are psalms and Taizé chants interspersed with silence. The emphasis is on simplicity. There are no notices and socialising is not encouraged. People simply come, pray and disperse.

Sometimes, however, individuals may stay behind and share their troubles with another.

In the Valley all the denominations have been regularly present, with a group of Catholics and Anglicans being especially faithful over the ten year period. In France – indeed in many parts of the world – Taizé worship has had a special attraction for the young. The NE Valley group, however, has been predominantly patronised by older Christians, including a few who have no particular affiliation or who may feel themselves to be on the fringe of the Church. The meetings take place monthly on a Sunday evening, lasting about an hour. They are locally advertised. ■

M.H.



emplating the unadorned
es

A well-spring of hope for the young

I first visited Taizé in 1982. On Palm Sunday I was travelling through the quiet villages of Burgundy, and arrived on the hilltop of Taizé to be welcomed by a number of young people speaking various languages. At first I felt quite overwhelmed by the diversity of people and tongues. Tired and cold, I rolled out my sleeping bag in a large tent and slept. In the morning I went to church for prayer. This was another overwhelming experience: about 8,000 young people sitting silently in prayer!

That Holy Week was spent listening to Bible introductions and in chatter with other young people from all over the world. We would talk about the meaning of different passages of Scripture and share what it meant to live as a Christian. Three times a day we gathered for common prayer with the Brothers of Taizé. The rest of the time we would eat, talk, sing, dance, laugh and maybe spend some quiet time in prayer.

I went back to Taizé a couple of years later with the intention of staying a week – and stayed two years! I was asked to help with the welcoming of young people. After a few weeks I was invited to travel and help prepare for Taizé gatherings in Denmark, Sweden and Spain. When I got back I decided to stay and work as a volunteer.

All year round Taizé welcomes the young – and the not so young. My job was to help with the cooking and cleaning – and the welcoming. At

the heart of Taizé are the Brothers, a community of about a hundred monks coming from many Christian denominations. They do not want to form a movement or organisation for the young. What they offer is an opportunity for people to pray, to share and listen, and to discover the universality of the Church. They encourage the pilgrims to build trust and reconciliation within their own communities and across the divides of Churches and cultures.

The Brothers also travel to different parts of the world and experience the life of local Churches. This year for instance, Brother Ghislain visited New Zealand in June and he plans to return for two more weeks in April 1999. Some of the Brothers even live in small fraternities in Asia, Africa and North and South America, sharing in the lives of the poor in slums, run-down neighbourhoods and shanty towns.

One highlight of my time at Taizé was the visit of Pope John Paul II. He said: "One passes through Taizé as one passes close to a spring of water. The travellers stop, quench their thirst, and continue on their way." For me too Taizé is a well-spring of hope and a place of healing in the search of the young to discover community. With my thirst quenched I left to stay with friends whom I met there and who were living in *L'Arche*. But that is another story. ■

Gerry O'Farrell

The Church will Rise Again!



The world over, bishops and pastors lament declining church attendance and fewer ‘vocations’. Last month Anthony Philpott challenged the bishops of England and Wales to take a broader view. His message could equally apply in New Zealand

Catholic clergy have a sense of crisis and a feeling of guilt. No wonder. We are the generation of priests and bishops who have lived across the watershed from boom to decline. We have presided over what, in statistical terms, is a reversal in the Church's fortunes.

What have we done wrong that our forefathers did right? Is it our fault that things have got into this mess? That people are not coming to Mass, that the seminaries are half-empty? We think back to the 1950s, when we were opening churches left and right, and talking about a place in a Catholic school for every Catholic child, when there were flocks of people coming into the Church every year. There are those, indeed, who would lay the change at our door. The only way forward, those people would say, is back. Restore the attitudes and discipline of those years, they would tell us, and you may save something from the shambles.

It is high time for some reflection on all of this, in the light of the gospel, starting with the Resurrection, and the appearances of Jesus afterwards. The risen Christ was different. He was not a resuscitated corpse. The post-Resurrection account tells us how often the disciples

did not recognise him at first. They themselves were profoundly changed by their experience. Their shame at abandoning him in Gethsemane, the discovery of their own cowardice and fear, the sobering, maturing experience of despair; and then the realisation that, in spite of all this, the risen Lord was inviting them back to intimacy with himself and responsibility in his Church – all these things changed them irrevocably. They were new people, just as Christ was new.

The coming Church, whose shape we cannot fully discern, will be new. It will be a resurrected, sobered, mature Church, humbler, realising that all is gift. It will look back on those years of building, as having been appropriate perhaps for their time, but at the same time flawed. It will see that the Church of the 1950s was quite materialistic, rather pompous and self-satisfied, given a bit to scoring off other Christians, not at all thinking, like Paul VI, of the Church as always in need of reform, not really seeing the need for a Council, rather proud of itself, and very, very clerical. It was a Church much pre-occupied with nationality and roots. Are you Polish, Irish, Italian? If not, what right have you to call yourself a Catholic?

If we are now undergoing a crucifixion, it is in order that we may rise again, entirely by the grace of God, to a new place. The Church will be purified, by God's unmerited kindness, from much of the baggage which has encumbered it in our lifetime. So the process in which we are engaged is an authentic one. It is a Gospel process. This should give us great hope. Questions like "Whose fault is it?" are irrelevant. After the Resurrection Jesus did not indulge in recriminations. He said: *Peace be with you: receive the Holy Spirit*. You cannot forecast in a demographic survey what the Holy Spirit will do.

A second reflection turns on the job description which Jesus gave himself in the synagogue at Nazareth, and which is recorded for us by Luke (4:17ff.):

"He unrolled the scroll, and found the place where it was written:
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."
The two dominant themes in it are Jubilee, and Messiah.

Jubilee, proclaiming the Lord's year of favour, is an event. It happens periodically, not all the time. It is a moment when debts are forgiven, when land is redistributed, when exiles are allowed home, when a line is drawn under the legal proceedings of recent years, when, in short, there is an amnesty and a new beginning. The Church recognises the need for this rhythm in Christian life by holding holy years: the millennium celebrations are in this context. There are blessed moments: moments when the impossible becomes possible; moments when the unthinkable becomes thinkable.

These moments are not as predictable as holy years. They do not come every 25 years. God's ways are not ours. But come they do. The moment of our Church will come again, through circumstances we cannot foresee. The Jews in exile could not foresee that Cyrus would come to power in Babylon, and allow them all to go home. When they went home, they tried to set the clock back. It was the only way they knew. When our time comes, please God we shall be wiser and accept that the Church must have a new shape.

The coming church will be resurrected, sobered, mature, humbler. ..

The new shape will be less to do with tribal loyalty and team spirit, which have played so much of a part in our history, at times degenerating into the mutual insults and brickbats of opposing football teams. It will be less preoccupied with the hierarchical arrangement of the clergy. We shall, inevitably, grow out of these things.

It is interesting to see how Paul VI, at the beginning of his encyclical *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, talks about the purpose of evangelisation by the Church. He does not describe it as gaining new members for the Church, but as seeking to transform humanity from within and make

it new. The Church evangelises, he says, when by the sheer divine power of the message it proclaims, it seeks to convert personal and collective consciousness. In other words we must have a longing to implant integrity, uprightness and justice in the culture which shapes human lives, whether they become card-carrying Catholics or not.

Bernard Sesboué SJ, a French theologian, in his book *N'ayez pas peur*, says that the Church today has particularly porous boundaries. He explains what he means. In many cases we cannot hope to convert people in the strictly confessional sense, but have to settle for conversions which you might call existential: movements towards true life, Sesboué calls them. Bishop Georges Gilson of Le Mans, in the book he wrote for his diocesan synod in 1988, contrasts *light of the world* and *salt of the earth*. *Light of the world* is the institutional Church as lighthouse, inspiring, leading, offering people the sure way home. *Salt of the earth* is the Church buried, half-anonymous, in society, forming opinion, offering hope to the desperate, putting love where otherwise there would be none.

Both light and salt are necessary. If the new shape of the Church is to be more salt, less light, perhaps this redresses a historical balance. Paul VI again: "We need to evangelise the culture and the cultures of humankind... not in a decorative way, as if applying a coat of paint to their surface, but in depth, penetrating to their very roots."

For instance, going to Mass on Sunday is not the sole criterion of "good" and "bad" in Catholicism. The word "lapsed" has a lot to answer for. It judges people from outside, and relegates them too easily to the exterior darkness. The vast mass of humanity, Catholic or not, will never go to Mass. Nor will they ever celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. Even within the Church this is seen as very much a minority exercise. We must stop being anxious and depressed about it. God's forgiving hands are not tied. If

going to confession were the only means of being saved, then Our Lord's death and Resurrection would have been singularly ineffective.

We know these things. But sometimes we live and think and pray as if we did not. There is still so much reason for hope, and so much to work for. To enable men and women to bring out into the open their innate goodness, in whatever way, and live by it, is no mean vocation.

The vast mass of humanity, Catholic or not, will never go to Mass

When Jesus speaks to the people in the synagogue, he clearly offers himself as the Messiah, the saviour. It is a highly personal affair. The Father has selected him as the channel of sight for the blind, of freedom for the oppressed, of good news for the poor. We must therefore concentrate on him, not on theories or ideologies. Leadership and perfecting of faith depend on him, not on the frenzied activity of priests or bishops, rushing about like hamsters on a treadmill.

Knowing Jesus opens the channel, and eternal life flows into the world: not knowing *about* him, but knowing him. The Church is not a business. It is the body of Christ. It has had, is having, and will have, its times of dereliction and suffering. But ultimately it will be revealed as the new Jerusalem: this is its destiny, and each of us makes a particular contribution to it.

The Book of Revelation (21:3-4) speaks of "the home of God among mortals":

*He will dwell with them,
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them.*

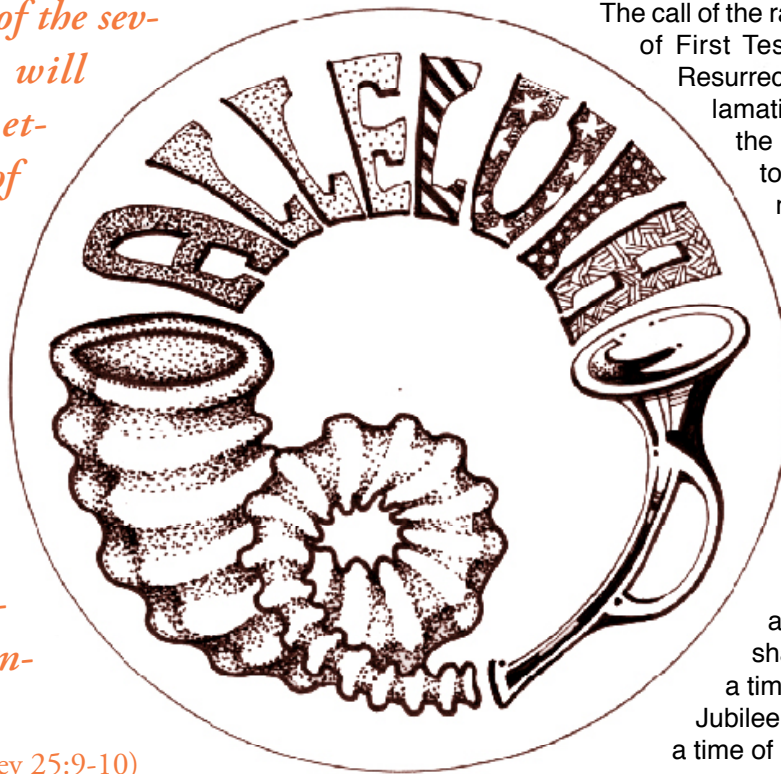
*He will wipe away every tear
from their eyes.*

*Death will be no more
mourning and crying and pain will
be no more*

for the first things have passed away. ■

On the tenth day of the seventh month you will sound the trumpet-call; on the Day of Expiation you will sound the trumpet throughout the land. You will declare this 50th year to be sacred and proclaim the liberation of all the country's inhabitants!

(Lev 25:9-10)



The call of the ram's horn on the occasion of First Testament Jubilee and the Resurrection Alleluia are both proclamations of hope and faith in the God of life. They are calls to the community to recognise God as the source of life and as the One who invites the community to participate anew in that life. At Jubilee time, according to Leviticus, the earth and the people were to be given rest so that they might experience renewal; burdensome obligations in regard to slaves, debts and land were to be lifted; all creation was equally to share the Creator's bounty in a time of celebration. The 50th Jubilee year was revered as a time of blessing and a time to put things right.

Does God Really Care?



Theologian Helen Bergin, OP skilfully weaves together the themes of Jubilee, Resurrection and the mission of the Spirit, into a message of hope for humankind. This article is an abridged version of a much longer talk

Recently, I heard of a Jesuit priest living in Dubrovnik who told a visitor about one night in 1991 when his city experienced 20,000 shells bursting on to it. His response to the visitor was, "But, the world seemed not to care!" This Jesuit priest is not alone in pondering the question. A Christian catechist in present-day Sudan expressed similar thoughts when he said earlier this year that he and other Christians feel forgotten. The catechist said, "There is a Church here; but does the rest of the Church not want us any longer?"

In our country today what is the question raised by the suicidal male, the elderly woman raped in her home, the taxi-driver recovering from racist battering, the mother forced to consider "community taskforce", the teenage boy afraid of school bullies, the Maori struggling with lack of economic opportunity, the parent affected by a factory lay-off, the woman or man struggling with sexual identity issues?

To these people do we, as Church, have any response? I believe that a study of Resurrection and of Jubilee points to a God who profoundly cares.

He is Risen, Alleluia!

In the raising of Jesus the world experiences the culmination of God's breaking through into the world which began at creation and continued in Jesus' incarnate life. The Resurrection is a vignette of all God's overtures towards the world. We are well aware of the many attempts by New Testament authors to capture even tiny glimpses of Resurrection. We learn of Jesus *appearing* not only from gospel accounts but also from Paul's letter to the Corinthians. We read about an empty tomb. The first Christian community testifies that the one who actually died is no longer dead. The risen Christ is present with them.

After the Resurrection the disciples, scattered in disillusionment, reconnect with one another. The gospels describe them gathered in a room when Jesus comes among them and breathes on

them. Even before the risen Jesus is acknowledged, his Spirit is already active among individual disciples leading them to reconnect with one another. It is the breath that transforms vulnerable disciples into new people. John names Jesus' gift of breath *the Holy Spirit*.

One strong First Testament description for the Spirit is God's breath which creates, keeps things in existence and restores people to life. Psalm 104 proclaims: *You take back your breath and they die!* Ezekiel pleads over dead bones: *Come from the four winds, breath; breathe on these dead, so that they may come to life!* There is power in such breath.

Through the transforming breath the disciples are invited to love afresh. In John's account Peter provides such an example as he attempts to cope both with previous frailty and with his deep love for Jesus. *Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep!* It is a struggle to receive forgiveness. Peter and the small forgiven group of followers come to understand the meaning of Jesus' presence in their world. Their renewed hope encourages hope in others: *That very day about 3000 were added to their number.*

After the Resurrection the disciples are newly focussed. They see Jesus – but not immediately. They can touch him, but not cling. As they let go their previous intimacy with him, they experience his presence anew in the gift of his Spirit. It is an “in-between” experience. Receiving the hope offered in the Spirit they become givers of hope to others.

There are some immediate practical consequences: the sharing of resources, the risk of adapting the gospel message, new insights about God's Spirit in the world and about the inclusiveness of God's community. As failures are forgiven and hope returns, the disciples are once more empowered.

The Christian community carries on this presence of the Spirit within our world today. Can it not show the Jesuit priest in Dubrovnik and the catechist in Sudan that the world and the Church really do care?

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me!

Resurrection, however, cannot be separated from Jesus' life and death. In *Luke* Chapter 4 Jesus openly proclaims: *the Spirit of the Lord is upon me*. Jesus re-iterates the prophetic voice of Isaiah: good news to all afflicted, gift of sight to the blind, liberation to those imprisoned and oppressed, breaking unjust fetters, and giving pardon to the oppressed and those indebted. It will be *a year of favour from the Lord*.

This event occurs on the Sabbath day in Nazareth. Some listeners are filled with amazement at the gracious words heard, but others attempt to destroy Jesus. From the beginning, his message becomes a sign of contradiction. He is announcing *a year of favour from the Lord*, which echoes the *Leviticus* Jubilee invitation. The Jubilee ideal of setting aside a period of special time was an invitation to the people to remember God's saving deeds in the Covenant and honour God's claims of liberation in the present. Now, with Jesus the opportunity is offered, amidst usual activity, for people to heed his call and join him in liberating others.

..suffered under Pontius Pilate, died and was buried

While Jesus' life is directed overtly towards the liberation of the poor, his death is even more a sign of his solidarity with outsiders. In Jesus, God-become-human dies on a cross outside the walls of Jerusalem, rejected by the politically powerful, by ordinary crowds and even by disciples. The antagonism met early in Nazareth has grown into widespread rejection of Jesus' person and message. The messenger must be eradicated with the message. God-made-human experiences his dying moments with the refusal of society. Does not this Jesus still stand today alongside those who are rejected?

The theologian Jurgen Moltmann suggests that the central meaning of Jesus' death lies in his sense of rejection by his

Father. Even God appears helpless to change what humans do. Jesus' death impacts on the very being of God. Moltmann reminds us of the need to keep the cross stark and unadorned in order to see its cross-beams reaching out, up, and within creation – for the salvation of the cosmos. Jesus' death is real and frightening: nothing less than our attempt to reject God from our midst.

By contrast the extraordinary nature of God's commitment to the world is only fully manifest in the Resurrection. From the failure, death and hopelessness of the cross, the raising of Jesus to life becomes the unexpected symbol of God's victory over death and sin. God unceasingly offers liberation, even when life seems totally gone. When Jesus is violently removed from the world, God responds by a further gift of personal presence. Resurrection is the surpassing sign of God's solidarity with humanity and creation.

Jesus' death is real and frightening – nothing less than our attempt to reject God from our midst

Come Holy Spirit!

God's response in the Spirit, offered with Resurrection, is threefold: the Spirit who is creative; the Spirit who invites us to forge connections; the Spirit who challenges and causes us to be a prophetic people.

Creative Power of the Spirit

The second verse of our Bible states: *Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, with a divine wind sweeping over the waters.* We often speak of the Spirit of God as the creating presence of God. Here is the divine presence preparing to bring something into being.

The creative Spirit is associated with images of fire burning within hearts, wind blowing, earth bringing forth fruits and water flowing in abundance. One special characteristic of God's Spirit is its *elusiveness*. In knowing the Spirit one encounters the mysterious face of

God which, nonetheless, one recognises as God coming close by. Wherever creative signs exist, there is the energy of this Spirit, drawing forth new life, provoking different life or encouraging fuller life.

Jesus' reception of the Spirit in the waters of baptism climaxes in his acceptance of baptism unto death. The raising of Jesus from death is the most creative action of the Spirit. This same Spirit also raises the collapsed community of disciples. And it continues to raise the poor and all those who put their trust in God. Resurrected from death Jesus becomes the well and source of ongoing life.

The Spirit Forging Connections

A second feature of the Spirit is to bring people together. Scattered disciples return to one another and receive the Easter gift of Jesus' Spirit. Contemporary theologians speak of the Spirit as God who is "in relation to". The Spirit, mutual love between Jesus and God, is the one who invites into relationship. The Spirit relates people with the divine, with one another and with the earth. The Spirit is the One working in the space between different entities to bring them close. The Spirit is the "communing" gift of the Easter Jesus: a God intimately close and active. Who dares to guess the connections that the Spirit is presently forging?

The Spirit forming a Prophetic Community in the World

Thirdly, the Spirit forms a prophetic community which enfleshes the caring and challenging face of God. At Pentecost Jesus' Spirit made the fearful community fearless. The Spirit not only creates and forges connections; it then sends forth. The Christian community is made one people in Jesus' Spirit, a people whose lives proclaim the liberating power of the Good News. Such a community becomes visibly the sign of a God who cares.

When the Spirit was given, according to John's gospel, Jesus told the disciples

John refers is the sin of disbelief. The Christian community, therefore, professes belief in the Jesus of Galilee and Jerusalem, in the Jesus of the cross and Resurrection, and in Jesus now present in his Spirit. It professes belief in the goodness and uniqueness of humanity, especially in the weakest and most despised. It also professes belief in the goodness and giftedness of the earth.

Christians are people who involve themselves directly in the struggle to bring life. They live out the paradox of life through death. The gift of the Spirit given by the risen Jesus was the fruit of Jesus' self-emptying love on the cross. If the entire created universe is surrounded by the Spirit, then no single, tiny or rejected being stands outside its influence. Creating, connecting, driving forward, the Spirit is God alive in our midst.

Jubilee and Resurrection

How then might we connect the effects of Resurrection with the celebration of Jubilee? Let me suggest three ways.

Whether or not the liberties proclaimed in ' proclamation of Jubilee ever happened, the ideals, nonetheless, represented a vision of hope for Israel. The people were called to honour God as source of their land, provider of their produce and as the reason for justice and equality among all. Both Jubilee and Resurrection speak of God's liberating presence being recognised. Both speak about communities of people being transformed. Both speak about the particularity of the earth's processes being acknowledged.

Our world needs such a vision. A theologian, John Taylor, says: "When all is said and done, what we desperately need is not so much to discover a word as to discover a vision: a vision of the many-splendoured glory of God within everything, the missing of which has turned our 'estranged faces' hard and tense" (). Resurrection and Jubilee speak

of such a vision.

A rhetorical refrain in , the account of First Testament Jubilee, is . It was because of God that the earth belonged to no one person or family, and was therefore to lie fallow for a time. It was God's earth: human beings were stewards. God had once freed the Hebrew nation, and Jubilee was an occasion to recall God as Liberator. It was a time to make explicit again the ongoing redeeming presence of God in people's lives.

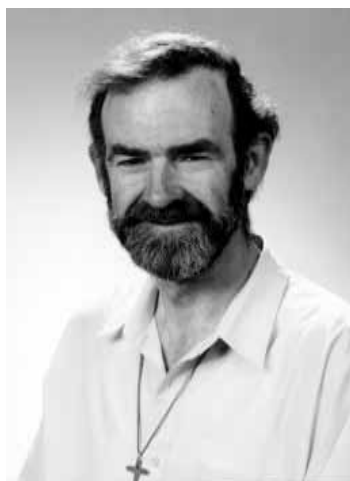
Likewise, Resurrection expresses God's pre-eminence vis-à-vis the created world. Resurrection encouraged the first disciples to preach God's liberating message to people of different races, customs and social groups. All were equally invited to participate in the reign of God.

Jubilee began with a proclamation calling people to take a Sabbath year (or years!). While the earth lay fallow, people were to do no work and the fields would produce sufficient food for all. People were invited to recognise their dependence on God and to live in God's presence. In our day, the contemplative recalling of Resurrection, especially on our Sabbath day, is an invitation to us to recognise God's life-giving presence, much as the first disciples were invited to experience God's totally new pres-

...no single, tiny or rejected being stands outside the Spirit's influence

ence among them. We Christians have nothing to proclaim unless it be that God is among us, despite every sign to the contrary. This message is alive only if the messengers themselves live it.

Jubilee, likewise, offered a social critique. It invited the people to act out of concern for the whole community and not just from family or local interest. Land was to be restored to its original owners, and even then it ▷▷



***Peter Murnane OP, in
a homily for Mission
Sunday, identifies
a new meaning for
Mission – seeking and
confronting the evil
within each of us***

Conquering the Enemy within

On Mission Sunday we were given to read that curious scene from , where Moses, from a hill-top, is praying for the Hebrew army as it fights the Amalekites. While his arms are raised in prayer, the army wins. When he gets tired and drops them, the army starts to lose. Moses – or his helpers Aaron and Hur – had the clever idea of sitting him on a rock and holding up his arms. By clever teamwork they brought about success in the battle.

This little ruse has always left me a little uneasy. Because it seems to cheapen prayer? Perhaps more because – in that blunt way typical of the First Testament – it ends up with the slaughter of the ‘enemy’. Are we meant to believe that prayer will bring us success in battle? Is this what our Church’s mission is about?

There is no doubt that the Catholic schooling I received – before the Second Vatican Council – was strongly flavoured with that idea. We were a Church Militant; we were, moreover, under siege. “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it” was declared triumphantly at the beginning of the Catholic Hour on Sunday night radio. Armies of

missionaries had brought The Faith to all parts of the world, generally where European countries had colonized. As Catholic youngsters we learned – rightly – to admire these courageous missionaries. And our generation joined them in droves, to help in their work of spreading the Catholic Faith.

But after the Second Vatican Council and 32 years of work as a priest, I have been helped to see that mission does not mean ‘overcoming the enemy’, be they pagan or Presbyterian; atheist or Moslem. It does not mean bringing others to join my group, or even necessarily hoping that they will do so.

There is no need to be ashamed of the armies of religious who went out bravely to bring schooling, medicine and Christian catechism to remote areas. Think of those Sisters who wore heavy habits in scorching heat or tropical humidity; the religious who left home and family, to return but seldom. But we need to admit frankly that they were a phenomenon that is not being continued. Could it be that their work was to prepare themselves, and then the people they served, for a deeper inner journey of the heart that God calls each of us to make?

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actually belonged to God. Slaves were to be released and returned to their families. Those with debts were to be pardoned. Jubilee was a call to begin again by recognising the equality of all, a time for individuals to be in solidarity with others and with the earth.

What, therefore, might these implications mean for us as Resurrection people called to celebrate Jubilee?

Perhaps actions of repentance and forgiveness might be one particular gift from the Christian community to our world. Forgiveness, as an act of non-violence, can break a cycle of disunity among human beings. Might not actions of dispossession

emerge from within Christian groups – dispossession of goods, attitudes, ways of acting that impede the growth of wider communities in which Christians live? The return of what fundamentally belonged to God was a key motif in the vision of Jubilee. And might we New Zealanders not engage in creating new connections with those who struggle to survive – let alone live – in this land of bounty?

Conclusion

To return to our opening question: “Does God really care”? For billions of people in our world there is no way for God to express that care other than through the care and love of human beings towards one another. So, what

might this ask of Eritrean and Ethiopian; East Timorese and Indonesian; Pakeha New Zealander and Maori; Tutsi and Hutu; Indian and Pakistani; Albanian and Serb; Asian immigrant and Pakeha New Zealander? Human beings empowered by Jesus’ Spirit can achieve what seem impossible dreams. The Spirit of Jesus hovers continually over burgeoning creation and is able to revivify not only what stalls but even what seems stone dead. Resurrection people are Spirit-led people, creating and forging a new earth for the good of all and for the glory of the Creator.

The year 2000 can be, as was Jubilee of old, *the year of favour from the Lord*. ■

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Is the purpose of all Mission not to 'label' people or tell them what to be, but to teach and empower them for the inner journey, the life-giving encounter of prayer?

It seems that we can begin this inner journey only in the second half of life. In any community a large proportion of people have not come very far along this road. One of its principal discoveries is to find that there are no enemies, no 'sides' until our folly creates them. The troops who laid down their guns to share Christmas, in that famous incident from World War I, knew this better than the generals and politicians who ordered them to slaughter each other.

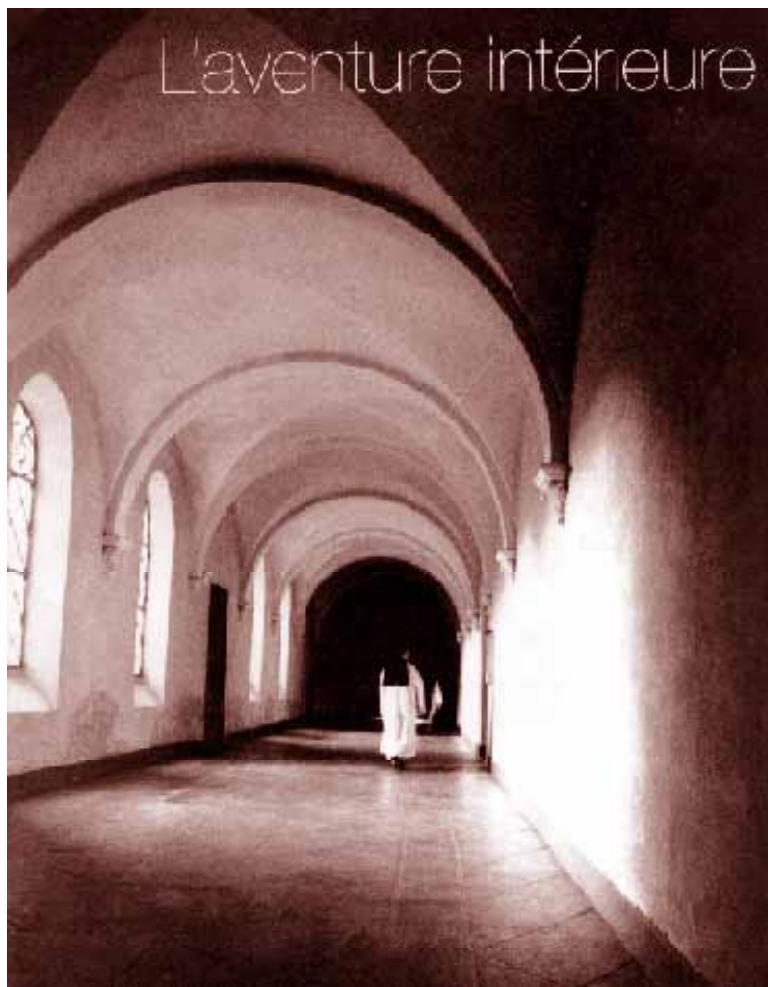
There are no enemies, and so no need to overpower or 'convert' anyone! Not enemies in the form of other persons or groups of people, anyway. It now becomes increasingly clear to me that I am called to find and fight, with prayer and any other device available, those inner things that can destroy me, in common with any human being, and our communities or the whole of society.

They are not hard to find: the *intolerance* that leads us to exclude others through racist attitudes, or even, when they are in our power, to *torture* them, by small ways or great. Today the radio told us that former dictator Pinochet has been arrested, a symbol of thousands horribly maltreated in the cause of greed, disguised as a fight against a political 'enemy'.

There are many other foes, all around us: the *blatantly unjust way our nation's goods are distributed among people*; the *pushing of drugs of addiction like alcohol and tobacco*, or those we make illegal. These foes interact forming subtle alliances,

but perhaps the cruellest, afflicting so many, is *to be or to feel unwanted*.

I will never forget William, a fifteen-year-old whom I met last week. When his parents separated, he was passed between so many foster-homes, suffered so many bruises to his childhood affections, that he taught himself to cope with grief and 'unwantedness' by shutting down his feelings. Now, well taught by our society, he sees nothing wrong with drinking, taking dope to excess, casual sexual liaisons. He takes out his deep anger on us, his teachers,



by shop-lifting, graffiti or stealing cars.

He is not the enemy, yet politicians boast how tough they are against such 'criminals' in order to get votes; and in all developed countries we are building more prisons to house them, and help them learn worse crimes. How can we show each other that the real enemy is the forces in ourselves that have shaped him?

Isn't it our Church's mission to identify and work on these forces? Isn't it time for Christians to forget about planning how to slaughter some group of nasty 'Amalakites'? Long after Moses and Aaron we are invited to see that it is a grave abuse of prayer to ask for the destruction of another person as 'enemy'. Instead, the gospel of Mission Sunday told us to persevere in prayer like a widow banging on the door of an unjust judge, demanding her basic rights. She could not afford to grease his palm, so she had to let him know that she could wear him down.

Jesus was not telling us here that God is mean or deaf, but teaching us to persevere as such brave women do. If we pursue our mission to meet God's mystery in prayer, we will not want to see hostile people annihilated, but will make some amazing inner discoveries. We will recognize the various enemies that lie within ourselves personally – and in our community. If we daily keep our hands raised in prayer, we will have awe in the face of Mystery, but we will ask lots of questions and will bravely challenge each 'unjust judge' we meet in society or in our Church.

We may get badly beaten up along the way – Jesus did! – but we will find an integrated life, therefore success in its deepest, true-

est sense.

"But when the Son of Woman comes, will he find any faith on earth?" n

Peter Murnane is Chaplain to the University of Auckland



Neil Darragh, Director of CIT Auckland, reflects on the traditional November commemoration of the departed. His piece is influenced by the recent death of a close family member

November is the month in the liturgical calendar when we remember our dead. The stories of long dead saints who led holy lives or died heroic deaths are the most edifying. The memories of the recent dead whose lives entwine our own are more disquieting and intense.

Edifying or disquieting, it is worth giving these memories some time of their own. This is a time when we can come to terms with the restless memories of those dyings and deaths too closely insinuated in our own living and dying. The one who died without our consent or approval. The one who died before we were ready. The one who died so messily and grandly. The one whose death we could not resent but who left us with too much somehow of the burden of life. The ones who left so quietly, so strangely, as if they had almost never been here. The ones whose deaths were at least as much relief to us as release to them.

The month of November is a month not just for remembering the dead in a spiritual and edifying way. It is a memory too of our own close struggles and uncertainties with another's dying: the undefined emotions; the untitled numbness as someone close moved slowly or rapidly to the point beyond the reach of affection. And after death, the undramatic and irregular intrusions of an absence – perhaps even, the enfolding of another unlikely presence to which we sense dimly a deep attachment.

In all this, both for our own sake and for the dying friend, we struggle to make some sense of death. There is too much opportunity for cheating here. Deceit in the face of death cheats both the dying

and the healthy: "Let's not talk about death." "It's quality of life that counts." But deceit's opposite, the patronising wisdom of the healthy, is brutality to the dying: "You have to face the fact that you won't ever get better." "She's into denial." The dying have their own timing and their own stages, and as time goes on these have less and less to do with the interests of the healthy.

Is death simply the end? This is the simplest solution. It is also the least consoling. But it ends the struggle to understand, the struggle to reconceive ourselves in a world no longer safe. The simplest solution may not be the truest

but merely the simplest. Perhaps our lives are not so excessively self-enclosed. Are we so self-contained that each of us is trapped inside our individual bodies? Does life simply stop? The old Christian formula states that in death "life is changed not ended".

Death does often seem to be, in the end, a release. Is death then a flight, a release from illness, a spirit leaving a distressed body, an escape to a better world? Is death more a passage than an end? Should the funerals of our friends and relatives, rather than occasions of sadness or grief, be centred on thanksgiving and respectful or joyful memory? This is the most consoling solution. But here again the opportunity for deceit lies close. If the idea that death is simply the end errs too much on the side of simplicity, the idea that death is the spirit leaving a distressed body errs too much on the side of consolation. Were their bodies then so trivial? Were

the dying just spirits enclosed in body shells? Does this mean that the dying are not really living, breathing, feeling, moving, suffering persons?

There is a spiritual tradition within Christianity that flowered particularly during the European Middle Ages which was concerned with what they called *the art of dying*. Dying is neither a passive acceptance of something that happens to us, nor is it something we can take control of. It is an art, a skill by which we thread our way within the intricate process of a surrender of ourselves to God. This is a process in which security surrenders to trust. It

The art of dying

is not simply an ending. Nor is it a rescue from the present world. It is a surrender *into* the intimate and infinite world where alone we can find God. That surrender will not leave us the same – neither physically, nor spiritually, nor psychologically, nor socially. In the Christian understanding this is the art of resurrection.

We would want our own deaths to be a conscious act of self-surrender rather than a tearing from us of something we want to hold on to. At the same time we would not want to give up too easily those gifts of God that have focused our living. We seek the skills to travel this intricate journey well. November is the month in the liturgical calendar when our dead, who themselves learnt too hard too late, struggle now to teach to us the *art of dying well*. ■

When does education start?

In the season when adults may buy expensive toys for children it pays us to stand back and ask what play is all about

Paul Andrews, SJ

You wonder about when to start teaching your children. Jenny is a happy four-year-old, who could play on her own or with other children all day long. You have been hearing about the importance of the early years, and seeing suggestions about teaching toddlers to read in these receptive years, and you wonder should you be using these years more constructively.

I hear in you a struggle between your instinctive enjoyment of Jenny at play, and an anxiety generated by neighbours or advertisements that you should be 'working on her' from an early age. For goodness' sake trust your instincts. Let us think for a moment about how she is learning.

Her personality and intelligence grow not by being acted upon but by acting, by doing things to you and to the world. From the moment of birth you and she were almost a unit. You talked to her long before she could understand language, yet in your talking she was learning not merely the sound of language, but all the love and other emotions that break through the human voice. You have been teaching her since you first held her and looked at her.

Then she started not merely to look back at you, but to reach for you, to call for you, to babble at you, and, marvel of marvels, to smile at you. The biggest leap in learning comes when she finds that she can make things happen. She cries and you come. She smiles and you smile back. She babbles and you talk back. There is the first experience in a dangerous world that activity is safe, that the world – meaning just you at that stage – makes sense, is a responsive place that she can influence. That is the

moment of fastest learning, more crucial than any doctorate she may achieve in the future. Your teaching is instinctive, and it consists less in talking than in responding, in an understanding way, to the child you know better than anyone.

So when you wonder 'How soon should I start teaching Jenny?' you are talking about something that has happened since the first day of her life, and that sprang from your own instincts. None of the teaching that you attempt consciously in later years, whether of reading or of cycling or whatever, will be as effective as that, because the best teaching is a one-to-one response to the desires and curiosity of the child.

What about these long hours of play that Jenny enjoys? It is difficult for an adult to adjust to a four-year-old's rate of learning, and to the sort of questions that are important to her. We take for granted the feel of things like clay and metal, and their temperature and hardness, and whether they can float,

and how they smell. *Everything* that Jenny sees and feels, starting with her own body and its products, is a brave new world for her, to be looked at and smelled and felt and often put into her mouth.

All marvellous and intriguing, and all a matter of learning. It is not just the names of things that she learns, but their colour, feel, coldness, softness, smell, taste, heaviness. We would find it hard to stay with her as she explores one thing after another; but if we interrupt her, and try to accelerate her learning, or make short-cuts, we are interrupting something precious, the natural desire of the human child to experiment and understand. That is a rose, you tell Jenny, as she toddles round the garden. She knows more. She has smelt it, felt the thorns and the soft blossom, the contrast between stem, flower, leaves and rooting earth, the taste and texture of the petals. Weighed against all that richness, what's in a name?

At the age of four she has moved further, and some of her play will be with other children. It is still valuable for her learning and growth, probably more useful than anything she would be doing at school, because in play we are going at our own tempo, solving our own problems, experimenting with our own questions, learning how to get on with other children, feeling the limits to our fantasies. Games with other children gradually show the need for some other rules than the ones we invent for ourselves in our fantasy games. Above all, in a game with other children, we learn that the world does not come to an end if we lose.





Outside my window, in the garden of St Patrick's school, is a spreading cypress, and underneath it is a collection of stones and sticks and bits of boxes which a gardener might easily sweep away as rubbish. When the children go out for a break, a few of the youngest girls and boys get down on their knees for the latest episode in a story about houses, cars, accidents, hospitals, and a thousand incidents of bull-doing, renting, sharing, building extensions, and all the big things they have heard parents talk about.

Some of these children have been described as having poor concentration. Watch them when the latest instalment is in full swing, and you find a concentration that Einstein would envy, listening to one another, thinking ahead, guarding their corner, so intent on the story that they *really* do not hear the teacher calling them back to class. When they are called, they pour out to her what has happened in the last ten minutes, more real than anything they see on TV or hear in class.

In class we are teaching them to concentrate, but in fantasy they are learning precisely that, and spontaneously.

In class we want them to learn self-awareness and self-control. Out at play they are demonstrating that, in their imaginary victories and defeats. We invent lessons to help them better appreciate how others feel and why they do things; none of our lessons are as effective as their games in achieving just that. We talk about teaching them to co-operate, but they teach themselves when they are caught up in a game, and they seldom need to call in an adult umpire to settle disputes.

Some of these children have been given expensive toys for Christmas, but these will not have given anything like the pleasure that their twigs and boxes and stones afford under the tree. Expensive toys often require learning, and trammel the imagination. The joy of the tree is that it leaves them free to invent. Above all, in their make-believe play they are working out problems, defeats, frustrations, and in their own unplanned way releasing all sorts of tensions. They learn so much from it,

You sometimes worry that Jenny may lose touch with reality; she so loves to enter the world inside

her own head where she can try out different roles and enter different situations. Is this fantasy too close to madness, where an adult lives in their own world of hallucinations and illusions?

A healthy child will know when she is fantasising. Most imaginative children will not need to be brought down to earth; they recognise what is real. If they do not, and cling to their tall stories, or if they consistently, over a long period, neglect the ordinary demands of family and school to escape into a fantasy world, then imagination no longer serves them well, and it is important to find out why they cannot face reality.

Children at play, with space and time to do their own thing, are learning faster than we could ever teach them: reliving and coping with painful experiences (playing school with a cross teacher, practising future roles (girls with baby dolls), overcoming their own sense of helplessness (little boys with guns). Child's play has its own purpose and meaning, and because it is personal and active (TV is the enemy of this sort of play) it can teach deep, lasting lessons.



Photos: Mary Ann Bishop

Poems of raw pain

As Well as Joy

by Tony Fitchett

The Marcus Fitchett & Rachael Gloag

Memorial Medical Education Trust

Price \$24.95

Review: Kathleen Doherty

It takes a long time to read *As Well as Joy*, Tony Fitchett's collection of poems written after the death of his son, Marcus, and Marcus' friend, Rachael Gloag, – it is too intense to be taken in other than small doses. The subtitle, *Elegies for Marcus and Rachael*, tells it all: this is an outpouring of grief for two young people whose lives held so much promise and which were cut short – they were only 26 and 23 – when they were killed in 1996 in an accident with a logging truck in British Colombia.

In a series of intensely personal poems written over 13 months, the first written just two months after the accident, Tony Fitchett, a Dunedin GP, has poured out his grief, his love, his memories, his questioning. Any parent who has

lost a child, anyone who has lost a loved one, will have the wounds re-opened while reading these poems, and feel again the raw pain when everything and every day brings a reminder of the loss.

The poems should probably be read as an account of a mourning rather than judged purely as poetry. Some may lack the finely-honed language which distinguishes memorable verse, but Dr Fitchett has allowed readers to be privy to his deepest feelings, and as an account of a devastating loss they are remarkably poignant.

All of the proceeds from the sale of the book are going to the *Marcus Fitchett and Rachael Gloag Memorial Medical Education Trust* which has been established to assist students at Otago University Medical School, especially those from low-income families and those entering medical school later than usual after previous study or work. It is a fitting memorial to a young doctor and a nurse who both intended further medical study after overseas travel together.

As Well as Joy is elegantly produced, the cover carrying a photograph by Reg Graham of the Michael Deavoll sculpture, *Journeys*. It is available from the Trust, P O Box 7046, Dunedin, as well as from some booksellers. ■

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By Thomas Kelly

Dublin/Maynooth: Columba Press,
1996. pp. 316.

Price: \$NZ 74.00

Review: Greg McCormick

The task the author of this book, a lecturer in philosophy at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, sets himself is both bold and timely. In the face of postmodern scepticism concerning any possibility of the ontological coherence of language, world and the source of meaning Kelly presents the case for an understanding of ontology as moving from a linguistically conditioned account of reality and existence to what finally becomes an account of onto-theology and onto-anthropology, according to which the nature of human personhood is described as transcendence towards Being as value and value as Being.

Although Dr Kelly modestly remarks in his introduction that this book is not intended for specialists in philosophy or theology, the complexity of argument,

Exploring the profundities of Being

the breadth of reading and subtlety of analysis is such that not every reader is likely to appreciate the finer points of this work. Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Hume, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger and Wittgenstein, to mention the most significant figures, are all examined, both in their own right and also in the view of the extraordinarily diverse secondary literature, for their contributions to the rise and fall of ontological thinking, but it is Dr Kelly's stated commitment to what he describes as his 'neo-scholastic' inheritance that provides this work with a unity without which it might otherwise have fallen apart. Certain aspects of his approach could be quibbled with (I am not sure, for example, whether his reliance on Klubertanz' interpretation of Aquinas' doctrine of analogy is justified in the light of more recent studies devoted to that subject, and it might also be suspected that Dr Kelly's argument for a re-instated ontology, even in the form he advocates, is still open to the weightier criticisms advanced against onto-theology in the

last 50 years) but the impressive command of the literature, and the generally balanced presentation of the various philosophical and theological issues under consideration, certainly justify a place for this book on the shelves of seminary and university libraries. ■

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Guiding and resourcing the volunteer worker

Volunteers: A Guide for Volunteers and their Organisations

By Mary Woods

Hazard Press, Christchurch (1998)

Price: \$34.95

Review: Stephanie Kitching, RSM

Volunteers are the “hope of the future” proclaims the final heading in this most welcome book. With the increasing devolution of the social system in our country, the necessity for volunteers is being more widely recognised. If you are a volunteer or are involved with volunteers, you will find this book invaluable.

Seeing the list of section headings – The Volunteers, Management of Volunteers, Common Problems in Volunteer Work, Volunteers in Different Contexts – each section divided into many chapters, you may think the information given would be only superficial. Not so. Mary Woods writes from years of her own and others’ experience of volunteer work. She was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship and used this to travel to USA, Canada and Britain to examine volunteering from all sides.

Volunteers is firmly embedded in the Aotearoa New Zealand context with the subject being approached from a holistic perspective. Attention is given to the mind, body and spirit of the volunteers. Cultural and gender issues are dwelt upon with particular attention being given to bi-cultural issues.

A difficulty that all organisations face is how to recruit new volunteers and how to care for them to ensure they stay. Being able to clearly define the tasks of prospective volunteers is essential, as is understanding what motivates them. The suggestions and checklists regarding recruiting, selecting and training volunteers are an excellent resource. I found the section on budgeting and expenses helpful, an area frequently overlooked by those who want volunteers to remain committed to

the organisation at their own expense.

Of particular importance is the information provided about volunteers with difficult behaviours. All of us at some stage have worked alongside someone whose behaviour leads to difficulties in relationships and many of us do not know what to do to change a particular situation. The author gives clear descriptions, and goes on to link these behaviours to unhealthy self-views, providing clear guidelines for the supervisor who deals with the volunteers.

In today’s climate a new type of volunteer is becoming more prevalent – the Board Member. Board Members are motivated by the same things as other volunteers – achievement, affiliation and power – and have the same needs. But Boards do not have a volunteer co-ordinator. The author has a section dealing with such issues and with good employment practices as they relate to

volunteers. She also covers volunteers in such organisations as sports clubs, Churches and welfare groups.

Reading this book is made easy by its format. There are side boxes which highlight the issue being addressed. There are checklists and questions for personal or group use. Examples and case studies abound, and there are cartoons and diagrams which catch attention. The Appendix has excellent NZ statistics, and the Reference and Index sections are very user friendly.

Volunteers is an eminently practical, well-researched book which every volunteer group could use as a resource for its leaders, its managers and its volunteers. It provides stimulating and challenging ideas which are able to be implemented in the local Aotearoa New Zealand scene as we approach the new millennium. ■

A pleasing draught

The Cup of Our Life

By Joyce Rupp

Ave Maria Press

Price: \$28

Review: Elisabeth Nicholson

On the back cover of this book Joyce Rupp is described as a “spiritual midwife” and this is an apt description of one possessing her particular gift, that of helping bring to life the capacity to pray which lies within each of us.

The book is a clear and practical guide for use in both individual and group prayer. It contains six weekly themes, each using a different aspect of the cup as a focus – the open cup, the cluttered cup, the broken cup, offering the cup, and so on. For each day the author offers a reflection, a short passage of Scripture, a meditation, questions to help with journaling (which she strongly encourages), and a suggestion for keeping the theme alive through the

day. Also included are helpful quotations from varied sources and attractive black and white illustrations, which could be an inspiration for prayer.

A well-produced and attractive publication, this book is not unreasonably priced at \$28. Its only serious fault is that the binding will not allow it to lie flat when open, very irritating in a book intended for use during prayer.

Joyce Rupp’s work always bears the stamp of experience, and she manages to give very detailed instructions without making her readers feel either coerced or inadequate. There is the sense that her instructions are indeed only a guide, to be used as and when they are helpful.

The Cup of Our Life would be useful to anyone working in the field of spirituality and I would recommend it highly to all who wish to revitalize and enrich their personal prayer. ■

by Caliban

Callous misuse of public money

The treatment of the *Hikoi* by the Prime Minister and her Cabinet illustrated, in the most graphic manner possible, the parlous state of her administration. Since the collapse of the Coalition, the minority National-led Government appears to have been hell-bent on fulfilling some of the confused and contradictory ideals of the market ideology: selling off more assets, demeaning and degrading the elderly, attacking the education system's ability to provide for the most disadvantaged children, and doing nothing to improve the delivery of health services to the most vulnerable in our society. The Prime Minister's refusal to receive those who had made the long march simply highlighted the inadequacy and the continuing failure of her administration. Lurching from one bad decision to another and failing to come to terms with the scale of the natural disaster facing our primary industries, the only question one can ask is, "How long?"

It is time for this government to go, to recognise that it has no mandate for its current policies and that it is distinguished only by the fact that it is now being viewed as one of the most unpopular and incompetent administrations of the last 50 years. Perhaps many of us would like to echo the words of Oliver Cromwell who spoke to the Rump Parliament on 20 April 1653: *You have sat too long for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the Name of God, go!*"

"In the name of God, go!"

The case of the child who was denied ear surgery by Healthcare Otago has outraged the country. When it was revealed that between 70 and 80 other children were on the waiting lists for similar surgery, a public fund was begun so that treatment could be started. This is a terrible indictment of the Health Service, its present organisation and its current philosophy. Is no-one assessing the effectiveness of the current model and attempting to tailor it to the real needs of the community? It is not difficult for any lay man or woman to see that failure to attend to children's hearing impairment and to their exposure to pain, is creating a whole raft of learning and behavioural problems for another generation.

certain high schools have attached units which cater for a huge range of student needs, offering occupational therapy, physiotherapy, counselling, workforce placement and supervision, in addition to the provision of their learning requirements. Students can be helped and monitored into classroom learning from the security of these units, encouraged and supported in coping with the wider world, which is often oblivious to their needs and their disabilities.

However, someone in Wellington decided that this system was inequitable and that it should be shared among all schools. So the staff in these units were all sent letters of disestablishment, telling them that their jobs would not continue

Bad apples in the Education Package

The public is told that there are limited funds available and that the health professionals cannot move outside these budgetary restrictions. Yet it was possible for three former health administrators in Healthcare Otago to negotiate a salary and severance package of a scale out of all proportion to their function in the system. And because of our employment regulations and the ever present threat of ending up in the Employment Court, no action can be taken against such a use of public money. The words from the General Confession in the Book of Common Prayer 1662 could be applied to our health administrators: *We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us.*

The recently released Education Package was intended to have been an item of good news to balance the earlier bitter economic pills which had been handed out. Coming in the wake of the attack on the Special Needs Units and the disestablishment of support staff, the public is naturally wary of so-called improvements. At the present time,

into the new school year and that they could apply for a reduced number of positions. In the new regime they would travel around a cluster of schools, their supervision organised and monitored by administrators appointed from within the cluster. It is a solution which has been thrust upon schools without proper consultation, displaying a carelessness about details of the scheme, in addition to an apparent ignorance of the value of the existing service. And now they expect praise for their so-called package.

There has been much talk about community needs, consultation and *the social contract* in the propaganda which is churned out by the Ministry of Education. H G Wells, the famous English novelist, wrote what could have been a description of our present Government and its Education advisers in *Love and Mr Lewisham*, written in 1890. "The Social Contract", wrote Wells, "is nothing more nor less than a vast conspiracy of human beings to lie to and humbug themselves and one another for the general Good. Lies are the mortar that bind the savage individual man into the social masonry." ■

Cathedral Vision

*On the surface its grey stone spires
stab at the sky
but in the babble of city streets
they fall short of the surrounding
towers
so the gothic arch leans darkly
inward.*

I admit that I was more than a little wary about seeing this film. Having grown up loving *Boys Own Adventure* type shows (as my ever increasing collection of *Bonanza* ephemera attests to!) I couldn't bear the thought of *Zorro* being turned into a hi-tech, sexy, 90s kind of flick. After hearing what Hollywood had done to the *Avengers* I had visions of a masked man turned politically correct.

For once, I am quite happy to admit that I was absolutely wrong. The *Mask of Zorro* is a rollickingly good film. From the outset, the makers seemed determined to remain true to the spirit of Zorro's past. The film has incredible sword play, high drama and, most importantly, there is that indefinable yet delightful cheesiness that is vital in any good, clean adventure film.

The cast is incredible. Anthony Hopkins plays an ageing Zorro out to avenge the misdeeds of his sworn enemy. Although the idea of a Welsh Zorro may seem a little incongruous, Hopkins plays the role with his usual aplomb. For those Spanophiles who hanker for the classic handsome stranger behind the black mask, Antonio Banderas plays Hopkin's sidekick to a 't'. Banderas really proves himself in what is an essentially comedic role, providing some of the film's most hilarious moments. Completing this all-star-line-up is the *Darling Buds of May* star Catherine Zeta Jones. Jones plays a role that swings from dutiful daughter to passionate temptress with absolute ease.

The *Mask of Zorro* is a fantastic family film almost guaranteed to make you laugh, cry and cheer. And you can't ask for better than that, I reckon. A must for those of you who haven't been to the movies for ages. Go on, drag your dad along, he'll thank you for it! ■

*Dry leaves slide on winter's breath
into the belly of the cathedral
crushing into dust
On the face of an abandoned
hymnal
while the high altar hides in
the gloom.*

*An old woman scatters
the surrounding stillness
shouting into echo
'Mass is in the chapel'.
Her sharp words jostle us and we
follow*

*Flattened feet on battered shoes
into a smaller space
seeking in the house of God
enduring patterns of entreaty
for the sake of silence.*

Jenny Collins

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Requiem for Adult Education

In the past year the National Seminary at Mosgiel, *Futuna* Retreat Centre in Wellington and the Pastoral Centre in Palmerston North have all closed or been threatened with imminent closure. Adult education in theology for Catholics will now be centred in Auckland.

The Catholic Church in New Zealand owes Bishop Peter Cullinane, the diocese of Palmerston North and all those who laboured long hours managing and running the Pastoral Centre, a huge debt of gratitude. They enabled the reality of the Vatican II *People of God* to be discovered and lived out there. It was a place where the theology of real lives could be discovered. I have spent some of my most formative times at the Pastoral Centre over the past 22 years. It was a place of hospitality and growth for so many people and groups. *Futuna*, run by the Marist Order, was also a place of peace where people could grow in faith.

Are the Catholic bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand really so blind to the signs of the times? They write letters reproaching the laity for their lack of faith and attachment to the institutional Church – and remove the very resources that might enable them to be more rooted in their own tradition. They speak of the need to prepare for the time of priestless parishes – and use all available funds to train a handful of priests insufficient for the pastoral needs of the faithful. The cost of the seminary transfer to Auckland will be more than \$5.6 million (*NZ Catholic*). Priests are still being trained in seminaries which are already ‘dinosaurs’, the remnants of a species which is functionally extinct. (*Pacifica*, June 1998)

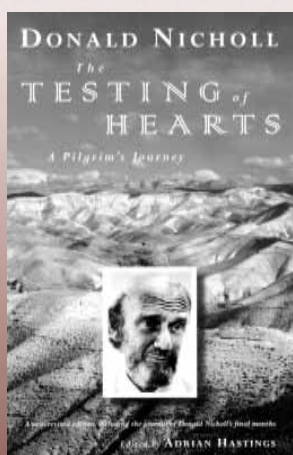
Catholic Bishops are now threatening to withdraw from the CCANZ which has enabled the Christian community to act together. Yet ecumenical activities are recognised as most appropriate to our age in history. In an article in the theological journal *Pacifica*, (June 1998) the reality that separate Christian denominations are dying while faith

searches are increasing, is mentioned time and again. The spectrum of belief within denominations is wider than the difference among particular sections of denominations. This is certainly true of women in the Churches who link closely across denominations. Yet there was no workshop on *Women in the Church* in the Wellington Diocesan Synod held over Labour Weekend.

We who are the Church must speak plainly about the lack of local education-in-faith for adults by the Catholic Church. Adults cannot be formed in Christian faith without education in the history, theology, traditions, liturgy, ethics and understanding of the Bible. Adult education, not instruction, is needed to help people understand the relevance of the teachings of Jesus to their own lives now. It is time to look to the new Millennium, not back to past ones. The People of God need places of hospitality where they can learn to grow, flourish and spread the Good News of God's love. ■

Anna Holmes

new revised edition!



THE TESTING OF HEARTS

A Pilgrim's Journey

Donald Nicholl

First published in 1989, the final part of this revised edition includes the journal of Donald's final months. This well-travelled, highly-respected author, academic and active worker for justice and peace also wrote *Holiness*, *Triumphs of the Spirit in Russia* and *The Beatitude of Truth*. The first two parts of the book consist of journals he kept during one of his most "testing" periods – the four years he spent as Rector of the Ecumenical Institute at Tantur, near Jerusalem, in the midst of the seemingly irreconcilable political, religious and social conflicts in the Holy Land today.

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