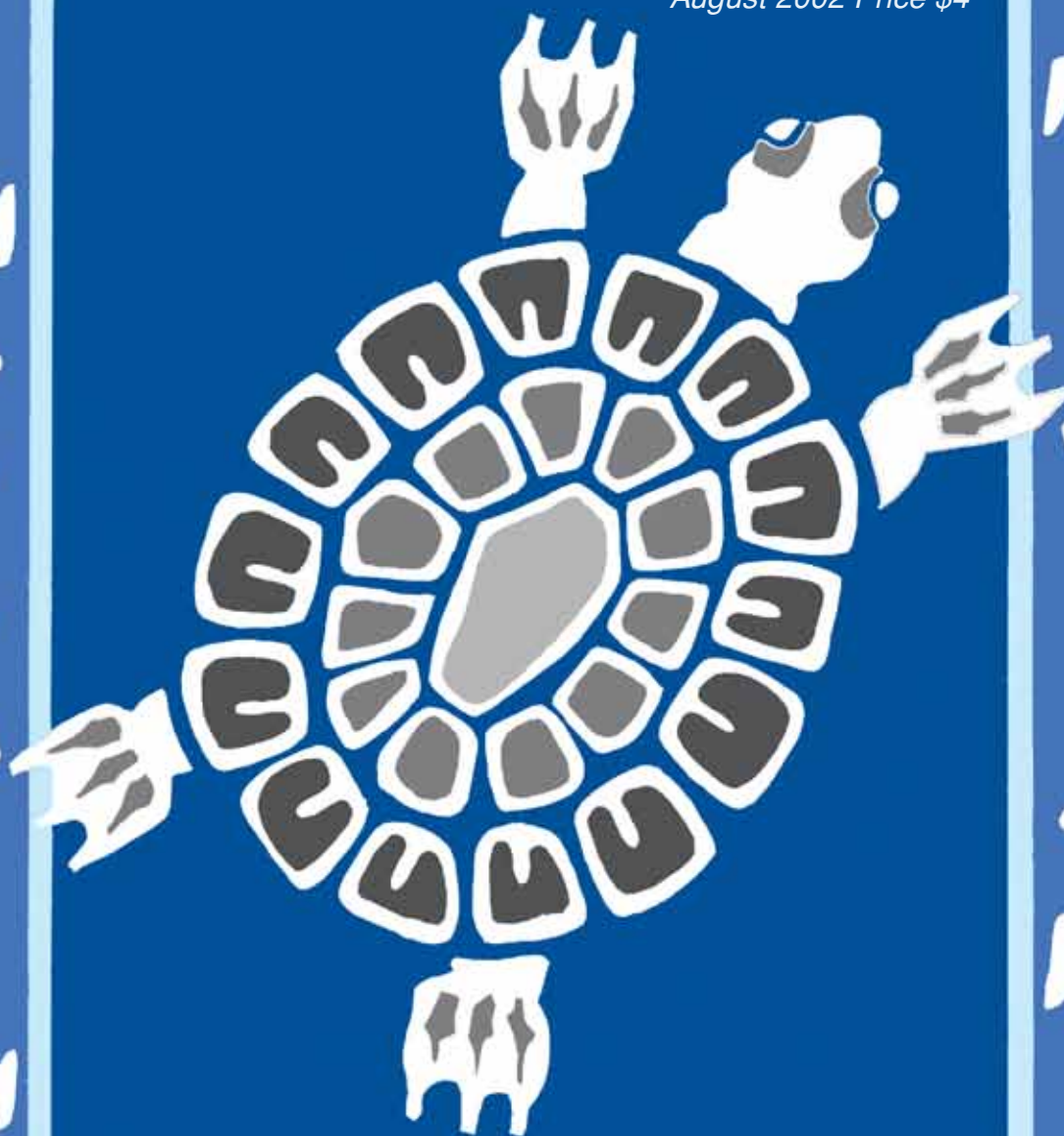


Tui Motu

InterIslands

August 2002 Price \$4



time to stand and stare

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a new series

Regular extracts from a recent book by Dr Jack Dominian, psychiatrist and commentator on marriage and human relationships.

(*Let's Make Love*, Darton Longman & Todd Ltd., is available from the NZ distributor *Catholic Supplies*, Wellington)

Cover: *Time to stand and stare*
Donald Moorhead illustrates the fable of *The Hare and the Tortoise* as an introduction to the leading article on pages 4-6.

Electoral Shambles

This is written during the final days before the 2002 Election. The campaign has been dominated by TV shouting matches, minor issues magnified by the media into major scandals, and constant bickering over who will go into coalition with whom after July 26. There has been much noise and little reason. Real issues have been ignored or swamped.

The major responsibility for this must fall on media coverage, particularly by *TV One*. The so-called leaders' debates have been little better than circus entertainment with Holmes, the ringmaster, constantly interrupting and preventing the development of any rational discussion.

Presentation has been custom built in favour of the master opportunist, Winston Peters. Little wonder that, fuelled by the applause of a lobotomised studio audience, the Peters' Party ratings have soared. These misnamed 'debates' are constantly interrupted by commercial breaks often featuring scare-mongering political advertisements. And so, during these final days, poll ratings are fluctuating almost as wildly and mindlessly as the Dow Jones index.

Over three weeks of the campaign I witnessed one really worthwhile debate – between Green leader Jeanette Fitzsimon and Labour Minister for the Environment, Pete Hodgson. It took place in Dunedin Town Hall, ably chaired by an eminent barrister, Judith Ablett-Kerr. It was televised in full with minimal breaks by local TV. There was adequate time for questions from the floor, which were often thoughtful and challenging. After a full hour and a half the debate was still in full swing, so TV coverage was simply extended to allow the process to proceed to its natural conclusion.

Why was this debate so good? First, there was one topic only – and a crucial

one at that – *Genetic Engineering*. The speakers were thoroughly prepared and both very able presenters. They listened to each other and answered each other. Point scoring was reduced to a minimum. The audience was attentive and did not interrupt discussion.

No one would have gone away from that debate without being better informed and perhaps guided to a reasoned choice on one of the outstanding issues of the election. Another supreme virtue was the total absence of Holmes or his ilk.

Significantly, although this debate took place right at the beginning of the campaign, none of the national channels thought to rebroadcast it. Even more significantly, the overseas proprietor chose the following week to pull the plug on the local TV channel.

Two observations on the main contenders. Helen Clark never fails to register her consummate political skill and her mastery of detail. However, an interesting chink in her armour has appeared during the campaign. Whenever an edge of scorn comes into her voice, you can guarantee she is on shaky ground. It is her way of dealing with doubt, and she manifested it repeatedly towards the Greens and the GE issue. She knows that both her logic and her science are vulnerable so she uses this rhetorical technique to escape facing up to an issue which may well haunt her – and us – for many years to come.

Bill English has reinforced his image as a doughty scrapper. He is never overawed by a hostile protagonist, even Kim Hill at her most waspish. However, I never cease to be amazed that he should have so shamelessly hitched his pennant to the *Law and Order* bandwagon. How many times during the campaign has he trotted out the **92 percent** figure? "*Ninety Two percent of the electorate in 1999 voted for stricter sentencing*", he cries ad nauseam. That figure is a

totally dishonest statistic – and he must know it. The 1999 vote was based on a question so loaded that no court of law would ever have countenanced it. It was another version of the notorious question: “Have you ceased beating your wife yet?” The question was wilfully misleading, and therefore the result has no value except to show how *not* to word a referendum question.

It is also evident that Mr English needs a crash course on the virtues of restorative justice. He could do worse than study the writings of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin (see article pages 13-15).

Elections come and go. Who will remember the Holmes debates in three months time, let alone three years

or 30 years? The *manner* of this election and its media presentation must, however, make us pause and ponder.

What seems to be obscured or lost in the constant media-driven stampede for quick responses and instant answers is any exploration of depth, any rational debate in search of truth, or any evidence drawn from mature experience. Wisdom is displaced by pragmatism. Rational argument gives way to the soundbite and the tele-opportunity. Prudence and reflection are sacrificed to haste and expediency.

You could say that this accurately reflects the *instant* society we live in: instant food, instant comment, instant closure. In response to this malaise

which afflicts every sphere of modern life, not just politics or media comment, we present as our leading article a reflection on the Eighth Deadly Sin. *What's that?* Read overleaf and find out! Read it and then apply its critique of our Western world to the way our election has been fought and presented to us by the media.

You may conclude that in place of ever higher economic growth, of ever more complex assessment procedures to in place of exams, of new assaults on crime, what we in New Zealand need is *wisdom* – the wisdom to cherish and enhance the huge assets of this green and pleasant land and its richly endowed and talented people. Will
M.H.

Tougher sentencing?

Richard Prebble, in his call for harsher penalties and his courting of the ‘*Lock’m-up-and-throw-away-the-key* brigade!’ will, no doubt, attract considerable public support in our increasingly fear and violence-ridden culture. Or lack of it! Hitler received like support in his campaign against the Jews who terrified him!

In vivid contrast, there was a man with a frightening moko on his face (*Tui Motu* July cover). His father was a criminal and he had a terrible life of abuse and did time in prison. A prime candidate for Prebble’s solution!

But a woman with radically different ideas to Richard got hold of him and really stuck with him. She has done for him, on a shoe-string budget, that which a lifetime in jail, at a huge cost

to the taxpayer, could never have done! He has picked up her ideas and is now a very fine man at peace with his community.

John Miller, Christchurch

letters

Election coverage

Thank you for the *July* issue. Quite a few thought-provoking articles. I particularly found interesting those about *Challenge 2000* and Kitty McKinley.

I think that in recent months you have been balanced in your pre-election coverage. I would, though, have liked to have seen something on the principles that should guide our voting

as Catholics, as *Wel-Com* gave its readers in the dioceses of Palmerston North and Wellington, through a fine article by Cardinal Tom Williams *Social Teachings to Guide Catholic voters* (July issue).

His first principle, the protection of human life and dignity, covered issues that mainstream politics in New Zealand tries to largely avoid, preferring to deal with issues affecting the economy and other material things, as did John Honoré.

Brian Quin SM, Wellington

Tui Motu’s strategy was to offer column space to various parties, but the early election date frustrated this.

As with all matters political and social, we aim to raise issues to help people make up their minds, not make up people’s minds for



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Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed. The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means “stitching the islands together...”, bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

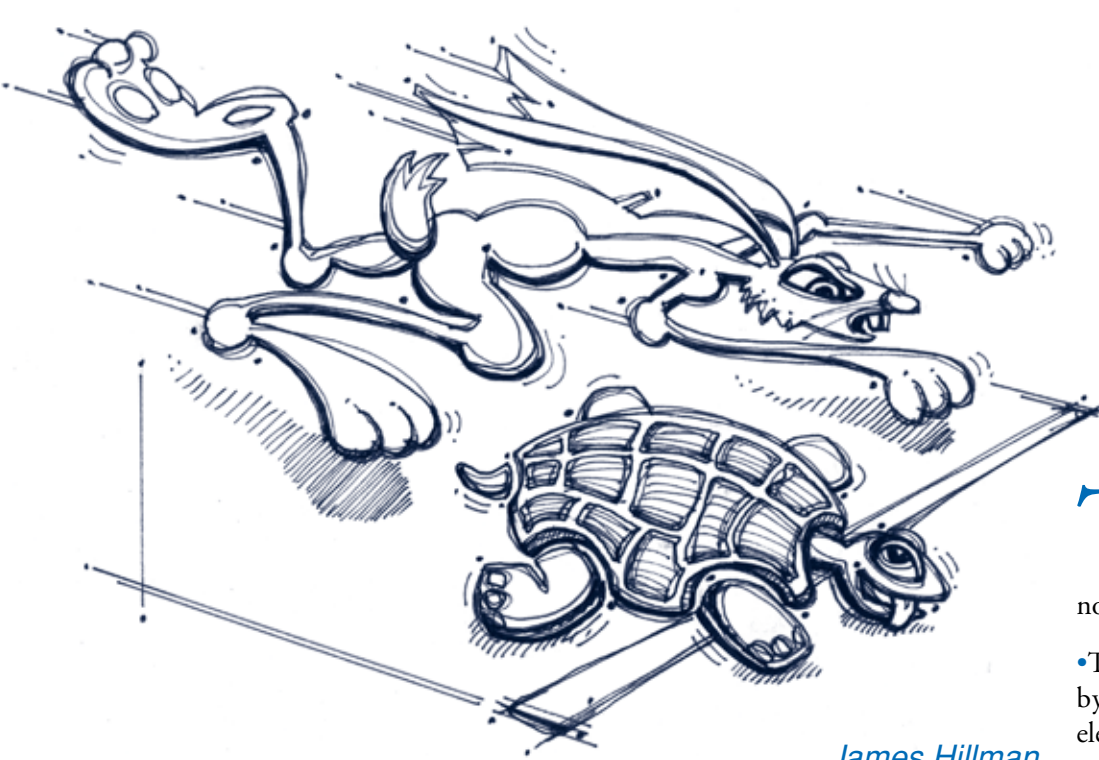
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James Hillman

Avarice, gluttony, vanity, lasciviousness, envy, wrath and sloth – to these classical seven deadly sins, according to Aldous Huxley, we moderns, despite our inventive genius and after so many centuries, have been able to add only one new sin. The sin? *Haste, hurry, rush, speed, momentum, acceleration*. We live in the economics of hurry, and the planet itself heats up with the energy of our hastening.

Time is money, and therefore the old adages have been cast aside: *More haste, less speed; Look before you leap; Haste maketh waste; A stitch in time saves nine; Fools rush in where angels fear to tread; An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure*.

Time is imagined as a racing river, gathering speed as it flows in one direction only: “He who hesitates is lost,” as the saying goes. Caution can only be imagined as timidity, pessimism, recalcitrant obstinacy, stubborn and stupid clinging to old ways.

Thus, when the precautionary principle enters public debate, the sides are drawn on archetypal, even mythical lines. On the one side, optimism, futurism, expansion, positive thinking, a progressivist advance that meets obstacles as they arise and overcomes them with redoubled energy. This is the *heroic* mind, moving single-mindedly forward, rising to every challenge, confident in its own ability, no monster too large, no wall too impenetrable.

Three other characteristics of our times are hurled along by the same river: the cults of technology, competition, and celebrity:

- The principal improvements brought by *technological change*, until the electronic computer age, were labour-saving and space-saving. A technological advance was measurable in the number of working hours saved by a machine, and the machine could compact and reduce materials into more manageable and transportable size. But now technological change brings mainly the benefit of speed: more done more quickly. What is saved is time.

- Time also curses the joys of discovery. It is no longer enough to experiment, ponder serendipitously, discover. There is a crushing *competitive* pressure to be first with a formula, a method, a product. The first to publish may get a Nobel award; the first in the market makes the most gain.

We are in the age of the short-cut, corporate espionage and falsified results – because of competition. As in a foot

Why is this life so full of care? We have no time to stand and stare

Haste, the spirit of hurrying time, affects human biology as well. Menarche comes on earlier and earlier; children grow taller faster; athletes break records, hurdling faster, leaping higher, farther. And haste affects our psychiatric diagnostics: who wants to be considered slow, retarded, passive, withdrawn, regressed, fixated...?

As long as time is imagined in accord with the heroic impulse, caution is doomed from the start. It can only be envisioned as blocking, stopping, an impediment in the river, clogging its flow, producing backwaters and stagnant pools. Caution has only the one face given by heroic single-mindedness.

race, only the one coming in first qualifies; the others are losers. A culture that promotes winners gets more and more losers.

- The cult of *celebrity* – the idea that each of us may have our “15 minutes of fame”, in the words of Andy Warhol – has radically altered the notion of

fame. In Roman and Renaissance times, *fama*, or reputation, was imagined to be like an invisible accompanying spirit, one's own genius passed to one by one's ancestors. It was more precious than one's own life, to be served, honoured, enhanced by one's actions, and kept untarnished. Its lasting benefits passed on to one's heirs, descending to future generations with the family crest and name. Now fame has been speeded up and replaced by *celebrity*.

The principle of precaution

The administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency of the current Bush administration, Christie Whitman, said at the National Academy of Sciences Meetings in Washington DC: "Policy-makers need to take a precautionary approach to environmental protection... We must acknowledge that uncertainty is inherent in managing natural resources, recognise that it is usually easier to prevent environmental damage than to repair it later, and shift the burden of proof away from those advocating protection toward those proposing an action that may be harmful."

So far so good, but the Whitman statement remains in the realm of means – how best to proceed or not proceed. What about

long-term ends
– *however noble* –
can never justify
short-term means

the ends which the means serve? What is the wider purpose of a project? If the ends are competitive advantage, increased profitability, tax-ation advantages, do not these ends disqualify the means no matter how protective of the environment they may be?

Suppose, however, the ends seem more noble – safer cures, a cooler Earth, cleaner water, species conservation – are then the means justified by these ends?

Moral philosophy holds that long-term ends, no matter how noble, can

never justify the short-term means, but that the ends must show their nobility in each moment of the means. The precautionary principle has something to offer here for resolving this dilemma of correlating means and ends. That they correlate only too well in predatory corporate economics is visible the world over: exploitation of mineral resources (ends) correlates with the means of ravaged Earth, oppressed indigenous peoples, destruction of ecological balance, deterioration of culture. But how is it possible to correlate means and ends in a positive way?



By slowing and questioning the most evidently efficient means, precaution invites innovations and experiment. The necessity caused by caution actually becomes the mother of invention. Three grounds for caution are particularly noteworthy:

1. First, the Hippocratic maxim: *primum nihil nocere*. Before all else, *harm nothing*. Before any action or plan for action consider first the down-side before the upside. Explore the risks rather than the benefits. Expenditures on research shall focus on worst-case scenarios, and extend the notion of 'harm' fully.

The Hippocratic maxim suggests two thoughts, at least:

- that intervention in the ways of the world, despite the delusions that heroic goodness brings to its ambitions, always invites a shadow. Yin accompanies Yang, always and everywhere.
- that the Earth has its own virtues and forces: nature may be acting in ways that our lack of caution does not let us see. Hippocratic caution brings with it a background in ancient animism, a respect for the dignity and power of phenomena, inviting a listening ear into phenomena, beyond cost benefits and

risk assessments, so as to discover *their* values, their intentions beyond ours, so that we might work with them, even follow *their* lead, for their sake as well as ours.

2. The *cautionary spirit*: Its most remembered appearance occurs in the cell where Socrates awaited his hemlock poison. When asked why he did not escape, he said he had not been urged to by his *daimon* – spirit, angel, inner voice – and, as he explains, the cautionary spirit never tells one what to do, only what not to do; it acts only as a caution. It speaks in a peculiarly non-statistical unscientific manner – anecdotally, superstitiously, symptomatically with omens and hints and whispers; even by bodily events like sneezes, yawns and hiccoughs.

3. A third psychological background to caution is quite simply *depression*. Depression slows all heroic endeavour; the very thought of action is too much! Hence, depression whether of the psyche or of the economy is desperately feared in Westernised societies and every possible measure is mobilised against it.

The pressures we feel, the drugs we take, the expectations we nurture and the dictates of global economic expansion are all anti-depressive measures. Psychiatry could easily say that the headlong rush of the river itself is a manic defence against depression.



4. Besides the Hippocratic, Socratic and depressive backgrounds to the psychology of caution, there is a fourth: *beauty*. As noted by Thomas Aquinas and repeated by James Joyce, beauty arrests motion. Beauty brings us up short. We catch our breath, stand in surprise, or in awe and wonder or even terror, as Rilke said. This momentary suspension in the face of a moment of beauty is true as well for ugliness which



▷▷ makes the soul shrink back within itself and turn away.

The gasp, “ahh-h”, lies at the root of the word ‘aesthetic’. This aesthetic response whether to the ugly or the beautiful shows an immediate instinctual awareness regarding the world before aesthetic judgments and before taste.

*beauty comes upon us
at a glance, seizes us. . .
and lets go*

Beauty comes upon us at a glance, seizes and lets go; as does horror. The aesthetic response is given with the psyche like the inner cautionary *daimon* that holds one back, like the depressive mood that refuses action.

Beauty, however, *prompts* action. That is – the naive aesthetic response leads on to aesthetic protest against ugliness on the one hand, and on the other, an aesthetic desire to preserve, protect and restore the beautiful. Of course, various attempts to conserve can turn into reactionary conservatism hostile to technological change.

Going backwards results from the identification of beauty with the particular moment of its appearance, which can be naturalism, romanticism, modernism... Each of these holds the aesthetic response captive, chained to dogma and deprived of its naive spontaneity.

What the response seeks is a heightened sensitivity and breadth so that the response comes into play ever more frequently and perceptively. In earlier times this was called the gradual improvement of taste.

Here we must distinguish the moment of arrested movement from an identification with the arrest itself, as if beauty must stand still. But beauty, like caution, is not meant to stand still. The saying is not “*Don’t leap*,” but “*Look before you leap*”. Beauty means only for us to arrest for a moment the senseless

insensitive forward thrust, in order to open the senses by inviting the aesthetic response. Then, as the arresting moment flees, the principle of precaution can incorporate into its innovative explorations an aesthetic awareness, insisting that any plan or project does not neglect the demand that beauty makes, or the deleterious effects of ugliness.

Were we to arouse our senses from their psychic numbing, many of the products and programmes, the very river of time itself, hastened on its course by the powers that rule governments, econ-omists, corporations, media and industries, would slow enough to seep into other channels that have not yet been irrigated and so have never had a chance to bloom.

Were our aesthetic responses to awaken, we would not need the admonitions implied by the principle of precaution – not even Hippocratic warnings and Socratic omens. The individual human’s aesthetic response would alter the very course of history and the shape of things we live among.

Our noses too, and our eyes and ears, are political instruments, protesters. An aesthetic response is a political action. Like the *daimon* of Socrates who indicates only what not to do, we too know instinctively, aesthetically when a fish stinks, when the sense of beauty is offended.

Standing for these moments – and these moments occur each day, within every airless office building, seated in each crippling chair, inundated by senseless noise and fattened on industrial food

*beauty
like caution, is not
meant to stand still*

– standing for our responses, these aesthetic reverberations of truth in the soul, may be the primary civic act of the citizen, the origin of caution and of the precautionary principle itself with its warnings to *stop, look and listen*. ■

James Hillman is a Jungian psychologist and the author of The Soul’s Code. Reprinted courtesy of Resurgence magazine. Visit their website: www.resurgence.org



CENACLE MINI SABBATICAL

Thursday 6th MARCH – Tuesday 15th APRIL 2003

In Mark 6:30 Jesus said:

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

A Sabbatical gives time set apart –

- * *For remembering the holiness of life*
- * *For personal renewal and refreshment*
- * *To regain a new enthusiasm for life – ministry – community!*
- * *Time to slow down and renew your vision!*

The mini sabbatical allows opportunity for a loosely structured program, offering a six-day retreat, a seminar on the Enneagram and Spirituality and a two-day reflection on Jesus and His Land. Time to pray, relax, read, share with others, read and reflect, on the beautiful shores of Moreton Bay 55 minutes from the city of Brisbane – in an area noted for the Koala population and native bird life.

For further information:

Sr Pat Clouston, Cenacle Retreat House, Centre of Spiritual Development
267 Wellington Street, Ormiston, Q.4160
Tel (07)3286-4011 Fax (07)3821-3788

*Tunahau Kohu
is living proof that
second chance education
taught the Maori way can
rescue many people
who failed our education
system the first time.*

*Katie O'Connor
pays a visit to Waitaha –
a Christchurch adult
education trust*



Tunahau Kohu is a kaiako (tutor) for the Waitaha Trust: Nga Peka Matauranga o Waitaha.

This is an educational enterprise in Christchurch and runs programmes in Maori language and customs. It attracts people coming back to education in later life, although there are some young people. Many of the students go on from Waitaha to do full University courses.

The people who come here, *says Tunahau*, may have grown up in contact with Maori culture but when they come to the city they leave it behind. I was like that. I missed the language when I came to the city. That's what we provide.

Often when people come here, they had a bad time at school many years earlier. So we have to embed them into a whanau environment where they will become excited about learning. That had not happened to them at school. As Maori in a class of pakeha kids, we found everyone else knew what the teacher was talking about except us!

So the programmes at the Trust are in language which people can understand. Our system follows the marae way, where you are nurtured by grandparents and elders. No one is yelling and screaming at you because you don't

know how to answer a question. The emphasis is always 'support the learner'. Your classmates are there to support you. A problem with Maori people is this in-built shyness.

Sometimes people come to us straight out of gaol. Recently we had a student who'd just finished a 15 year sentence. He was a mess. He didn't even know how to sit up at a table! A man in his 40s! It took about a week for him to start to feel comfortable with the environment. Some who come are street kids. We get drug addicts, we get homeless people. And some finish up with degrees. So there are a lot of success stories about this place.

The education system in New Zealand has not served Maori people. We get a few straight from school – the ones the schools cannot deal with. And we succeed with them too. Once again, they can begin to belong here because it becomes their whanau.

We want to get people to the stage where they are really excited about what is happening here. They want to learn. They were told they were dumb at school, so they believed they were dumb and just finished up doing labouring jobs. But they aren't dumb! They are able to use their brains.

The courses here are full-time and run throughout the year. We have about 40 places on the various programmes. One of these is Maori tikanga, about our customs and values.

At the start the students learn about themselves: where they were born; their tribes; their hapu; their marae. We get them to meet people from their own tribe who are in the city. This gives them a sense of their Maori identity.

The next thing is to learn the language. All our lives people have said to us: "Where the hell is that (learning Maori) going to get you?" I say to them: "Suppose the Asians who are coming in suddenly said to us Kiwis: 'you are no longer going to speak English. From now on you speak Japanese! You have to understand the vehicles and technology which is all made in Japan.' How would you feel if someone said that to you – 'Your culture no longer matters any more?'"

Our kaumatua would say to us: "Our language is the jewel of our prestige!" We're told we are New Zealanders. But we don't quite fit. Our identity is our language. It helps make us whole. Within the language we find the wairua, the spirit of Maoridom. We cannot fully translate that. We are taught about love

▷▷

▷▷ – ‘aroha’ – but it is deeper than romantic feelings. It centres on something you’re passionate about.

It is the language which teaches us to belong. It counters all the negativity we have received. Our genes only allowed us to become a mechanic or a painter. We didn’t have the genes to get to Varsity and become a doctor!

The method for teaching language is ‘A Taaranei’ – a method using coloured rods, developed by an American with indigenous people in America. It was brought to New Zealand and two women developed the method on marae all over the country.

Some of our older people objected and said our language came direct from Io, from God. They said the new way was useless. But those who took it on found that using the coloured rods they could build the words more easily, and retain what they had learned. So this is the way it is now taught throughout the country. It’s a lot of fun. When you’re happy learning, you want to learn.

When they go on from us to Varsity they will come across people who are too academic for their own good, and don’t know how to deal with someone with no academic background. They are put off by the jargon. But we reassure them: “learn it that way”, we say, “so we can empower ourselves that way”. Here we build their confidence so they will be able to cope. The Varsity tutors have also come through these courses.

We do a lot of singing and that helps keep people here. It’s another way of learning, especially as regards language. Waiata plays a big part. What many find difficult is writing. They may not have used a pen for a long time. We get them to write up what happens on their own marae, and that is meaningful for them and they can relate to it. Maori was always an oral language, so learning to write it is not easy. Our aim eventually is to give the students skills in numeracy and literacy.

Eleanor Palmer came to us after a lifetime in teaching and stayed with us

for 12 years. She did a lot of one-to-one tutoring. She started with people whose reading and writing was at the level of seven-year-olds. They found grammar very hard. It took her a year to get them on track.

Eleanor was also the counsellor, so she got to know the students personally and built on that trust. Then they were able to learn and to pass exams and maybe move on to Varsity study. Eleanor died recently, and that has left an enormous gap. She was the ‘mother’

our aim is to give skills in numeracy and literacy

of this place. She came out of the ‘40s, when the Queen was important. She fitted perfectly into that scene. Her posture was regal, and when she spoke it fascinated us because she sounded the way the Queen talks! We had never been exposed to a person like that before.

She was a pakeha schoolteacher. At her funeral her family and friends were

overwhelmed when they saw us all there. They didn’t really know the work she had been doing for the last years of her life. About 40 of us went to the funeral. She had spent a lot of time with us and she came to know our customs. So we walked down the aisle, and we put roses on her casket.

At a pakeha funeral people don’t cry. They don’t show emotion, except Eleanor’s daughter and grandchildren. But the people were blown away by what we did for her and what we said about her, so they came up afterwards and thanked us.

She had been our kuria. She *looked* out of place with us, but she was there. I work a lot in the gaols. To have this lady among the mobsters and the Black Power members with the full moko – this white haired pakeha woman among all these thugs! It used to make me laugh. But she was quite at home with them, and they felt comfortable with her. She represented what they were afraid of: she looked like a judge. I told the people at the funeral all about that.



Eleanor Palmer (1931-2002)

Eleanor Palmer died in January 2002 at the age of 70; for the last 12 years of her life she had been literacy

and numeracy tutor at the Waitaha Trust, in Christchurch. But she was so much more than a teacher – she became a guide, counsellor and friend to some 200 students over those years.

Although Eleanor was a strong person she was also an excellent listener and was never afraid to become involved in the situations and difficulties of others. She loved her work with the Trust because she loved people. Long hours of one-to-one tutoring can be very taxing, yet she continued on at Wataha as long as her fragile health would permit.

Eleanor was a lively, creative person. She was born in West Otago and boarded at Gore High School for her schooling. From there she went on to Teacher’s College in Dunedin and studied to be a home science teacher. But after her family had grown up, she moved into what was to be her real vocation – remedial teaching and youth work.

Her friends testify that she was very enthusiastic about this work even though at times she might have to deal with people with deep resentments against society, especially pakeha society. She helped them work through their anger. As a teacher she was firm and demanding – but also good-humoured and affectionate. She is remembered as a true ‘mother’ figure in the work of the Waitaha Trust.

I grew up in a marae environment. I was brought up by my grandparents. My grandfather had died, and I had a fight with a teacher at school. I hit him and just walked out. I went home. My grandmother packed me some tins of corned beef and gave me \$3 – and I left. I hitch-hiked to Auckland from Tauranga.

I found this boarding house, and the pakeha lady gave me a feed and sent me to a place where I could find work. I got a job, and the lady let me stay there until I had some money to pay her. I started sweeping the streets for \$30 a week.

I joined up with the Stormtroopers gang. We used to put \$2 aside each week so as to go to this other country – the South Island – where they were going to have the Commonwealth Games in Christchurch. By the end of the year we had enough money for a minivan.

During this time I had very little contact with pakeha people. I believed they ripped us off, taking everything from us and we were second-class citizens among them. Joining a gang was finding a whanau. They took me along to their pad: they had everything I dreamed about there. There were girls there! I was very excited.

Then, when I got to Christchurch on holiday, I went to this hotel and there were these pakeha girls who were looking at us. We wondered why, then we found they were interested in us and wanted to talk to us. So we went and stayed with them. And we found the pakeha people in the shops and the street were friendly to us. At the end of the week I said to others: "I'll see you fellows – I'm staying down here".

I joined another gang in Christchurch. I went through a period of selling dope to make more money. But it wasn't a bad experience altogether. Eventually I met a young lady from Rotorua, and we settled down and had nine kids! Eight girls and, then, a boy. Now they range from 24 down to seven.

Tunahau's story



What woke me up was helping my kids with their homework. Some bright spark sent a Maori tutor to the girls' school. They came back and told me about what they were learning, and they would ask: "What's the Maori word for 'door' or 'window'?" And I realised I didn't know!

I had grown up with Maori language. My grandmother spoke it all the time. But I didn't want it. TV arrived at the time I was growing up – and here was something else. So I wanted to get away from the marae and the language.

Anyway I went to see my cousin and he taught me the Maori words for 'door' and 'window'. Then I went to see a friend who had learned Maori and was teaching it. That was when I came here to the Waitaha Trust. He said to me: "Hang on! If you want to do this you're going to have to come here and learn!"

So he showed me round, where they did advanced Kohanga Reo Maori and where they learned about computers. He introduced me to Evelyn, who was in charge. I said to myself: "No! a bloody 'baldhead' (a white person)".

He persuaded me to come and meet her. This lady spoke to me for two hours and told me what the place was all about – but she didn't want anything from me. Then she said: "If you want

to come here and learn, just sign this paper. Otherwise, just throw it away."

I signed on. But the first week I refused to stand up and be acknowledged with a mihi by the class. I came in all dressed up in leather. But a friend taught me the words how to introduce myself in Maori. I paced up and down until two in the morning repeating it. The kids were saying: "Dad! Shut up and get to bed!"

Next morning I stood up and said: "Ko Tunahau a ho nga Tauranga ho. Tene koto. Tena koto katoa". I was waiting for someone to smirk at me, and I was going to run across the room and kick him in the head! That was my mindset. But instead they all said: "Kia ora, kia ora, welcome!" And they grabbed hold of me and hugged me, and it really made me feel good. And I never sat in that corner again!

So I took it on. Eleanor taught me how to read and write. And 14 months later they gave me a job. Up to that time I had sold drugs, cheated the Social Welfare. I went down the pub drinking and didn't go home for two days.

I left all that behind. But I brought a lot of the guys who had been with me before to this place so that they could change too. I know where they have been, so I can deal with them. Even the guys in the gaols. You don't stand in



Life on an Israeli kibbutz

“It would drive me crazy”, says TV producer Lorraine Isaacs (left), who has lived most of her life in Invercargill and Dunedin. Born into a Jewish family in South Africa, she emigrated to New Zealand at the age of 8.

Lorraine has visited Israel many times and talked to Tui Motu about life on a kibbutz and the present troubled situation



My family originally came from Northern Europe (Ashkenazi Jews as opposed to Sephardic, from S Europe). They escaped from the European ghettos to go and live in S Africa – and spread from there to Israel and to many other countries, including New Zealand. I have an aunt who moved to Israel and cousins, my aunt’s son and daughter, who have lived there on the same two kibbutz since 1965. I have visited there a few times.

The very first kibbutz was established by Jews in Palestine in 1909. The first members of my family went to set up the kibbutz Tzarah in 1948. A kibbutz is a voluntary collective community, mainly agricultural. It can be seen as a form of ‘communism’.

Facilities are communal although every family has its own house. There is no private wealth but the kibbutz takes responsibility for the wellbeing of its members. They were set up on the borders and were a protection or buffer for Israel from its Arab neighbours, who have always tended to be hostile to the existence of Israel. The new settlers went either to the cities or to a kibbutz.

Over the years the typical kibbutz has diversified into more of a manufacturing economy, computers for instance. Many of the people living on the kibbutz will now go out to work somewhere else. My cousin’s wife 30 years ago worked only on the kibbutz. Now she travels half an hour to Jerusalem for work.

front of them and look down on them, like a lot of people do.

I have been a tutor now for 11 years. I’ve enrolled to get a Bachelor of Education degree in Maori. I’m not interested in just chasing more money. I want to stay here and help these people. It’s the lowest paid job I’ve ever been in – but there is huge job satisfaction. Before, I worked just to feed my children. I watched the clock all day!

My family don’t mind. Because doing this job has made me a better person. I speak Maori at home with the children. But I’m also quite at home in the pakeha world too. That is what Waitaha has given me.

It has also been a spiritual journey. We learn about the Maori Creation story,

and it’s interesting to me how it runs alongside the Bible story of creation. They run side by side. Until coming here I had never opened the Bible. You say to yourself: “Didn’t Tane do that – just as Moses did in the Bible?”

framing their learning in prayer

Every morning here we start with a karakia session. We start with a prayer and a reading. We sing. We open up the floor, so that all the matters are dealt with. If we have any trouble we settle it here – even if it’s hurtful. Then we round it up with a karakia and we join hands. The wairua flows from each person to everyone through the linking of hands. We finish with a chant. We start and

finish our day like that, acknowledging everyone who came during the day.

In the classrooms we have a karakia session also with the students. They too get used to framing their learning in prayer. We teach them about half a dozen karakia – about blessing food, about health, opening and ending the day, acknowledging someone who is in hospital, their loved ones.

Before I came here I had no faith. But there are lots of messages for me now in the Bible. When I read about the narrow gate in *Matthew*, I think of going to Varsity as a road that not many people travel. Multitudes go along the other path – but it doesn’t do them any good! We have the courage to tread this path now, achieving the goals we have set for ourselves. ■

So what's it like living on a kibbutz today?

In 1948 the kibbutz where I stayed had vineyards and dairy cattle. Today there are still dairy cows producing milk for the cities. It still grows grapes. They even produce wine in conjunction with a local Franciscan monastery. It grows coffee, rears turkeys and has a furniture factory, and makes equipment for the disabled.

Money earned is pooled. My cousins do not own their own car, but whenever they need one they can register to borrow one. It is noticeable that money is used much more now than in the old days. Once you simply fed in the communal dining room. Now your meals are charged against your budget according to the amount of money you bring in. So those who earn more from their work can save to go on overseas trips. In the old days everyone received the same whatever they did.

There are 270 kibbutz in Israel on which 120,000 people live. That is three percent of the total Israeli population. They vary between a hundred and a thousand members. Tzorah has 900 members so it is one of the bigger ones. It has two and half thousand acres of agricultural land. On Israeli standards that is huge. The whole country is only the size of Southland: 240 km from north to south, yet only 20 km across in places.

There is a guesthouse for visitors. All 900 can eat in the one dining room. A huge common laundry. It is run like a small village. It is guarded. There are no roads for cars. Everyone has their own little garden. It has its own primary school and a high school that also serves the surrounding villages.

People come as visitors and may work up to a year. To settle there you have to be Jewish and prepared to give your wealth to the kibbutz. You must have work to contribute to the kibbutz. You are vetted by the kibbutz association to be allowed to join. That process may take 18 months.

What effect does this communal style of life have on the 'family dynamic'?

My aunt who has lived there since 1965 has her own great grandchildren living there too: four generations of one family. In the early days the children were brought up communally, like a whanau situation. At first the children lived all together, but after one generation the kibbutzim decided to go back to a family situation.

The next generation of children were brought up in family units, and they have a much closer bond, I would say, with their birth parents. Interestingly, the first generation of children spoke Hebrew, so their English tends to be poor, whereas the next generation speak excellent English and speak Hebrew as well. My impression is that the younger generation are more friendly and loving than their parents.

Living in a kibbutz means living in an agricultural village.

That isn't for everybody – it would drive me crazy! You get together and do everything together, and it isn't easy to make friends outside the circle. There is not much in the way of art and culture. You do not do things on your own. For instance, you don't go shopping. You give a list to someone else who goes to Haifa and gets it for you! Somebody else makes the children's clothes. For me it is too 'communal'. I like to make my own choices.

My cousin goes into Jerusalem and manages a major orchestra. In the evening he returns to the kibbutz. And if it is his turn on the roster, he is handing out the food, washing the dishes, cleaning the floor afterwards. If he is working fulltime, it is not too much, but he is obliged to do his bit.

It is a very sheltered little world. My impression is that there are fewer marriage break-ups, fewer mental health problems, because there is this sense of communal loyalty. You are less likely to grow away from your marriage partner if both of you have the same ideals. Among the 900 members I never came across any broken marriages. The kibbutzim are mostly secular. There are no services. God is not discussed.

What about the Jewish religion? How widely is it practised?

The kibbutz Tzorah is mentioned in the Old Testament as the birthplace of Samson. Even though the kibbutzim are secular they keep up their Jewish traditions. In December when we were there, they celebrated Hannukah – a festival of light which commemorates the Dedication of the second Temple in about 165 BC. The festival lasts for eight days, because the tradition is that the Temple oil miraculously lasted for eight days.

It reminded me of the Christian loaves and fishes miracle. The people were miraculously provided for! It is a lovely festival. There is no tradition of giving expensive presents, but there are traditions of eating sugar buns and the children playing with spinning tops.

They also celebrate Passover roundabout Easter, celebrating the fact that the angel of death which struck down the Egyptians 'passed over' the Israelites and spared them. They are celebrating God saving the people at the time of the Exodus. They also celebrate the Day of Atonement, fasting all day before their 'new year' in September. It is a day of atoning for all the wrongdoings of the previous year. So they continue their traditions even though they are in many respects a secular society.

There are of course lots of very religious Jews who tend to live in particular areas in the cities. I am not just referring to the ultra-Orthodox (whom everyone dislikes!). In Jerusalem there is a district called Meashearim, where the ultra-Orthodox are. You are not allowed in the streets unless your head is covered and women must wear dresses. The



▷▷ men are dressed as they were in 17th Century Poland, long black coats, black fur hats, beards and ringlets round their ears – for the men. The women shave their heads when they marry and always cover their heads and wear long dresses. Their life of synagogue worship and strict bible reading would not be possible on a kibbutz.

I think a lot of the problems in Israel spring from the intolerance of the ultra-Orthodox fundamentalist Jews, just as the Arab problems spring from fundamentalist Muslims – and the

Christian problems from ultra-Orthodox Christians. When they go so far ‘to the right’ in any of these religions, they become rigid in their beliefs and hateful towards everyone else – to the point where they are prepared to kill those who do not believe as they do.

My view is that Israel should give these territories back in return for an absolute guarantee from the Arab states allowing Israel to exist. My family who have always lived there would not see it like that, but my brother and sister-

My family sees no possibility of peace as long as Arafat is chairman... I would include Ariel Sharon in that.

something for these refugees, who have been better off, especially the women, under Israeli rule than under their own Arab neighbours. The problem is not only Israel's.

The Arab women under Israeli rule are better off because at least now they have some rights. Their children are better educated and housed, whereas Arab Muslim law afforded them no rights.

There are Palestinian schools in Jerusalem itself. There is a Palestinian town Abu Gosh bordering Jerusalem, where the mayor says he is Jerusalem's best

friend and resents any prospect of a change in the status quo.

How safe did you feel in Israel on your recent visit?

The unsafe parts were the Palestinian areas, the West Bank and Gaza strip. Also parts of the cities, such as Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem itself where young people gather. You see tanks on the road, young Israeli soldiers carrying submachine guns, you are searched at the airport by armed guards. When I went in to Jerusalem to go to the museum I had to promise my family I would not stand at a bus stop,



Shalom! Welcome to Kibbutz Tzora

in-law who have been there for the past three years only would agree with me.

The illegal Jewish settlements built since 1967 would have to be abandoned and the people moved back into West Israel. The government settled these with refugees, mostly Russian, as a further buffer zone. These people never had any choice where they lived. They are constantly in need of the Israeli Army for protection. If they were resettled there would no longer be need for such a large Israeli Army.

How do you see the rights of the Palestinian people?

I feel sorry for them. But I also deplore the fact that the neighbouring Arab states do not lift a finger to help them. Some of these Palestinians have lived in refugee camps for 50 years. Look how reluctant the Arab states have been even to accept the 13 Arab gunmen locked up in the Church of the Nativity. Ironically, only the Israelis have tried to do

but would travel straight there and back in a taxi. You have to be careful, even in the Jewish areas.

My brother and family feel as safe there as anywhere, provided they avoid the danger spots. So far the suicide bombers have not been into the smaller places. Unfortunately you cannot travel to places like Bethlehem or Jericho which are under the Palestinian authority because they are not safe.

My family sees no possibility of peace as long as Arafat is chairman of the Palestinian authority. But I would include Ariel Sharon in that. Those two men have been at war for 50 years, since Israel was set up as a state in 1948. Until they are replaced by younger men there will be no chance of peace. ■

The Consistent Ethic of Life

*Cardinal Joseph Bernardin challenged
the new Religious Right in America to reverence human life in all its aspects.
Mary Eastham concludes this two-part account of Bernardin's life*

All theology is contextual. This is especially true of public theology which holds before us a moral vision of human possibility. In *A Consistent Ethic of Life: An American-Catholic Dialogue* (1983), Cardinal Joseph Bernardin notes the uniquely American context of his moral vision. He is aware of deep contradictions within American culture; and yet he also knows that the American people can respond to a powerful moral vision.

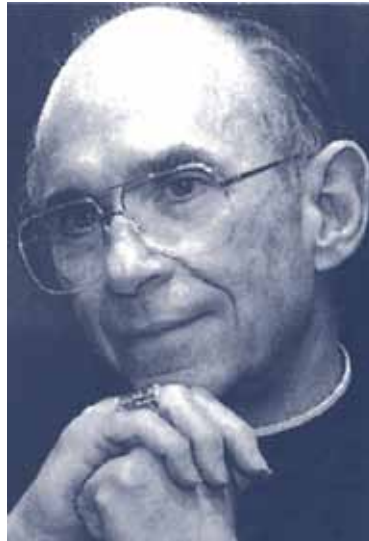
Since the conversation between religion, morality and politics has always been alive and well in the United States, a skilled public philosopher and public theologian can gain a sympathetic hearing – provided he/she respects the secularity of the political process, the religious pluralism of the American people and the need for civility, not religious passion, in public discourse.

If a moral and religious language is chosen that can be understood by all, the public theologian stands a chance of alerting the nation to a new vision. For Joseph Bernardin, the Catholic tradition of social ethics provided the language; the *consistent ethic of life*, the vision.

Early in his career, Bernardin grasped that life is sacred, interdependent and whole. The links he makes between 'life issues' reflect his awareness of the spiritual and moral bonds holding the human family together. If a people could become aware of these spiritual and moral links, they might see the human face behind problems posed by technology and seek solutions that were humane and just.

The American background

Among the most controversial decisions in American public life have been



two Supreme Court rulings, *Roe vs. Wade* and *Doe vs Bolton* (1973), which overturned the prevailing consensus against abortion on demand. Almost overnight a political movement was formed – the 'Religious Right' – which championed the right to life, and vowed to overturn Supreme Court decisions they considered an affront to the moral values of most Americans.

The Religious Right also champions platforms which do *not* promote the right to life: a strong national defence, capital punishment and eliminating state-supported welfare programmes.

*life is sacred
interdependent
and whole*

Here we see a disturbing contradiction in the psyche of American conservatives: how to reconcile a pro-life position which is both anti-abortion and pro-capital punishment.

Similar contradictions exist in the 'liberal' camp. The liberal position is

centred upon *individual* rights in life-style choices, economic entitlements and global responsibility. In domestic policy liberals champion the 'right of a woman to choose', gay and lesbian rights, a strong welfare state to protect economically disadvantaged Americans and an end to the death penalty. In foreign policy, they promote a nuclear-free policy and laws to protect the environment.

The most glaring inconsistency in the liberal position is the alarming blind-spot between individual life-style choices and their long-term social consequences. A society cannot overnight alter deeply held moral convictions on a range of family life issues without significant personal and social upheaval.

The task of the skilled public theologian is to make moral and political links for the general public in such a way that mutual understanding and reconciliation become possible. Only then can contentious political principles of public morality be clarified in a way that moves the dialogue forward in both the Church and the wider society.

'Life' is not a single issue

The purpose of the *consistent ethic of life* is to ground a pro-life ethic in a comprehensive and consistent world-view. The US. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* (1983) provided a major opportunity for Bernardin to develop the link between abortion and nuclear war.

He argues: "success on any one of the issues threatening life requires a concern for the broader attitude in society about respect for life." Thus, issues as varied



as genetics, abortion, pornography, capital punishment, modern warfare, the care of the terminally ill could then be linked on a continuum as pro-life issues. Abortion is not the same as war; nor is capital punishment the same as poverty; but each, in its own way, is a threat to the sanctity of life.

The *consistent ethic* also highlighted the social nature of each pro-life issue. Anti-abortion and anti-euthanasia must be linked to the need for a wide range of humane positions on tax policy, welfare policy, nutrition and feeding programmes, health care, housing, education, employment, old age pensions and compassionate care during times of crisis.

Poverty merited special attention. In 1984, Bernardin noted that 35 million Americans lived below the poverty level. Most were women, or children, or belonged to ethnic minorities. These statistics were just as alarming as that of 1.5 million abortions per year.

Public Morality and the Cult of Privatisation

An issue Bernardin sought to clarify was the concept of public morality, because it is very misunderstood in American public life and at the heart of much of the tension between “liberals” and “conservatives”. In many ways, abortion is a private matter between a woman, her family and her doctor; so too, genetically altering human life in utero; so too, euthanasia. In each instance, we are faced with dilemmas that have been thrust on us by the intrusion of modern technology into the most intimate areas of our lives: birth and death.

So how are these issues also public?

• *they are concerns of public morality*

Bernardin believed that a private matter became an issue of public morality if it involved public peace, protection of human rights, and commonly accepted standards of moral behaviour.

In *Religion and Politics* (1985), he wrote: “Whether a given question should be interpreted as one of public morality is not always self-evident. A rationally persuasive case has to be made that an

action violates the rights of others or that the consequences of actions on a given issue are so important to society that the authority of the State and the civil law ought to be invoked to govern personal and group behaviour.”

Bernardin pointed out how black slaves were denied their humanity and their rights were not guaranteed under the law. Until that was overturned by the Supreme Court in the 19th century, black people were treated as property and could be abused according to the whim of their owners.

Bernardin believed parallels existed between that decision by the Supreme Court and the *Roe vs. Wade* ruling in that both decided “who fit in the circle of the legally protected human community.” Unless the *Roe vs. Wade* is revisited, the American people have not responded to the moral challenge posed by abortion – the care of the most helpless and vulnerable among us, who are genetically human in every way. Killing of any kind – including abortion and euthanasia – tears at the moral and spiritual fabric of society.

• *the cult of privatisation*

As life becomes more complex and overwhelming, people retreat into the privacy of their lives. This split between the private and public realms of life, however, destroys any hope of reconnecting the sacred and secular in modern life. A moral vision is necessary which speaks to the sacred in the secular as it puts us in touch with the sacred within ourselves.

a moral vision which speaks to the sacred in the secular

The *consistent ethic of life* is such a vision, and yet even Catholic public servants fall prey to the cult of privatisation when they make public statements such as: “I’m personally opposed to abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, but I do not want to impose my religious convictions on others.” Bernardin

insists: “The position of a public figure who is personally opposed to abortion but not publicly opposed in terms of specific choices, is an unacceptable fulfilment of a public role.”

The Impact of the Consistent Ethic

A moral vision takes time to make deep inroads into the consciousness of a people. Ideas precede moral judgments, which in turn lead to a new awareness of being in the world. As a social ethic, the *consistent ethic of life* takes place at the level of ideas and moral judgements. If argument is persuasive, attitudes change on the range of life issues, from abortion to nuclear war to capital punishment to the interconnectedness of all beings on Earth.

we need to show convincingly that we are ‘for life’

In 1989 another Supreme Court decision (*Webster vs. Reproductive Health*) redressed the faulty logic of *Roe vs. Wade* – not “*Who* decides?” but rather “*What* is being decided?” Surveys indicate that some 60 percent of Americans were opposed to abortion on demand in 1990 but were ambiguous about how many restrictions to place on it. Perhaps the *consistent ethic of life* was having an impact in moving Americans who previously held extreme positions into this middle ground.

In 1990 Bernardin wrote: “It is not enough to be against abortion; we need to show convincingly that we are *for life* – life for women and children; *for life*, in support of the very old and the very young; *for life*, which enhances the chance for the next generation to come to adulthood well-educated, well-nourished, and well-founded in a value structure which provides a defence against the allure of drugs, violence and despair.”

He also believed that the consistent ethic might have played some role in reshaping the relationship between the US and the Soviet Union: “the possibility of a different political order in world affairs,

(was) closer at hand in 1990 than... in 1983, despite the existence of some 50,000 nuclear weapons.”

But the consistent ethic of life has not changed public opinion on the death penalty. Indeed, as Bernardin noted, some politicians actually ran for public office on the basis of whom they were prepared to kill. As late as this year, Supreme Court Justice Anthony Scaglia,

*some politicians
ran for office on the
basis of whom they were
prepared to kill*

who has never hidden the fact that he is Catholic, suggested publicly that the Church reclaim its tradition of capital punishment!

Bernardin's New Zealand visit

In 1995 on a visit to New Zealand, Bernardin reiterated five ways the Church was called to witness publicly in the modern world:

1. – as a community of conscience speaking out when human rights and dignity are trampled; as in: abortion, war, sexual promiscuity, poverty, injustice, oppression, and denying refugees entrance to wealthy countries.
 2. – as a community that understands the interdependence of the human race and thus lives in solidarity with all people.
 3. – as a community which is faithful to its heritage, historically and intellectually because this fidelity is a precondition for authentic doctrinal development.
 4. – as a community of struggle which shares in the suffering of millions of people as it works to eradicate poverty, injustice and oppression.
 5. – as a community of learning and teaching which collaborates with intellectuals the world over to solve the urgent problems confronting us all. (see *New Zealand Tablet*, 2 April 1995)
- These five statements summarise the essential contours of the *consistent ethic of life*.

In 1997, the New Zealand Bishops reformulated this vision to reflect the unique spirit of our nation. Note, however, the cosmological orientation of New Zealand's approach, over against the anthropological orientation of Bernardin.

The sacredness of creation is the starting point for the bishops' statement. The document begins, “We live in a world of extraordinary beauty”. It proceeds to develop nine issues connected with a *consistent ethic of life*.

- the choice of life or death is at the heart of the Biblical tradition...
- respect for the integrity of the ecosystem within which human life exists...
- rejection of discrimination in all its forms because we are united by our common humanity...
- eradication of poverty which is the number one killer in the world...

*we live in a world
of extraordinary
beauty*

(NZ Bishops)

- elimination of mass weapons of destruction, both nuclear and conventional, developing comprehensive peace accords based on mutual respect...
- promoting peace based on justice and to reject war as a means of settling disputes...
- an end to abortion – the creation of an environment within families and society where pregnant mothers are supported and children are made welcome...
- raising awareness about the link between euthanasia and opening the door to other kinds of “mercy killing”...
- ending of the death penalty and a call for the development of humane restorative judicial processes for all criminal offending... that allow for apology, healing, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, and wherever possible, reconciliation.

(*A Consistent Ethic of Life*-Te Kahu-O-Tē-Ora, April 1997)

Bernardin's legacy

The legacy of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin is above all a statement of compassion and reconciliation between people and between discordant groups in society. What would he have to say now about the spectacle of sexual abuse by the clergy? I think he would hold the errant parties accountable and demand justice for the victim. The consistent ethic would demand of priests the highest standard not only because they serve the Church but the community.

He would work tirelessly to bring about reconciliation. He might say: ‘the Church should not be evaluated solely on one of its darkest hours. Consider the contribution of Catholic schools, hospitals, old age homes, hospices’. He might even ask the Press lords why they are clobbering the Church so mercilessly. Issues like *Can the Catholic Church Save Itself* (*Time* magazine, Good Friday, 2002,) are intended to make a powerful public statement.

Bernardin might hint that there is something about the American Church's public witness to the full range of life issues that is troubling some rich and powerful people today. For the church opposes stem cell research, which stands to make only a privileged few healthy. It condemns over-consumption in the First World and human rights abuses in the Third. When was the last time you read an exposé in *Time* about the inherent injustices of the global economy and its effect on the poorest of the poor?

In the meantime, we can hold up Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's life and vision as something to celebrate, cherish and continue to develop:

“...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” (Matthew: 31: 35-36) ■

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The Icons of Russia

their art and spirituality

Russian icons are religious images that follow traditions and rules that have their origin in ancient Byzantium. They depict the Twelve Festivals of the Eastern Orthodox Church related to the life of Christ, as well as a range of other images including the lives of the Virgin, the saints and the Fathers of the Orthodox Church, as well as local religious stories. They do not aspire to realism but to symbolic representations of the Divine.

They are usually painted in egg tempera on a gesso ground set into a wood panel. The majority are small and portable, no more than 50 centimetres square, but they can be large, over two metres high. The smaller icons were generally for domestic devotion – every household had an icon corner with several images. The larger ones formed part of the *iconostasis*, the wall of icons separating the sanctuary from the congregation.

There are popular images relating to the Virgin, always referred to in Russian as *Bogomater*, the Mother of God. The Virgin has particular significance in Orthodoxy interceding on behalf of sinners to her son Christ the Judge. A fresco image of the Virgin was often painted on the apse ceiling of the sanctuary, where she stands with arms raised in supplication to her grim-faced Son depicted on the domed ceiling above the iconostasis.

One popular icon depicts the *Dormition* (see above opposite), the ascent of the Virgin Mary's soul to heaven after her death, celebrated on August 15. Christ in Glory, set in an abstract landscape

of coloured light (*mandorla*), is usually shown receiving and holding the white shrouded soul of His earthly Mother at her Assumption, just as she is shown in other icons holding her son in her arms after the Nativity. Our example shows St John the Baptist and St Stephen at the top of the icon. Saints Peter and Paul are usually depicted at either end of Mary's bier.

Another popular icon in which Mary plays a prominent role is of the *Nativity* itself (below). Our example indicates the way icons often show various aspects of an event dispersed about the picture surface – the three kings arriving on horseback at the top left, the protective archangels above the Christ Child in his



The *Nativity*, mid-16th century, (63 x 59 cm.) is kept in the Andrei Rublev Museum of Early Russian Art, Spaso-Andronikovo Monastery, Moscow.

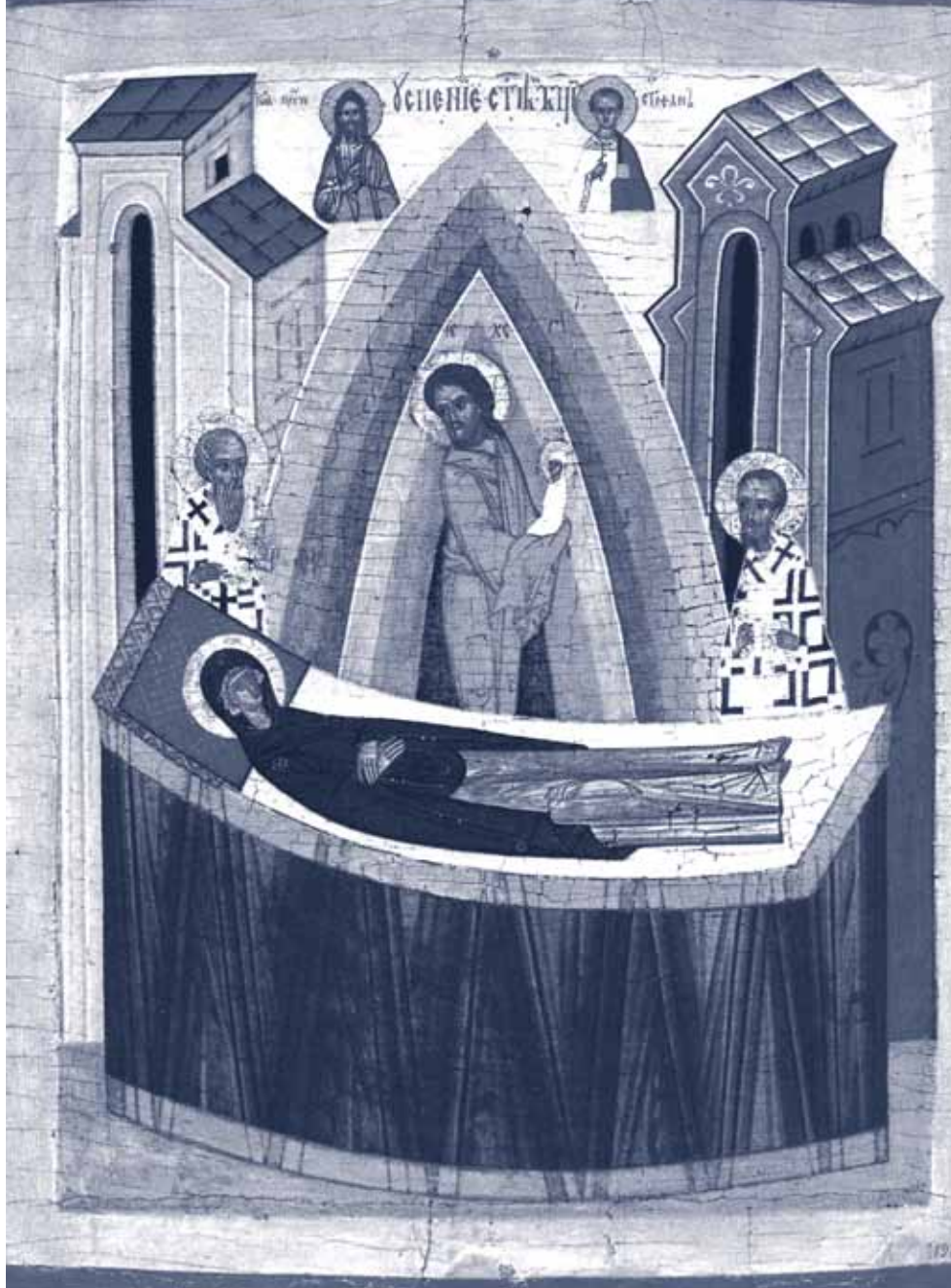
Peter Stupples

manger overlooked by the ass, the angels having descended from the dark semi-circular Heaven at the top centre. The shepherds are at left centre. Mary herself looks towards the aged Joseph conversing with a saint, possibly warning him to seek sanctuary in Egypt, and at the bottom right the baby Jesus is being bathed by a midwife, foreshadowing the later ritual of baptism. ■

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The *Dormition*, early 15th century, 48 x 37 cm., Russian Museum, St Petersburg.

Dormition, or 'falling asleep', refers to the death of Mary and the ascent of her soul to God.



In the icon of the Nativity, a scene is often added to the Scripture accounts (*see detail left*) showing a midwife washing the child Jesus in a large basin. At the same time another figure is ritually pouring water. This scene symbolises the new life given to the Christian through the baptismal rite. As Christ was born of Mary into this world, so the Christian is reborn to eternal life through baptism.

Since the Renaissance religious pictures in the West have been like a *mirror* of the real world – naturalistic, humanist, depicting religious subjects as scenes from

real life. By contrast, an icon is more like a *window* into another world – the world of God and of the Saints.

The icon is a 'sacramental' presence. It became an indispensable part of Orthodox worship, revered like Scripture itself as revealing God to the believer. St John Damascene wrote in the 8th Century: "(in church) my gaze is held and my soul is moved to praise God..."

Henri Nouwen wrote: "Every time I entrust myself to these images... they draw me into closer communion with the God of love". ■

Belting Kids

Glynn Cardy

This week Jake Wilson was acquitted for beating his stepson, Shayne Ambler, with his belt. Shayne has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (A.D.H.D.) and, reportedly, major behavioural problems. It seems the stepfather was at his wits end and belting the boy had the desired effect: namely hitting produced fear, fear produced compliance, and compliance produced safety. The law says he can use 'reasonable force', and the jury believed the belt was reasonable. Just as a jury in Hawkes Bay last year believed that using a piece of timber was reasonable.

Reason has actually got little to do with it. We are part of the most advanced, scientific, reason-based, medical system our planet has ever seen. We have the knowledge and technology to prevent plagues, to heal many of the lame, and to help the blind to see. This same advanced medical system is unequivocal in its condemnation of hitting children. The *British Medical Association* and the *American Academy of Paediatrics*, to name just two august bodies, clearly state that physical chastisement of children should never be permissible.

In the case of Shayne Ambler two medical experts appearing for the prosecution are reported as saying, in particular, "a hyperactive child should never be hit". Their evidence seems to have been dismissed, not on the grounds that the medical data was scientifically flawed, not on the grounds of reason, but rather on the basis of the jury's own experience. Objectivity was replaced by the subjective and deeply held belief in their minds, and in the minds of many in our society that fear, and the physical means to instil fear, are an important part of controlling children's behaviour. This belief is augmented by the feelings of frustration and powerlessness that

most parents experience at some stage in child-raising.

Yet there is a cost to instilling fear. By allowing any hitting, some are set along the path of hitting a lot, with the result of some nine or more children being admitted each week in New Zealand hospitals with adult inflicted injuries. A number of these are babies.

Another cost is the flow-on effects. The child's logic says: *If an adult is justified in hitting me, then hitting is obviously acceptable in society.* How often have children discovered the morally suspect scenario of being hit by an adult because they have hit another child? Is it any wonder that those hit become hitters themselves?

*those who are
hit become hitters
themselves*

Another cost is the change in the relationship between an adult and a child that violence brings. We know that when physical violence enters a marital relationship, the trust is never the same again. The same may well be true for many child-adult relationships. Learning and modelling alternative methods of handling anger and disputes is hard work. Yet I think we need to minimise fear in children's lives.

It is a fallacy that fear brings respect. I, like many adults, went to a school that practised caning. Indeed some Masters would practise every opportunity they could get (improving their golf swing?). Yet there seemed to be an inverse correlation between how much respect a teacher had and how much they used the cane. The most inspiring teachers never used it or threatened to use it. Respect and cooperation were earned by non-violent means.

I was interested that Jake Wilson's lawyer quoted the Bible – not in order to discourage hitting, but to encourage it. The lawyer trotted out the only verse that seems to justify belting: *Proverbs 13:24*: "Those who spare the rod hate their children, but those who love them are diligent to discipline them." The key word in this verse is *rod*. It has long been assumed in our culture that this is a piece of wood.

However, Biblical scholars beg to differ. The *rod* they say is the rule of God. It is the Torah, the first five books of the Bible, and the Wisdom writings which provide a measure (a ruler) for faithful obedience to God. In other words the verse means those who neglect to teach their children the faith hate their kids, but those who love their children are diligent to put the time and work into instructing their children in its ways. It is an admonition to teach children the beliefs and understandings of their religion, to give them religious standards and ideals to seek to measure up to. It has nothing to do with hitting.

The Bible does not give clear irrefutable instructions about hitting or not hitting children. It doesn't say: "if they're naughty belt 'em", nor does it say "thou shalt not hit children". What it does say, for Christians, is that Jesus is the paramount revelation of God.

So what would Jesus do? Some would say that, if he'd had children, he would have hit. Others would say that Jesus was loving and kind. While remaining true to the demands of love, Jesus never intentionally instilled fear in anyone. In particular he was deeply committed to the vulnerable and the marginalised – including children. ■

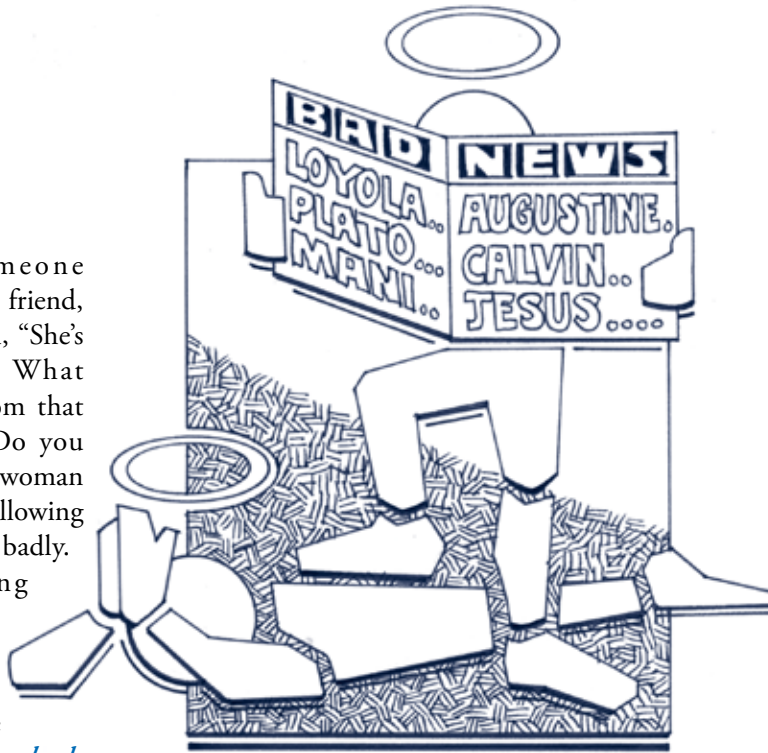
Glynn Cardy is Anglican Vicar of St. Andrew's, Epsom, Auckland

Broken-ness

— a questionable virtue

*There's no virtue in being a doormat, says John Hunt
looking at a dubious Christian tradition*

I remember someone speaking of her friend, an elderly woman, “She’s an absolute saint. What she puts up with from that husband of hers!” Do you feel a little uneasy? A woman is being praised for allowing herself to be treated badly. Is there something praiseworthy in a woman accepting abuse? I am unhappy about a stream in the Church which honours *broke-ness*.



We have the prayer of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits:

*Teach us good Lord,
...To give and not to count the cost;
To fight and not to heed the wounds;
To toil and not to seek for rest...*

A former Sister said to me “Those words are dangerous. They allow the ill-treatment of religious people”.

From time to time, someone will say to me, “You’re looking tired”. What is being said? It is an expression of concern. To look tired, however, is an acknowledgment that I am doing my job. To become ill from overwork is praiseworthy.

Broken-ness somehow authenticates ministry. I think, through the Christian centuries, by accepting *broken-ness* good Christian men and women have allowed themselves to be abused and exploited. The honouring of self-sacrifice, the glorification of pain, has meant many broken, unhappy lives.

Remember the man who had been by the pool for 38 years. Jesus asked him, “Do you want to get well?” The sick man answered, “Sir, I have no one here to put me in the pool when

the water is stirred up; while I am trying to get in, somebody else gets there first.” Jesus said to him, “Get up, pick up your mat, and walk” (*John 5 GNB*). I suspect the man was trapped in thinking of himself as unwell. Jesus confronted him with the question, and offered him the possibility: *Do you want to get well?* I believe Jesus invites people to be well!

For me, the Christian Faith is a three legged stool: love for neighbour, love for self, love for God. If one of the legs of the stool is too long or too short, the stool falls over. We have been strong on love for neighbour. We have been reasonably strong on love for God. The third leg, love for self, has often been short. The life of the Christian man or woman has been ‘broken’.

The cult of broken-ness

Plato had the idea that everything is an imperfect representation of its perfect form in the spiritual realm. The spiritual realm was thought to be perfect and good, the material world imperfect and bad. Platonic Dualism degraded the whole physical world.

We see this view also in Manichaeism. Mani taught that there are two opposing forces in the universe: God (*light*) and matter (*darkness*). We can move toward the light by denial of the physical.

Manichaeism is important chiefly because of its influence on *Augustine of Hippo* (354-430). Augustine gave us the doctrine of original sin, the theology that from Adam’s sin, ‘we suffer from an hereditary moral disease and we are subject to an inherited legal liability’.



- ▷▷ Natural human desires are condemned as inherently wrong. Sexuality is regarded as sinful. It is as though the denial of the physical means the enhancement of the spiritual. Augustine had a profound effect on Western theology. He leaves us with the pathological view: "The world is bad news. Life is bad news. People are bad news".

Once upon a time women, who engage in something as physical as giving birth to a baby, were disregarded. The word hysterical has its root in the Greek *ustera*, womb. It was assumed women therefore were unable to think. Men, who engaged in thinking, regarded themselves as acceptable. It could be the Church has created a culture of people feeling badly about themselves, people lacking self-esteem, people feeling inferior. We see people therefore unable to form loving relationships; people therefore unable to take their place in society.

When I first came to St Giles in Christchurch, a man about my own age said to me, "You never tell me I am a naughty boy, John. You give us the carrot but not the stick". I looked at him and felt for him. This man was missing the sado-masochism he had found in the Church! He couldn't believe that he is an acceptable, good man.

An anomaly in Scripture:

"My body *broken* for you"

The honouring of *broken-ness* appears in the words of Institution of Eucharist. In *Matthew 26.26* we have: *Take, eat, this is my body*; in *Mark 14.22*, the same. In *Luke 22.19* we have: *This is my body given for you*. But in the Authorised Version, *1 Corinthians 11.24*, we have: *This is my body which is *broken* for you*.

The A.V. of 1611 follows what is known as *The Received Text* which is now recognised as unreliable. Since it was compiled in 1550 by Stephanus, many further manuscripts have come to light. *Broken* is missing in the earliest manuscripts and in Origen, Cyprian. In modern versions of the New Testament: RSV, New English, GNB, NRSV and 'Jerusalem', at *Corinthians 11.24*, the word *broken* does not appear.

The message of this verse to people celebrating the *Lord's Supper* was: a true follower of Christ is a person who will allow him or herself to be broken. Calvin reinforced this view: "even the good works of Christians are intrinsically evil, though covered and not counted as sins through the imputed merits of Christ".

A young minister of the Church of Scotland one winter's Sunday morning skated down the frozen stream from the manse to the church. He was brought before the Session for discipline, charged with 'Skating on the Sabbath'. In his defence he pleaded, "It was just a means of transport". The Elders discussed this a while. Then the Session Clerk put the question, "Did you *enjoy* it, minister?"

The honouring of *broken-ness* has made people, particularly women, vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. When a woman who has suffered ill-treatment at the hands of her superior or at the hands of her husband, has protested, she has been accused of pride or wilfulness. The *broken* position has been regarded as the true Christian position.

Jesus in the Gospels

I believe Jesus is not offering us his broken body. Jesus is offering us his whole body. Jesus is offering us wholeness and wellness. From a position of *broken-ness*, we can take Jesus' death on the cross, as Augustine does, as the sacrifice of God's Son, to atone for the sins of humankind, to satisfy God's sense of justice. We see the abject, broken Christ, hanging on the cross.

From a position of wellness, we can take Jesus' death on the cross, as the Celts see it, as Jesus suffering the worst pain, but not overcome. The Celts see Christ both alongside us in our pain and calling us beyond our pain. Through Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, we also will not be overcome.

At the Resurrection Jesus came to the disciples hiding behind locked doors. From a position of *broken-ness*, we could identify with the disciples' failure to stick with Jesus, their feeling of failure, their feeling of worthlessness. Did Jesus say, "Where were you when I needed you?" *No*. Did Jesus say, "A bright bunch of friends you turned out to be!" *No*. What did Jesus say? "Peace to you."

Jesus understood the disciples' fear. Jesus accepted that they had done their best. Jesus said to them, *Shalom*, have peace, have wholeness, have contentment. Jesus gave them the confident, cheerful spirit they needed to step out into the world. In the northern hemisphere, Easter comes at the beginning of spring. It is a time of new growth, new flowering, new beginnings.

*Jesus is offering –
not his broken body – but
his whole body*

The Celtic Spirit – A free spirit

The Roman Empire and Church did not get to Ireland in the early period. When Christianity did come, the Celts were not told what to do; they were not put in hierarchies; and they were not told what to believe and what not to believe. The Celts delighted in the Psalms, with their references to God in the natural world and in *John's* Gospel with its mysteries. The Celts could take seriously what seemed good and true to them.

The Celts delighted in the Creator they knew in the creation. They saw in the passing of the seasons, the rhythms of day following night, the turning of the tides, the migrations of birds, the ever-flowing streams, God's constant love for them.

The following piece illustrates the Celtic Spirit:

*As the hand is made for holding
and the eye for seeing,
thou hast fashioned me for joy.
Share with me the vision that
shall find it everywhere:
in the wild violet's beauty;
in the lark's melody;
in the face of a steadfast man;
in a child's smile;
in a mother's love;
in the purity of Jesus.*

Alistair McLean



A personal story

When I was confirmed, I had to meet with the minister in the vestry on the Friday prior, after school. A girl came out crying! I recall thinking, 'this doesn't look too good!' The minister then appeared and beckoned to me. I recall vividly him saying, "On this eve of your confirmation, John, it is appropriate for you to confess your sins. When I say something which is right for you, you say 'I confess that sin, Lord'".

I knelt down. He began his prayer referring to sins I had never heard of! I do remember he said, "I have spilled my seed upon the ground". I had a picture of helping my father plant the garden and wastefully spilling a packet of seed. I have an idea now what he was referring to.

I was feeling a failure because I hadn't committed any of the sins he was naming! It was a huge relief when he said, "I have taken thy name in vain". I was very happy to be able to say: "I confess that sin, Lord!"

I was only 14! Wouldn't it have been so much better if he had said, "On the eve of your Confirmation, John, it is appropriate for you to look back over your life and remember God's love for you. Would you like to tell me about some of the difficult things you have handled?"

"Would you like to tell me about some of the things you have achieved? Would you like to tell me about your good friends, people in your family, people who love you?"

I am clear Jesus wants us to think well of ourselves. Jesus accepts us in our weaknesses and affirms us in our strengths. Jesus is with us in our pain, both alongside and calling us through. Jesus delights in and nurtures our goodness. Jesus calls us to grow and to flower. ■

John Hunt is Minister at St Giles Presbyterian church in Papanui, Christchurch. Celtic spirituality is a special interest for him.

Is there no other way?

Is there no other way but this
when children learn to curse and kill,
when isolation numbs the brain
and torture breaks another's will?
Is there no other way but this
from tyrant fear ourselves to save,
but eye for eye, and death for death,
till earth becomes our common grave?

Is there no other way but this
when drug and truncheon, tank and gun
impose belief, or seek to force
their iron rule on everyone?
Must we take up the stone and knife,
and at the last the winter bomb,
protect our own by taking life,
pit all our strength against the strong?

Is there no other way but this,
no other choice before our race,
must hate forever mask from me
a brother or a sister's face?
I choose another way than this.
I choose to turn from final loss:
choose good for bad, choose love not hate.
Lift up, my soul, the Saviour's cross.

Colin Gibson

Suitable for Hiroshima Day, 6 August.

This year is the 58th anniversary of the first atomic bomb.

Hymn of the month: Source: Alleluia Aotearoa #73 and He Came Singing Peace #12; available from the NZ Hymnbook Trust, Box 2011, Raumati 6450 or from your Christian Bookshop.

Ministering to Church Leavers

Trish McBride



There is a common perception among members of Christian churches that individuals who leave their church are doing so because they have ‘lost their faith’, and turned their backs, on both God and their community. In Catholic terms they have ‘lapsed’, an exact equivalent of the evangelical term ‘back-slidden’.

Not necessarily so, says Dr Alan Jamieson, pastor at Wellington’s Central Baptist Church. His interest was sparked in the early ’90s by observing that many people whose integrity and commitment he respected were leaving churches to which they had been deeply committed for a significant number of years. This led to his doctoral thesis and subsequent expansion of his findings into his book *A Churchless Faith* (Philip Garside, 2000).

It also led to a unique ministry to church leavers operating from the base of Wellington’s Central Baptist. Known as *Spirited Exchanges*, this support group meets twice a month and is facilitated by Jenny McIntosh who leads this part-time paid ministry.

Alan’s research findings were that most of the people who leave churches after intense commitment, in fact continue to have a vibrant faith in God and Jesus. They simply cannot continue with integrity to express it in the setting/ language/ theological understanding/ community in which they have hitherto done so. *Spirited Exchanges* gives such

people a spiritual way-station with companionship and support from people who understand the pain of making such a move. There is space to reflect, voice doubts and fears, to be angry, to grieve for lost certainties.

Attendance at the group can be a dozen or more, said Jenny. The format is generally a discussion on an advertised topic, with sharing of personal journeys in smaller groups. Topics over the last year have included “Who is God?”, “What is Prayer”, and “Spiritual Abuse”. Scheduled for early 2002 are “Why I Left the Church”, and “Easter and the Absence of God”. Other topics will be generated by the group.

Brenda, who has been with group for two years, said: “When you leave the church you get really lonely, you miss the community. Here there is acceptance with no agenda for you – no fear and no control. That feels amazing!” Another participant said: “I don’t have to watch my words here, I don’t get judged, and I’m only responsible for myself.”

For many, leaving their church can be a major life experience equating to divorce or bereavement. It throws up conflicts for the onlookers too. Those who remain within the institution can feel threatened and rejected and frequently find maintaining a relationship with the leaver in the too-hard basket, much as friends do after a divorce, despite the best intentions to remain in touch with both parties.

When Alan and Jenny addressed the

national training event of the *Association of Christian Spiritual Directors* last year, they were asked whether they have an agenda for the people who come to the group. “Do they see it as a way to gather up the lost sheep and return them to the fold?”

Their reply was engagingly honest: “We used to see it like that, but now we don’t. Now we understand that leaving a (or the) church is a valid and necessary part of some people’s spiritual journeys. They may or may not join another denomination, but the God-journey is going to continue.”

Alan makes a strong correlation of his findings with Fowler’s *Stages of Faith*, and concludes that most EPC (Evangelical, Pentecostal, Charismatic) churches, on which his research focussed, are geared to people with up to stage 3 faith. Stage 3 is characterised by Fowler as needing external authority/a parental figure, with followers grouped around a leader. In contrast Alan assesses the general level of New Zealand secular society to be at stage 4 level, where self-responsibility, plurality and listening to all the voices are becoming the norm.

A question one might ask: does the Catholic umbrella offer room for the development of more stages of faith than EPC churches? Catholics are far less homogeneous in theology than, say, AOG members.

So is it worth taking, this huge step of faith in one's faith journey, leaving the familiar church? Can God really be 'in the other place'? Does God roam free of the boundaries of denomination and institutional religion? Is there really 'nowhere else to go'? *Spirited Exchanges* provides food and shelter for the early part of the journey out into the desert away from the companionship of those with whom the travellers have pitched their tents for a long time. Some join another denomination. Many find their way later to a group of people whose journey has taken them down a similar track. These post-church faith groups are the topic of Alan's latest research.

One recent Catholic analysis has it that by abandoning their religious institution individuals lose the influence that would enable them to bring about change in either church or society, have no access to the shared practice of a time-tested tradition, no longer enjoy the wisdom of the great figures of the tradition or a coherent theology, no longer experience the nourishment of a canonical sacred literature and have no access to the tested traditions of moral ideals and restraints. Again, "not so", say Alan and Jenny – church leavers can take with them the best of their learnings including moral ideals, and continue to make a contribution to bettering the society in which they live.

While the compassionate work that is being done by Central Baptist is focussed mainly on people leaving EPC churches, their ministry raises questions for Catholic parishes. What do priests and other parishioners do when someone indicates being unsettled or starts talking about leaving? Is there a willingness to try to understand, to continue in ministry to that person, to wish them well, to have confidence that God is with them and still guiding their way?

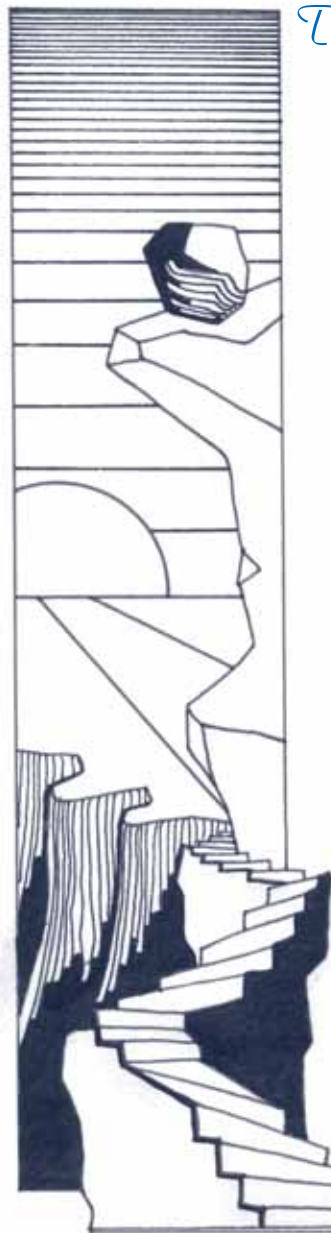
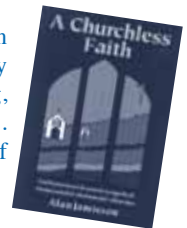
Could there be a farewell ritual, even a viaticum – food for the journey? If corporate bodies conduct exit interviews in an attempt to refine their business

practice, what useful information could the church learn from those who are departing? Is there an emphasis, shared with EPC churches, on bringing people in the front door (eg through the RCIA programme) while resolutely ignoring those leaving by the back door? Thirty years ago there was a sense that God never led people out of the Catholic Church. Has this changed?

As Alan writes in *A Churchless Faith* in a plea for leaver-sensitive churches: "Church leavers tell their horror stories ... surely this cannot be a good advertisement for the Christian faith. Putting time and effort into leavers may

not lead them to come back, but it can significantly reduce the negativity of their experience and their stories." And if God is truly known as having a special care for the marginalised, how might the Catholic Church enfold this care for those whose journey leads them to its margins and beyond? ■

A Churchless Faith by Alan Jamieson is published by Philip Garside Publishing, Wellington (\$29.95). Cover picture courtesy of Philip Garside.



The Centre of the Circle

When I began my journey,
the road was quite narrow
and fear lurked on either side.
I shrank from people who walked paths
so distant they seemed opposite to mine,
and I even called them enemy.

But Love called me on
and the beautiful road grew wider.
Fear was still there but I could see
over its fences, and people on other paths
seemed nearer so that I could call to them
and wish them well as they travelled.

Still, Love called my heart,
and the beautiful road grew so wide
that the boundaries of fear disappeared.
I saw other paths so close to mine
that I wondered how I ever
could have viewed them as alien.

Come, said Love, dragging at my heart,
and now the paths had no separation
and no horizons, only a brightness
that transcended all ways and words.

We did not need to name it,
for in its light, we were all one.

Joy Cowley

Dear Bishops. . .

Continuing the Dialogue

The pastoral letter from our bishops provided welcome reassurance that issues of sexual abuse were being confronted. Several important issues, however, remain to be addressed. More information and continuing dialogue will surely help us along that path of healing. When the members of *St Patrick's* (Palmerston North) Social Justice group discussed the letter, several points were noted:

- Victims should have been invited to come forward without fear
- We need assurance that there are no persons in positions of pastoral care who have credible claims against them
- Our priests and bishops should acknowledge that sexual

abuse entails an abuse of power and authority in their pastoral relationships.

As noted in the article on sexual abuse, *restorative justice* conferences are a way to initiate the process of healing and reconciliation. They would also provide a way for our bishops to step back from their positions of power and status over the laity. A conference run by well-trained lay facilitators, who are independent of church authority and unconnected to the victims or offenders, would be more likely to achieve solutions with credibility throughout the community. It could go a long way to restoring a relation of service between priests and laity.

Paul Green, Palmerston North

See July issue, pages 21-22 for the previous article.

An Open Letter to the Bishops of New Zealand

Thank you for your recent letter on sexual abuse in the church in New Zealand. Sexual abuse hurts the whole People of God; most of all it damages victims and their families.

We are very conscious of priests and religious feeling alienated from those they minister to, by the actions of abusers. When priests are moved to parishes where abuse has occurred they may not be informed of this and feel unsupported by their bishop. They face the deep anger and hurt of communities who have been abused.

It is no use focussing on the past and introducing draconian punishments for abusers without at the same time trying to ensure this will not happen again. Other professions have very clear written standards of accountability and behaviour. They also undergo regular professional supervision and auditing of their work. We think this is essential for all pastoral workers. We understand this is a radical proposal, as the work of clerics has always been left to their consciences. Unfortunately the present outcome shows this is not enough to safeguard the innocent.

Two underlying factors contribute to abusive behaviour.

- On one hand there is an unreal expectation that because the institutional Church represents God in the world, it must appear perfect. To publicly acknowledge the sinfulness of clergy and religious is therefore impossible. Not wishing to scandalise the faithful was the excuse of those who hid abuse.
- On the other hand there is unchecked, abusive power at all levels of the Church that reflects its internal hierarchical and clerical structure. This leads to a profound deafness, a failure to listen and be accountable.

In the Vatican, abuse of power is visible in two important areas:

First, its Congregations refuse to listen to the pastoral concerns of bishops. Local bishops at the Synods of Africa,

Oceania and Asia tried with passion to address urgent pastoral concerns about marriage, women in the church, married priests and many more. The problem of sexual abuse of women by priests was raised at all these Synods. None of their final documents deal with these issues. All were written in Rome and anything contentious was edited out.

Second, the current method of appointment of bishops by the Vatican, with minimal local consultation, sometimes causes conflict and distress in the local church. This occurs when the appointed bishop is at odds with the local church and attempts to impose his vision of church.

In the Church in New Zealand, we note with sadness, that similar behaviour occurs. Local bishops sometimes move priests without consulting the parishes to which they will go, or the ones they will leave. This exactly reflects the Roman model above. It is sinful to appoint a priest to a parish where he then dismantles a well functioning church community and imposes his limited vision of church. This damages the community and the priest. It does not reflect the image of Church as the People of God. Another ongoing issue for women in the church is the deliberate use of exclusive male language in liturgy and the failure of Bishops to address this practice.

The church is in a process of radical change. This demands a painful letting go of past certainties, safety and power. That is the real challenge of the Second Vatican Council. This age calls for a stepping out in faith, a walking on water, with full knowledge of our weakness and fallibility.

A dysfunctional church wounds us all. We pray for a true People of God, a church where the truth can be spoken in love and heard. We pray that you might have the faith and hope to help it come to birth.

Blessings and peace,

Dr Anna Holmes, Catholic Women Knowing Our Place

Human and Divine Love

In the last 30 years all the Christian churches have moved to accepting coitus as an expression of love. But few have explored the link between human and divine love. I will attempt to do so.

First of all, in the *Song of Songs* sexual attraction and the body communicate the divine plan for human loving intimacy. In this passage of Scripture, seriously ignored in 2,000 years of Christian sexuality, we find that the body with its erotic components has the divine assent to the messages it communicates.

So in the course of ordinary life, when we find ourselves in the grip of being sexually attracted, far from being apprehensive, anxious and experiencing disgust, we can be sure that we are in the midst of divine approval. We are meant to appreciate God with our bodies and our ordinary personal communication is embodied.

We accept God as a creator who gives identity to the world he created through his love. He hands over this creation to human beings, whose bodies become the principal instruments of perpetuating this love through marriage, in which the chief feature, as we have seen, is sexual intercourse.

At the centre of sexual intercourse is the naked encounter of a man and a woman. Nakedness has been viewed with an eye of suspicion in the Christian tradition, and yet nakedness highlights sexual attraction and pleasure. This nakedness in the midst of sexual intercourse continues the divine plan of creation.

The couple has returned to a world of safety, relaxation, peak excitement and celebration of pleasure. The physical and the emotional slide imperceptibly into the spiritual. The couple recapture the initial state of innocence, now redeemed through grace, and thus they return to

the state described in *Genesis*: *This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body. Now both of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they felt no shame in front of each other* (Gen.2:24-25).

Jack Dominian is a leading contemporary Christian psychiatrist and commentator on marriage and human relationships.

Christianity has traditionally been hostile to sexuality, eroticism and sexual desire. Yet, writes Dominian: "Every time we make love we are in the presence of God."

This is the first of a series of extracts taken from Dominian's recent book, *Let's Make Love* where he explores the inner meaning of sexual intercourse.

It is a common social phenomenon that when sexual matters are referred to in public a certain unease emerges which is translated into jokes or laughter. Similarly, the presentation of nakedness in public, although shown repeatedly in recent times, is still surrounded with apprehension and unease. Yet in sexual intercourse within marriage, nakedness assumes its original innocence and the communication of divine love. So at the very centre of intercourse there is a divine presence in nakedness.

From nakedness there is a move towards sexual intercourse and the body is mobilised for actual intercourse that culminates in the intense exquisite pleasure of the orgasm. The whole procedure of intercourse is a divine liturgy of love. We go to church and experience God at the Mass or at any other service. In marriage, the couple has their own domestic church and at the centre of this church is the enactment of sexual intercourse. Sexual intercourse as a divine liturgy gives the couple the means to experience and create love. It

celebrates the personal, interpersonal and creative encounter of love.

In this sense sexual intercourse with its components of nakedness and genital encounter is the epitome of embodiment and is the channel of the divine. The couple, in the process of making love, are expressing the central liturgy of the domestic church. They are the couple in prayer, and sexual intercourse is the central and recurrent act of prayer of the couple. More specifically, when we come to sexual intercourse, it reflects the inner world of the Trinity in that the Trinity expresses the relationship of love of persons. The Father loves the Son, and the fruit of this love is the Spirit and all three are essentially one but completely separate. We find in sexual intercourse an interpersonal union of love in which, at the moment of consummation, the spouses are one and yet at the same time they are separate persons. This total communion of separate persons who become one is one of the most powerful examples to illustrate the Trinity.

Thus, God as love is expressed in the original state of the innocence of nakedness. The act of intercourse is like the Eucharist feast in which we take in each other's bodies. It culminates in the *trinity* formed by two people becoming a third, single being in one union. Since sexual intercourse has such a powerful spiritual connotation and is the experience of the overwhelming majority of married people, its understanding, safeguarding and appreciation is a major part of evangelisation.

Marriage and sexual intercourse are the people of God in prayer. The ability of Christianity to see this vision is the spiritual answer to divorce and to the trivialisation of coitus. ■

Xavier Rynne 1915-2002

Jim Neilan

Obituaries have appeared in the Catholic press worldwide for an 87-year-old Redemptorist priest, Francis Xavier Murphy, who died in April. He was reasonably well known as a writer, but this would in no way explain why his death was so widely reported. The truth is that Francis Murphy had a second identity. He was the mysterious *Xavier Rynne*, whose writings caused a sensation in the marble halls of the Vatican and whetted an appetite for news about the Catholic Church among the world's secular press during the years of Vatican II.

The saga began in 1962 when an article – *Letter from Vatican City* – appeared in the *New Yorker* magazine, exposing some uncomfortable truths about the intrigues behind the scenes in the Vatican. Obviously, there was a mole in the corridors of power. The article was signed 'Xavier Rynne'. The *Letter* caused great interest around the Catholic world and infuriated those members of the Roman Curia who were attempting to shape the Council in a way that would thwart Pope John XXIII's "opening the windows to let some fresh air into the Church".

Murphy was a large, gregarious man with a great sense of humour. He had an amazing variety of friends – not surprisingly, considering his background as parish priest, teacher and army chaplain. He would never admit to being Xavier Rynne, but to those who knew him it was an open secret. He took great delight in playing the cat-and-mouse game necessary to conceal his clandestine reporting from angry officials who wanted him silenced and punished.

During the council, 16 of the *Letters* appeared in the *New Yorker*. They were then published in four volumes and

were the first unofficial but authoritative history of Vatican II. Through them, Rynne exposed the human side of the Church and, as a result, neither the Council nor the Church was ever quite the same again.

The doors of the Vatican's inner workings were thrown open and its personalities portrayed 'warts and all'. He cut through the commonly held ecclesiastical *trickle down* theory that God speaks exclusively through the pope who filters it down to the laity via a celibate male chain of command. Instead he presented a thoroughly human scene of men lobbying for votes, quarrelling and arguing about the future of the Church.

*Xavier Rynne
exposed the human side
of the church. . . it was
never the same again*

Council debates were closed to the press, so Rynne's reports were eagerly devoured. It was well known that a powerful group abhorred the idea of opening the Vatican windows. They wanted to control what the bishops discussed and to vet any documents released to the faithful. Xavier Rynne exposed these machinations.

One example was the heated debate about collegiality – restoration to local bishops and regional conferences the authority which, in communion with the pope, was theirs by right, but which had been whittled away by the curial authorities in the Vatican. This proposal caused a furore. At one point Cardinal Ottaviani, (a predecessor of Cardinal Ratzinger), suggested that the only time the Apostles acted collegially was when they ran away and abandoned Jesus!

It was not until the late 1970s that Murphy publicly acknowledged he was indeed Xavier Rynne – a combination of his second name and his mother's family name. Murphy was an excellent professional historian. He saw that what was happening at the Council had all happened before. He thought it important to present the human side of the Church. His critics complained that he made it look *too* human. His response was to point to four other writers also guilty of this fault – *Matthew, Mark, Luke* and *John*!

In Rome he lectured in Patrology, and a favourite theme was the insistence by many of the early Christian Fathers that the Church is both holy and sinful – a community of sinners struggling for holiness and truth. And *all* the people of God, from the highest ranking to the humblest of the laity have to live out this struggle. In the 40 years since the Council, Xavier Rynne's hopes that it would usher in a more open, humble church gradually diminished as the windows were steadily closed and power was again centralised in the Roman Curia.

He died before the sexual abuse scandals in his own country reached shock wave proportions. He would have seen the clerical system, which fostered secrecy, privilege and emotional immaturity in its ordained ministers and hierarchy, as an example of this reluctance to admit the human, and often sinful, dimension of the Church.

Francis Xavier Murphy would be right behind those, including many bishops, who see the need for another Vatican Council. The man who did so much to bring the last one to the world's notice will not be around for the next. Will he be entered in the heavenly register as *Murphy* – or *Rynne*? ■

Labourer in the vineyard

An Auckland parish farewells a faithful pastoral worker

As we are all aware, priests seem to be becoming an endangered species and the laity will have to rely on their own resources more than ever. In the 1980s quite a few members of religious orders became parish workers. Sr Eileen O'Sullivan RSJ was appointed to our parish (St Helier's, Auckland) in 1988. She immediately set out to discover what was needed, then acted upon it.

First, she was co-opted onto the Liturgy committee. We had only to mention a hymn, and she could recite all the words, or alternatively, burst into song. She was very good at getting people involved. She laboured to find people to accompany the singing at Sunday Mass. When none was available, she led

the singing herself. She planned liturgies for major feasts and helped the bereaved prepare for funerals.

Eileen had no car initially, and promptly became the fittest person in the parish. She walked miles. She became aware of the needs of young mothers – particularly those who had no extended family to call on, so started a weekly playgroup where they could chat while their children played. She then started a group for senior parishioners, to meet at regular intervals – sometimes for an anointing Mass followed by lunch, and at others, to listen to a speaker or just socialise.

From this came awareness of the needs of the bereaved, so a group for widows (and widowers, when they can be found!) was formed. She also was the moving force behind the establishment of the Passionist Family Groups which provide social interaction among parishioners. As well as all these activities, she was a de facto member of other parish groups.

At Sr Eileen's farewell many were involved in planning the liturgy, preparing food for more than 200 people, decorating the hall and organising the formal part of the proceedings. It was a fine tribute to a person who, in recent times with an energetic pastor, has contributed to the growth of the parish in every way. ■



Pat Reid

Minority Report

Directed by Stephen Spielberg

Review: Mike Crowl

Don't miss the beginning of this movie: a lot of information arrives in a hectic first five minutes. The opening is one of several superb set pieces, such as the fight on a car assembly line (a take-off of a similar sequence in the latest *Star Wars* movie?), and another fight sequence where most of the participants have backpacks enabling them to fly. And let's not forget the futuristic motorways.

Minority Report is set about 40 years hence, in Washington DC, where murder has become a thing of the past due to the ability of three 'precogs' to warn the 'Pre-Crime' police that a murder is about to be committed. Thus people who would have committed a murder are incarcerated even though they haven't actually done the deed.

A number of Spielberg themes reappear: the lost child from *Hook and Al*; 'Big Brother', police (from *ET*); the perceptive but helpless female (any of the *Indiana Jones* movies), and the way choice can change the future (*Schindler's List*).

There is also a bunch of typical Spielberg grotesques: the maybe-crazy 'inventor' of the precogs; a surgeon who can replace your eyes (so you're not identifiable on the iris scans) and his peculiar Swedish assistant; the three inert pre-cogs who spend their lives floating in a womblike

chemical mix, and their caretaker; and the prison guard who plays *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* on an organ, to soothe his inactive charges. The eye-replacement scene, by the way, isn't as stomach-turning as the rancid sandwich moment that occurs just a little later!

Minority Report is a detective story, but with the detective as the apparently guilty party. However Spielberg and his scriptwriter filter themes of more importance into the script: how do we see (in every sense of the word); do we really have a choice about our destiny; how near the surface of our lives does evil live?

Sight and seeing and blindness and changing eyes are so common in this movie, it's as if Jesus' words about "those who think they see, are blind", had been pasted to the scriptwriter's keyboard. And the idea of predestination, whether we choose to change what's going to happen, or whether we can, is the crux of the main investigation and of the climatic scenes. It's no coincidence that the disruptive FBI investigator tells us early in the piece that he did three years at Fuller Seminary before training for his present job.

This movie shows Spielberg and Tom Cruise at their best. Great pacing, plenty of twists and turns, wonderful filming and effects, and an underlying seriousness mixed with the shocks and laughter. ■

The mystery of God in a new language

Altogether Gift

Michael Downey

Orbis New York and

Dominican Publications, Dublin

\$36 NZ approx.

Review: Kevin Burns

This book has a very engaging beginning. Two theologians got together to develop their ideas on Trinitarian Spirituality. Catherine La Cugna and Michael Downey, both Professors of Theology, wrote independent essays on the Trinity for a new Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality and they then agreed to work together to produce a book. Two years after the agreement Catherine died at the age of 44, and Michael continued alone with the commitment and finally published in 2000.

I found the book gentle and deep. I needed to read much of it over and over to appreciate the new language and the use of language to challenge the reader to delve deeper into this central Christian mystery. We are so much at home with the traditional and familiar words describing the Trinity that this book serves well in presenting us with different language and a careful use of language when speaking of the mystery of God.

'Father' is not God's proper name. Nor is 'God' God's name. God has no proper name. *Father, Son and Spirit* are names that designate relationships rather than who God is in God's fullness. God is inexhaustible mystery. Unfathomable. But through the process of naming, the three names, *Father, Son and Spirit* emerge in relation to one another and to us. They bespeak the profoundly relational character of the divine mystery, the One whose name is beyond all naming: 'God is love' (1Jn 4:8) p38.

Towards the middle of the book and in the chapter 'The Doctrine of the Trinity'

the reader is led to pay attention to the small words, believe it or not, the prepositions! These are important words within the 'grammar of the Trinity' because they express relationship. It is a bit bewildering at first to take in the importance of these words but the author insists, "the Christian faith is defined prepositionally, since prepositions express sheer relationship".

These small words – "in" and "through" and "to" – describe the relationship of *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*, the relationship of the three in one Love to us, and our relationship to God. The author then draws the conclusion that the Christian life is always to the *Father*, through the *Son* and in the *Spirit*.

This strengthens the belief that God's covenant is irrevocable, not just because of the promise verbalized through the prophets, but because the presence of God is utterly reliable and constant. The author presents God as totally self-giving, totally relational and he takes the reader towards seeing the Trinity as *Giver, Given* and *Gift/ing*.

The base for people seeking a spirituality today is usually the age-old question: "Who am I?" Whereas, Trinitarian Spirituality as presented by Downey poses the question quite differently: "Whose am I?" In this search for 'whose am I', the book draws our attention specifically to the 'mentally handicapped'. The mentally handicapped stand as a reminder that our whole being cries out for relationship. In the lives of the mentally handicapped there is little hope of achieving current (false) notions of ideal humanity. This is also true for the permanently ill and disabled persons.

This notion is thoroughly thought out and wonderfully developed leading to the amazing discovery of how the mentally handicapped serve as a catalyst in the recognition that one's personhood

is not grounded in what one does or achieves. 'Who we are' as persons lies elsewhere, and "this fundamental dimension is all too often buried beneath a veneer of physical beauty and strength". The fullness of the human person is to be found in relation. The human person is *from* God and *for* God.

I conclude with a direct quote from the book which carefully leads the reader into lovely new territory: "What we see in mentally handicapped persons is that they are frequently conspicuously relational with little pretence of self sufficiency. They often must look towards the other, to others, for the fulfilment of basic human needs. But what we also see in many such persons are real qualities of heart, deep capacities for forgiveness, for reconciliation, for celebration, for mutuality, for tenderness and compassion".

I recommend this book as a study and a meditation that touches and expands the heart. ■

Kevin Burns is parish priest of Our Lady of Victories, Sockburn, Christchurch



Bible Society ad

A conundrum in the family tree

At the Edge of Memory

by Michael King

published by

Price: \$32.95

Review: Kathleen Doherty

Poor Maurice Belgrave! He wasn't to know, when he arrived in New Zealand in 1908 with a new name and a new identity and proceeded to establish himself as a family man and worthy citizen of Hamilton, that the wife of one of his sons would be the aunt of one of New Zealand's leading historians and probably its leading biographer.

And he wasn't to know that a passion for family history would lead to a grandson of his first cousin, now living in New York, to compile, over 40 years, a family tree of some 1200 names, his included. Or that the two would make contact and one would encourage the other to turn the story of how and why Moshe Bilgorj became Maurice Belgrave into a book.

At the Edge of Memory is an intensely personal book. Michael King, who was born two years after his great-uncle by marriage died in 1943, has made it as much the story of his own search and reaction to the emerging past as the story of what might have happened.

Mr Bel, as he was known affectionately by King's mother, made such a good job of covering his tracks that during his lifetime and for many years after his death no-one knew that he was Jewish, although many subsequently said they had suspected it.

In spite of his claim that he had been born in London, he had in fact been born into the closed and restrictive culture of a strict orthodox Jewish family in what is now south-east Poland. He left home when he was 12,

he told his family, but his movements between then and his arrival in New Zealand when he was 26 are uncertain.

He converted to Catholicism and was married in a nuptial Mass, had three sons, and ran a successful drapery business in Hamilton. In all this time he made no contact with other Jewish families in the area, and gave no signs that he was anything other than what he appeared. A letter from a sister in Australia who had managed to track him down was returned by his wife with a note that her husband wished to have no contact with his relatives.

The only hint that he felt for what he had left behind was when the family housekeeper came upon him one day in 1943 listening to a BBC broadcast about the Nazi extermination camps. "Those are my people," he said to her, with tears glistening on his cheeks. Days later he was dead.

In his introduction, Michael King acknowledges that, like many true stories, this one has gaps that can be bridged only by supposition, and there is much of that in this memoir. One of the most fascinating chapters relates not to the Belgrave family but to the Gluckmans, who also lived in Hamilton. Ephraim (Ted) Gluckman had been born in the same year as Maurice Belgrave in an adjacent area of Eastern Europe belonging to the Russian Czarist Empire. Unlike Maurice Belgrave, however, Ephraim Gluckman had wanted his family to know of their roots and of his life in the shtetl, and his account must be a family treasure. Whether or not Maurice Belgrave's experiences were similar is a matter of conjecture.

At the end of his sleuthing Michael King takes it upon himself to say *Kaddish*, the Jewish prayer for the

dead, at the grave in Hamilton where Maurice Belgrave had been buried with the rites of the Catholic Church. It is unfortunate that the author overlooked the fact that in Jewish ritual, *Kaddish* is not an individual but a communal synagogue prayer requiring the presence of 10 Jewish males over the age of 13. And having said *Kaddish*, he left his great-uncle by marriage "twice blessed, to the serenity which two traditions of Faith promised righteous men". One wonders what Maurice Belgrave would have made of it all.

Putting together the details of a huge family dispersed all over the world and with names changed to make their lives easier at a time of intolerance of Jew, is a mammoth task, and relating the work done must be an inspiration to aspiring genealogist. But this story is full of gaps which Michael King fills neatly with might-have-beens, which are not altogether satisfying. The known facts would have been sufficient. ■

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Do cry for me – Argentina!

The collapse of Argentina stirs memories of family history for me. My parents spent five years in Buenos Aires in the late 1920s and shared in Argentina's golden age which drew to a close with the crash of 1929. My father pioneered the purchase of wool for a French textile manufacturer. Wool was notoriously difficult to value because of huge variations in fibre diameter, often invisible to the naked eye. His first delivery was a disaster. His boss, who knew his potential, hid the truth of this shipment, sending him a good report, but telling him to take care. Father's confidence was established, and he went on to become a legend in the firm for his uncanny ability to value wool from South America and New Zealand.

The wealth of Argentina was established on the extensive rural estates, the estancias, which sustained an enormous number of grazing animals – bulls, cows, horses and sheep descended from the animals brought by the Spaniards to the New World. They covered all the plains of Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santa Fe and Cordova. The pampas grasslands are among the most fertile soils in the world and helped to define the country's economic and social heritage.

Between 1870 and 1940, Argentina's population increased from 800,000 to 13 million and that increase changed the nature of country life. Today, 14 million out of a population of 37 million are living below the poverty line.

How can this be? Argentina has experienced the governments of Peron who ruled the country as a despot, prior to the violent military dictatorship of 1976 – 83, which resulted in 30,000 people 'disappearing'; the Falklands war of 1982 and the traumatic hyperinflation of 1989.

The IMF lent endless amounts of money to the bloody dictatorship of 1976 – 83 and has implemented the neo-liberal ideas of globalisation which

Crosscurrents

by John Honoré

has produced rampant capitalism in the hands of corrupt managers. Fernando de la Rúa's government of the '90s was corrupt beyond belief. Now the IMF, as head of an international creditors' cartel, is not solving Argentina's problem but is seeking repayment of its loans. The external debt, corruption, and the economic crisis have produced social

and financial chaos. All this – in a land gifted in natural resources and with a resilient people who have endured incredibly destructive regimes.

I have not lost faith in Argentina, but there are parallels between the present situation there and the great depression of the 1930's from which emerged the Weimar republic in Germany. This economic crisis is seriously affecting Uruguay, Paraguay and Brazil. Other countries in South America are beginning to protest against neo-liberal policies. Can Argentina weather this storm and redefine its social and political identity yet again?

In memory of my father, I pray for Argentina.

Au revoir, Kim

I have mentioned before the pervasive influence of women in positions of power in New Zealand, and this, under the direction of Marian Hobbs as Minister of Broadcasting, extends to radio and television. But this is not to say that this authority is always of the highest quality. Cracks are beginning to appear in *National Radio*, particularly since the departure of 'La Stupenda' Kim Hill from the 9 to noon slot on weekdays.

Kim Hill reigned supreme. I remember particularly her interview with a doyen of English literary criticism, Harold Bloom, who had just written another huge tome on Shakespeare (which Kim gave the impression she had read the night before). As usual, she was holding her own admirably with, arguably, one

of the world's experts on Shakespeare when he had reason to pause at her line of enquiry and finally said; "That's a very intelligent question". It summed up for me Kim Hill's absolute mastery of her medium.

But the network needs revitalising and it appears that Sharon Crosbie, chief executive since 1995, might have been long enough at the post. *National Radio's* musical content is appalling and the continuity of programmes defies logic. Its flagship programmes rely on the likes of Kim Hill and Chris Laidlaw, for whom it is only a part time job. It is too early to form an opinion on Linda Clark who has the unenviable task of succeeding Kim Hill. Overall, *National Radio* has lost its authority and identity and this signals the need for new directions as well as the need

Anybody need a new broom?

for new management.

I write this before the results of the General Election are known to me, but from what the polls are predicting, Labour will win and National will take a bath. There will have to be a scapegoat and who do you think it will be? Even as you read this, Michelle Boag will be studying the fine print of her contract. However, I think there could

be other niches for Michelle.

She was the new broom who cleaned out the National Party's cupboard of political no-hopers. Every party has them. I suggest that she be hired by the Labour Party to do the same job for them. Then she could move on to the Reserve Bank where her sense of dress would enliven the boring quarterly pronouncements from the grey-suited chairman. The country needs

Voices from the past

I have been listening to a voice from the past. I have been playing tapes made by Scripture scholar Raymond Brown not long before he died four years ago. They deal with “New Testament scholarship as we end one century and begin another”. It was fascinating to hear his voice again. It recalled when on a lecture tour he stayed with the Redemptorists in Melbourne. But it also embarrassed me as I recalled how I lied to him at that time.

He had a free Sunday afternoon. I offered to drive him out to Healesville Sanctuary to see the kangaroos, wombats and other truly native Australians. When he asked me how long the drive would take, I grossly underestimated the time. I did not want to lose the opportunity of having an afternoon with Raymond Brown. In the event I believe he was glad he came. I certainly enjoyed the time, for Raymond was good company, with no pretensions of any kind.

On the way back we dropped in on the police academy, formerly the provincial seminary. He had spoken there on a previous visit to Australia. He was intrigued to find that *Corpus Christi*

College had become ‘Coppers’ Christi’.

As our community recited Morning Prayer today I thought over what he said on one of the tapes. Jesus spoke in the words and thought patterns of a Jew of the first third of the First Century. His words as recorded in the Gospels have perennial value. We can draw on them for answers to today’s problems. But we must accept the reality that they are couched in the words of a culture of two thousand years ago, not of that of today.

The *Prayer of the Church* employs the psalms and the canticles of the Old Testament, the products of an even earlier age. These inspired texts are full of expressions utterly at variance with the Christian message as we perceive it today. The believer in *Isaiah 38* thanks God for having been preserved from death because in the after-life – if there is an after-life – it will not be possible to praise God. The faithful are enjoined in *Psalms 149* to praise God and shout for joy, for God has dealt out vengeance to the nations and punishments on all the peoples. Hardly our sentiments in these days of the struggle for justice and peace.

On the tape Raymond Brown showed himself well aware that there is a similar problem in the New Testament, even with some of the words recorded in the Gospels as being those of Jesus. Taken literally they are offensive to a wide variety of individuals, to Jews, to blacks, to women.

But Brown sees it as a problem for which tampering with translations is no solution. A translation of *John’s* Gospel that pretends that the evangelist never laid blame on “the Jews” short-circuits the issue and leads to false solutions as to how we are to show proper respect for and kinship with the Jewish people of today.

The translation of the psalms used in the *Prayer of the Church* is relatively, though not completely, tamper free. So far so good. But it still leaves me with the problem of how to use prayers couched in the words of a culture not my own. I will have to work towards a solution.

At least one thing I am sure of. I will not take up *Psalms 126’s* counsel to marry, beget a large family and so have a full quiver of sons with me when I contend with my enemies. ■

Fr Humphrey O’Leary is superior of the Redemptorist community, Auckland

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Let the punishment fit the crime

Tom Cloher

Imagine that you have been the unfortunate victim of a serious road accident. Subsequently you are told that you will be in hospital for three months. No! 'doc', that's a lifetime. You could be forgiven for that reaction. Even a week in hospital can feel like a month.

Any kind of detention is an alien experience. Ask the kid who's been kept in after school while the mates go home, or a serving soldier whose leave is cancelled. No punishment is worse than being somewhere you don't want to be, while helpless to do anything about it. People campaigning for longer sentences and reduced parole have simply never grasped that a year in prison is longer than three anywhere else; a week in one of Her Majesty's finest would give them an entirely new perspective.

How long is enough? We trust highly qualified and carefully selected judges to determine this, but that's not enough

for the 'sentencing' brigade with whom, distressingly, three prominent political parties marched strongly in the recent election campaign.

Of course, there is a case for continuing detention for violent offenders who show no remorse and are patently an ongoing risk to others; but they are comparatively small in number. The vast majority comprise those unfortunates whose life experience has been something most readers (and writers) can only imagine, this writer included. Visiting prisoners conveys some sense of their current and past deprivation. It is difficult enough just going there – staying there is the real pain, day after dreary day, night after endless night, whatever the sensible sentencing pundits think.

How long is enough? Johnny-on-the-outside seems to think length of sentence equals effective justice. For

the specific violent minority maybe, on the score of a safer community, but no research exists to demonstrate that longer sentences return a more rehabilitated person to the community.

The *lock-em-up-throw-the-key-away* syndrome may deliver short-term political mileage but it is a mean gut reaction to very complex social problems, which the prison system should not be expected to solve. Let's hope that the next term of office for the incoming government will be graced with more initiatives like restorative justice.

A policy with more emphasis on redemption, and less on retribution, will deliver better security for our communities and better rehabilitation for offenders. ■

Tom Cloher is chairperson of the Tui Motu Board

'A Fair and Just Solution'?

By Rory Sweetman



Historian Rory Sweetman writes succinctly on the history of integration of Private Schools into the State Educational System in this newly released book. The State Aid Conference held over 1973-4, under Norman Kirk's Labour Government, provided the opportunity for interested parties to seek a solution under the Education Act for the inclusion of the 'special character' of parochial schools, thus ending more than a century of secularism in New Zealand education.

Says Sweetman... "Through complex and lengthy dialogue, the negotiators on the integration working party found the words to bridge a century of conflict..."

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