Tui Motu

... but will she know peace in her life

Jubilee 100

November 2006 Price $5

Shanti learning how to use a traditional loom

Annual village mela (fair) in Ghyagi village, Himachal Pradesh. The dancers are the village Women's Group

Rohan with 3-day-old kid and village friends

Above: Village women work hard all day often carrying heavy loads – and wide smiles

Left: Village women working together at chappatti-making in preparation for a feast celebrating the local devta's (goddess's) birthday

Photos: Kaaren Mathias
Jo Smith (Shanti and Rohan)

A Mother's journal

Kaaren Mathias

Bright colours splash around Himachal Pradesh every day. The Kullui men perch a marigold or bright plastic bloom in their striped bright caps. Women cheer a bus in their bright matching salvar kameez suits and scarves. Monsoon finished fully earlier this month.

Three months of clinging mist, damp cloud. Frequent outbursts of heavy rain and flooded rivers. When Hari Ram invited us for chai, it was a great excuse to leave the inside of four walls. He lives perched high on a hill. His wife, in a wheelchair after an accident hasn't left the house for three years.

As we puff up onto the verandah, we meet Phul Devi looking over the green-green valley. Beside her is a mini-loom. She weaves the colourful bands for men's caps, and edging on shawls. Six year old Shanti was intrigued by the loom's tangle of wool, knots and the wood darkened by the touch of many hands. Phul Devi is full of smiles. Over chai and a sweet rice pudding she waves over the valley and her loom: "With all this to look at and all this weaving to do – I have no time to go out of the house."

Walking up a long hill on another Sunday afternoon, Rohan is a bag of grizzles. Tired legs, hungry and not wanting to go on a stupid walk. Village children crowd around and pull his hand to walk with them. He roughly jerks it away. A shyer girl behind peeks over with her three-day-old goat kid in her arms. Hunger, tiredness are forgotten while Rohan staggers around the crowded courtyard with the skinny, bright-eyed kid.

Another week later, we nearly fell upon the mela up in Ghyagi. On the village outskirts we met the mela cooking team - making chappattis on a huge griddle. They laughed with the fun of preparing a feast for hundreds – cauldrons of dhal and rice boiled over smoky tangy fires. Then with the bigger crowd at the village square, we waited our turn at the microphone to tell about our child health initiative – vaccinating, deworming and Vitamin A.

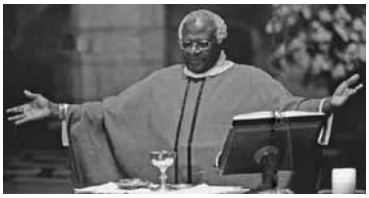
The Women's Group of Hirab village queue jumped up and started their dance. Slow and shy at first – the women were dressed in the full finery of their best pattus (the colourful woollen shawl they dress in during winter). Giggling they started stepping faster. And suddenly in the whirl of nasal music, drums and dancing, I realised the colour and melas are here to brighten the monsoon, the day, this sometimes sombre grey and green valley.

On with looms, baby goats, chapattis for hundreds and dancing on a cloudy day. On with colour! On with life! ■

Contents of number 100

Apostle of peace

interview with Paul Oestreicher



Prophet of our time
Desmond Tutu

Christopher Carey

A rich harvest of many theologies

Pauline O'Regan

Close Encounters – love and justice

Mike Riddell

Peace starts in the human heart

In this 100th edition of *Tui Motu*, many of our most faithful and cherished writers feature. There was no deliberate choice of theme, but as often happens a theme emerged. *Peace starts in the human heart*. The foundation of true peace lies deep in the culture of a person's faith and experience – and from one's earliest years.

Paul Oestreicher (*interview pp.6-7*) begins his story with the childhood experience of being a refugee – making a new home in a strange land where he found himself labelled 'the Hun!'. Little wonder, then, that in his maturity as an Anglican priest he returned to the Quakers, who had not merely preached peace but practised it – by welcoming his parents and himself. Another prophetic figure, equally devoted to the cause of peace, is Archbishop Desmond Tutu (*pp.11-12*). Tutu continues to spread the message of peace in season and out, even on his 75th birthday and beyond.

An abridged version of the 2006 Otago Peace lecture (*pp.8-10*), by Professor Paul Morris, appeals to people of diverse faiths to listen to one another in the spirit of the ancient Jewish *shalom*; putting aside prejudice and seeking, as individuals, to understand the 'other' – Jew, Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim.

And Pauline O'Regan (*pp.14-15*) rejoices in the diversity of many beliefs and theologies, because for the sincere believer, faith leads to intimacy with God; which is true for Martin Luther King, for Dietrich Boenhoffer, as for Gandhi and Aung San Suu Kyi.

Which brings us to *Tui Motu*, our chosen name. We exist is bring to our readers this rich variety of beliefs – truly 'catholic' and universal. We aim to help people climb out of the pit of their prejudices – and each of us inhabits one.

Our appeal is to the richness of human experience, to give the lie to that narrow exclusivism which stifles life and growth. The reason why the Gospel of Jesus continues to ring true after 2000 years is that it finds an echo in the very best of personal experience. But, as Gandhi lamented, "if only Christians would really live it!"

In matters of doubt, freedom

Tui Motu is sometimes criticised for being insufficiently Catholic – even for being 'anti-Catholic'. If being Catholic means being in the tradition of St Paul, of Augustine, of Julian of Norwich, of John Henry Newman, then *Tui Motu* is fully and unequivocally Catholic. What these have in common, apart from being saintly and Catholic, is that they lived and strove and proclaimed in the market place. They were steeped in their own times: they listened to its challenges and questions, and then responded in the light of the Gospel.

We live, for better or for worse, in a secular culture. We are children of the 18th Century Enlightenment. This is the world, the value system we have to meet, to listen to and to bring the Gospel to. And the greatest ornament of the Enlightenment is its love of freedom; its most precious fruit is a yearning for peace.

Christianity has preached peace, forgiveness, non-violence and love for 2000 years. But its critics will rightly point to the Spanish Inquisition, to 'rack and rope', to the Crusades and the terrible religious wars. How much innocent blood has been spilt in the name of Christ! Peace on earth may be implicit in the words of Jesus, but it took the Enlightenment to persuade Christian societies to begin to practise it.

The finest fruits of the Enlightenment have been tolerance and free speech, democratic and constitutional government, non-violence in the streets and freedom of the press. The Religious press belongs to this facet of modern society. Therefore, a journal which claims to be gospel based must look outwards. It must strive to be inclusive. It must recount the stories of prophetic people of all creeds and persuasions. It must therefore risk the opprobrium and slander which prophets always bring upon themselves.

Tui Motu fully embraces the vision of the Second Vatican Council which described a pilgrim church. The Council commissioned a people on the move, communing with the world as it is, seeking to participate in the shaping of its future. With John Henry Newman it believed that doctrine continually develops, that we must be ever open to new insights to be tested by the time-honoured wisdom of Christian tradition.

St Augustine put this precisely and beautifully in his dictum at the head of this article. The complete quotation is: *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas*. An English translation (longwinded by comparison) is "In matters of necessity let there be unity; in matters of doubt, freedom; but in all things let there be charity."

Without freedom there can be no true dialogue, no honest debate, no pursuit of the elusive truth, no change, no growth in wisdom. This is where *Tui Motu* stands. We sincerely hope that is the direction it will point for the next hundred issues.

M.H.

Number 100

Hello Tui Motu readers

Tui Motu celebrates its 100th edition this month – a notable achievement for the mustard seed that was planted in 1997. It is now a flourishing plant that has nourished and fed many like myself with thought-provoking and challenging articles for the past nine years. For that I'm truly grateful.

Obviously I'm not the only one who values *Tui Motu*. I'm thrilled to tell you that we have close to $100,000 in money received and promised for the *Tui Motu Foundation* Fund. The money has come from individuals and a number of Religious Congregations who have responded so generously to our call for support.

The ***Tui Motu Foundation*** is now officially up and running and five Trustees have been appointed. Their job is to oversee the money that has been given and loaned and make sure it is prudently invested. Those of you who have given debentures should receive an official Debenture Certificate this month.

Quite a number of subscribers have also given a generous 'top-up' when renewing their subscriptions. All this is a really excellent start.

However, we still have a way to go with a target of half a million dollars and a goal of doubling subscriptions. It is really important that we keep up the momentum. For the *Foundation* to succeed, promises need to be turned into action.

This is how you can help

• **Take out a debenture:** The Trustees will guarantee that capital is repaid in full and on time.

• **Make a donation:** We will need many substantial donations (as well as loans) if the target of half a million is to be met. Nevertheless any gift, however small, will be much appreciated. We fully understand that what people give depends on what they can spare.

• **Give a $40 Jubilee gift subscription**. This is a special offer which closes at the end of the month. We have printed several hundred extra copies in the confident hope that many will take this option. *Tui Motu* would make an excellent gift idea for Xmas for those 'difficult-to-buy-for' family members!

• **Recruit current readers:**
If you are part of a group that shares *Tui Motu* or you pass on copies to others please encourage them to become subscribers, if they can afford it. We know *Tui Motu* is read by many times the number of people who subscribe.

• **Sell down a generation**: Buying a subscription for one of your children (or grandchildren) could assist their faith development. Like the parable of the Sower, sow the seeds in your own family.

• **Promote *Tui Motu* in your parish**: once a month promote and sell *Tui Motu* to your church community. A co-ordinated effort has been made to increase parish sales and recruit people, and recently ten new parishes have started selling with several more in the pipeline.

• ***Special promotion of the 100th issue.*** *Over the month of November and early December we hope to have people all around the country promoting and selling our special 100th Edition. We have 600 extra copies to sell. If you would be prepared to help us with a one-off promotion we would be delighted to hear from you. Alternatively, please support the existing promoters by assisting them with selling and taking names.*

If you can help with this promotion, contact Brian Rea at Tui Motu *03 477 1449 or email:<brijo@clear.net.nz>*

Finally, some *thank-yous* are in order: to all our writers and contributors who continue to provide us with stimulating reading; to our volunteers who help each month in a variety of ways to make sure the magazine happens, and to you our readers for your loyalty and support. Congratulations to our Editors Michael Hill and Francie Skelton on *Tui Motu*'s 100th Edition. Thank you, all of you, for the hard work that makes *Tui Motu* truly a quality Catholic magazine.

Katie O'Connor

ISSN 1174-8931

Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed. The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means *"stitching the islands together..."*, bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.
Independent Catholic Magazine Ltd, P O Box 6404, Dunedin North, 9030
Phone: 03 477 1449: Fax: 03 477 8149: **email:** tuimotu@earthlight.co.nz: **website:** www.tuimotu.org
Editor: Michael Hill IC; **Assistant Editor:** Frances Skelton; **Illustrator:** Don Moorhead
Directors: Margaret Butler OP, Rita Cahill RSJ, Tom Cloher, Robin Kearns, Chris Loughnan OP, Elizabeth Mackie OP, Katie O'Connor (Chair), Kathleen Rushton RSM

Eucharistic Hospitality

How can we be fully Christian if we do not celebrate Eucharist with Glyn Cardy – and also, as he rightly says, (*Tui Motu September*) with "divorcees, children, gays and lesbians, Buddhists and Muslims"?

Christ appeared to have no moral conflict in His associations with the tax collectors, prostitutes and outcasts of his time. Furthermore, Scripture does not refute the possibility that He actually gave the Eucharist to Judas Iscariot. In truth, wouldn't it be completely typical of the man to have done so in a last ditch effort to stop Judas from what he was contemplating?

Who dares dispute the fact that the Eucharist is totally God's free gift to us and not the prerogative of humans to decide who may come to the table and who may not?

We cannot possibly be given our full sustenance from "pious after-dinner mints" received in select company. Our souls cry out for the complete nourishment given us by Christ in this most wonderful sacrament. And for it to be received in the company of all our sisters and brothers.

Thank you, Glyn Cardy, for a genuinely theological exposition on what Eucharist really means.

Desmond Smith, Auckland

American prison system

I appreciated the two articles in your *October* issue exploring prison related issues. And I agree: you do not want to head down the same road as the U.S.

Now, we have mega-prison institutions bent on self-perpetuation. We are trying youthful offenders as if they were adults. The system we have created exacerbates the very behaviours for which people are being imprisoned. We couldn't have created a sicker system – or a system designed to make people sicker – if we had tried.

Diane Pendola, California USA

letters to the editor

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

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

Congratulations – 1

I have been reading *Tui Motu* on and off for more than two years... this wonderful magazine provides me with stimulus, both spiritually and intellectually, that is hard to find anywhere. The range of issues and points of view never fail to challenge me.

In a world often sullied by violence and conflict. social injustice, greed and deceit, *Tui Motu*, while it may not provide any easy answers, helps me to grow in my spiritual convictions and, hopefully, my attitudes and actions towards the issues facing us today.

Jan Adams, Dunedin

Congratulations – 2

Congratulations on your challenging and compassionate *October* issue. Two contributors, Joy Cowley and Daniel O'Leary, hit the nail on the head. Too many Catholics live in fear or have been brought up with fear. The late Cardinal Hume treated fear as a friend – admittedly tepidly at first.

In the letters Adriana Janus is right. More and more women are called to the priesthood. In my lifetime I have heard many preachers: the best an ordained woman minister of the Methodist church. At a spirituality seminar I once heard a Sister say: "One day women in the Catholic church will be able to feel the sun from both sides."

Denis Power, Southland.

Congratulations – 3

Congratulations on turning 100! What a brilliant innings. From here on in you can hit the ball to the boundary with ease. Well done!

Mike Riddell, Cambridge

Faith in troubled times

The news reminds us of the dire developments that lie ahead because of global warming, and the Biblical foretaste that Noah experienced tells us something about similar cataclysms that our planet has experienced in the past. The sort of 'been there, done that' response should tell us that nothing that we see about us is eternal.

A recent summarised "History of Nearly Everything", by Bill Bryson, tells us in simple language the reality of the age of our planet and the quite unique scenario that has come out of history and which today we see about us both in terms of the flora and fauna and, in particular, our own uniqueness as thinking beings.

As a teenager at a Marist Brothers college I came to recognise the reality that faith and religion were not exactly the same and that many others who followed some other form of religion still had a basic faith in a Creator. This became more clear as I saw men die, and took part in a burial party for crewmen who had died in a crash.

I feel that this is the sort of thinking that lay behind the recent lecture given by Pope Benedict and which caused such a furore throughout the Islamic world. Ever since the beginning of time men have fought and killed in the name of God, and the name of God varied according often to their Religion.

Sadly, in almost every case it was backed by the desire to exercise authority and power and was so often political. Pope Benedict knew that such attitudes needed to be talked through and discussed, and herein rested the hope for humanity in a troubled world.

We are indeed blessed with a stability of leadership and a faith in the goodness of the Creator and the promise our Saviour gave the man who died with him on a cross: "This day you will be with me in paradise."

Maurice McGreal, Auckland.

Proclaiming the earth as holy

Why do we Christians need the beautiful words from popes and bishops to remind us of the duties of our ordained stewardship? What is it that allows so many good Christians to sleepwalk into ecological disaster with their eyes dutifully fixed on heaven?

As others have pointed out, a dualism has crept into our faith which separates Spirit and Matter, assigning little or no importance to the latter. Christianity has been guilty of wrenching the Spirit away from the material world and stealthily placing it – the Holy Ghost – somewhere high up in an imaginary heaven to be revered by us in her disembodied glory. So, with the Spirit safely locked away, the earth is left to fight for survival, a battle she cannot win because we have robbed her of her anima-breath-Spirit-soul.

In order to make the words of our episcopal leaders credible they will need to unashamedly promote in our devotions a rightful place for our earth, inhabited and made holy by the Spirit. Our prayers will then affirm the oneness of matter and Spirit in our imagination, our spirituality and our emotions. This will gently shift the focus of our prayers and become the most powerful motivation for a loving care of our earth, not just care dictated by anxiety which tends to be fickle.

The material is available and begging to be employed. Norman Habel's *Creation Liturgy* (*Tui Motu* Jul '06); commemorating the United Nations' *Earth Day and World Environment Day* in our services, and picking up and interpreting the clues in the Scripture readings which are often overshadowed by the main story. Here we need to ask our bishops for strong guidance that unequivocally encourages these practices, while we may be thankful for the parishes which are already leading the way.

An early experience

My thoughts go back nostalgically some 75 years when, holding my father's hand, we walked behind our priest who, carrying the Blessed Sacrament through the fertile Austrian fields, was committing them to God's loving care while the adults were reciting litanies. Four altar boys with a carved pole each were carrying a precious brocade baldachin as a protective roof. I was trusting in my Lord's forgiveness when in the late morning heat my thoughts occasionally wandered longingly to the local pub where the villagers used to gather for a drink when all the praying was done.

An awareness of the peasants' deep faith in their observance of what was to me a mystical experience, left me with the sure feeling of Christ's presence in all of nature. This certainty has sustained and comforted me and helped me through some of the most difficult early farming days in this my adopted country.

I have often quoted *Leviticus 25* as an early instruction for sustainable use of agricultural land. Recently I heard a Rabbi say that *Lev 25* puts a natural curb on this by commanding the strict observance of the Sabbath with its one seventh reduction in production and consumption. Following God's laws faithfully has benefits for us and for our earth which are not always immediately apparent.

St. Francis admonished his fellow Brothers who were digging the garden to leave the borders undisturbed so that the eyes can feast on the beauty of the varied forms and colours of the wild plants and flowers. Little did he know that this was sound agricultural practice which 800 years later would be advocated in the name of a healthy ecology, biodiversity, companion planting etc.

Farming in New Zealand

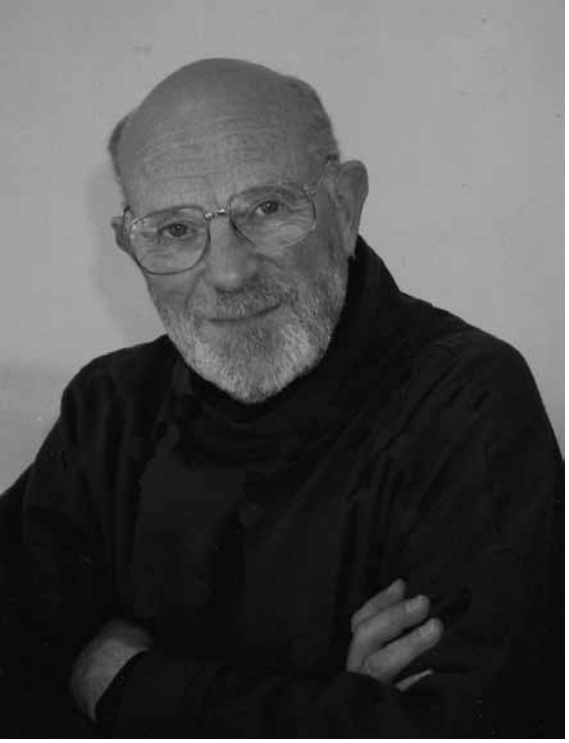
This story corroborates the lesson I have learned in my long tenure of land in my care as farmer. As a refugee from Nazi-occupied Austria I found myself in charge of a badly neglected piece of land in South Auckland. I was determined to make a go of it with my newly acquired academic knowledge of chemical-assisted agriculture.

The initial success was quite startling. But soon there appeared symptoms of ill-health on the land. Averse to using more chemicals which my neighbours had recommended, I had to watch the lush growth on their pastures while my paddocks began to get a bit weedy.

But ever so gradually my eyes opened to a different kind of beauty. I started to notice the varied kinds of grasses that replaced some of the ubiquitous rye, the weeds which flourished in the absence of rye grass competition. And I enjoyed the systematic approach of grass grub extermination by hundreds of starlings for whom I had provided nesting boxes. No DDT had ever been used on my land. My production was below that of my neighbours, but my animals' resistance to disease and their shiny skins were witness to the benefits of the beautiful diversity of their pasture.

Supported by St Francis and my own experience, I can truly claim that allowing our God-given aesthetic sensibilities to inform our judgments and decision-making may have consequences far beyond our present understanding.

Frank Hoffmann



Apostle of peace

Paul Oestreicher was a child refugee from Germany, raised in New Zealand, but spent his life mostly as an Anglican priest in Britain. In this interview Paul traces the sources and fulfilment of his vocation to spread the message of peace

I arrived in Dunedin as a refugee from Hitler's Germany at the age of seven. Within months the Second World War began. My parents and I were now 'enemy aliens'. At school there was a game called *Hunt the Hun*. I was the Hun! A little girl shouted to the others: "He's not just a German. He's a Jew!" So, from bad to very bad.

My father taught me that the only way to deal with such ignorance was to be sorry for these kids. They just didn't know any better. Just love them in return. They'll learn, maybe slowly, to accept you as one of them. So, I learnt early on that what Jesus taught and how he lived makes sense. Loving our enemies is the only way to change our world for the better.

My parents joined the pacifist community of the Quakers. The Quakers were the only church in New Zealand that went out of its way to welcome German refugees. They did it corporately, not just as individuals. That left a deep impression.

At Otago University studying politics, the Student Christian Movement (SCM) became my spiritual home. I was impressed by Anglican liturgy and very much influenced by the chaplain and vicar of All Saints, Charles Harrison. Amazingly, he had both the appearance and personality (as I realised much later) of Pope John Paul II. So I became an Anglican.

When, at 18 I was called up to do military service – still compulsory at that time – I was accepted as a conscientious objector. I went on to write a Master's thesis on the history of New Zealand's conscientious objectors in World War 2.

My supervisor at Victoria University, Wellington, was General Kippenberger, the editor of the NZ *War Histories*. He was a famous soldier, and from him I learned to respect soldiers. The young pacifist and the retired General, who had lost both feet at Monte Casino, came to like each other. He was a man of tolerance and understanding.

The antinuclear movement

I returned to Germany as a postgraduate student working on the relationship between Christianity and Communism, and finished up a few year's later ordained as an Anglican curate in London's East End. My parish priest was Stanley Evans, a truly remarkable fighter for justice and a leader in the peace movement. I had years before as editor of *Critic*, the Otago University newspaper, published one of his sermons. He and I marched together in the early Aldermaston marches of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), of which I am still Vice-President.

The campaign still goes on. Britain and the United States are threatening war against Iran because of its nuclear ambitions. At the same time Britain is claiming the right not merely to retain nuclear weapons but to develop the next generation of Trident missiles. That is politically foolish and morally repugnant. The Scottish Catholic bishops, led by Cardinal O'Brien, have said so very clearly. In England the churches – all of them – have been shamefully silent.

Tragically, British political leadership seems determined to go on undeterred by what most people now think. Although the majority of people in Britain are opposed to the war in Iraq, Tony Blair will not listen. That indicates the current parlous state of British democracy.

Robin Cook, the late Foreign Secretary, resigned on the issue of the Iraq war. But there is an entrenched tradition among British politicians that the only way to retain some status as a world power is to belong to the nuclear club and to do it under an American umbrella. That mindset is political, not military.

The Church of England many years ago commissioned a report called *The Church and the Bomb*. It found that the continued possession of nuclear weapons was incompatible with Christian ethics and with a decent international order. I was one of the drafters of that report. In the end, in the midst of the Cold War, it was quietly shelved. Its findings are still valid now.

An alliance between the church and political power dates back to the time of the Roman Emperor, Constantine. It has a long history. Yet a prophetic strand has also been present throughout Christian history. Prophets are always an unpopular minority, swimming against the tide. I think of Daniel Berrigan, the American Jesuit poet, who was prepared to go to prison for opposition to the Vietnam War. The great Catholic sculptor, Eric Gill, was another. I feel privileged because of my background to have been able to stand in that gospel tradition.

It has often been hard to stay within the church institution, but to be in *critical solidarity* with both church and state is what I believe Jesus demands of his followers. This is a term I learnt from the Christians living under a Communist regime in Eastern Europe. They said: "we must remain in solidarity with our society, but we cannot accept it as it is." That position, for me, represents the very nature of Christian witness in every society.

Becoming a Quaker

At the Anglican Synod in the '80s Archbishop Michael Ramsay wept because his church rejected a scheme to reunite with the Methodist church. It was vetoed by a very conservative group of priests against the wish of both bishops and laity. The Archbishop said: "I now fear that Christian unity will never come through formal agreements from above. It will have to be worked out at grassroots". It was an appeal to individual conscience.

That speech impelled me to return to my roots and join the Quakers – and yet remain an active Anglican priest. This was an act of witness that raised some eyebrows. I had the support of both the Archbishop of Canterbury and of my own bishop. Some Quakers, as I was to discover, could not get their heads around it. I can see why. Many had had bad experiences with the mainline churches.

In 1985 I was elected by the Wellington Anglican Synod to become Bishop of Wellington. But the election was too much for some of the New Zealand Anglican bishops. This radical from England was too much of a threat. My being a Quaker gave them an excuse to veto the election. It was my politics they didn't like. Sir Paul Reeves had encouraged me to let my name go forward, but he had been made Governor General and was out of the ecclesiastical picture. So I was saved from joining the ranks of the bishops, and in hindsight I am grateful for that.

The Israel-Palestine tragedy

My Jewish roots are very important to me. The whole of Christianity has Jewish roots. Jesus was quite simply a Jewish Rabbi. Yet for 2000 years Christians have shamefully persecuted the Jewish people. Now there is once again a Jewish nation. Israel is a powerful country in the Middle East backed up by the world's only superpower. My grief today is that Israel has become the oppressor of the Palestinian people. Israel is destroying its own soul.

It is now the only Middle Eastern nation with nuclear weapons – with the blessing of the West. That is pure tragedy. There is a significant minority of Jews who share my grief at Israel's denial of its own prophets. In Britain I do all I can to support the organisation *Jews for Justice for Palestinians*. The Jewish Tikkun community plays the same role in America. Their task is to support the opposition in Israel.

These brave Jews have the courage to put up with being reviled as traitors within their own society. Much of my prayer and my emotional energy is directed to helping them, some of whom are in prison for refusing to do military service in occupied Palestine. Zionism has triumphed in Israel and has created a permanent refugee problem for millions of displaced Palestinians. This unjust occupation lies at the heart of the conflict between Islam and the Western world.

The anger of the Islamic world is concentrated on the tiny land of

Palestine. It is the source of so much Islamic terrorism. Some 95 percent of Israelis are passionately convinced that only their military power can save Israel. That is an illusion. Tragically, it is the recipe for another holocaust. It will take many years for sanity to prevail: the creation of a viable Palestinian neighbouring state, tied to Israel in friendship. Nothing, sadly, points in that direction yet.

Conclusion

Pacifism is no easy option. It is not the obvious answer. It requires real spiritual maturity to see that violence begets violence. People have the right to defend themselves. But when people claim that right, they usually mean the right to retaliate, the right to attack others they see as a threat.

Just as the abolition of slavery was once thought impossible, so many people today believe that the abolition of war is no more than an idealistic dream. Einstein, the great physicist, recognised that – given our technological capacity to destroy – unless we abolish war, war will abolish us, *all of us*. That calls for a new human mindset, just what Jesus was advocating in the Sermon on the Mount. That, today, is not idealism but realism.

If the resources that go into the military-industrial complex were used to feed the hungry and to save the environment, we, as a human race, just might survive. That's the new realism, the new peaceful revolution. Albert Schweitzer simply called it 'reverence for life'. It's in short supply, but Jesus challenges us to go on in faith hoping against hope for the triumph of love. ■

Paul Oestreicher is living in busy retirement in Brighton, southern England

The Role of Interfaith Activities in Building Peace

In the annual Otago University Peace Lecture (25 September) Professor Paul Morris lamented the increase in tension between the world's major faiths, at a time when in most countries the population was becoming more mixed in race and religion

How we can build peace, specifically peace between faith communities, between Christians, Muslim and Jews; Muslims and Hindus; Buddhists and Hindus; Buddhists and Muslims; and of course between secularists and religious adherents. The motivating force is simply the fact of religious diversity or pluralism. We *have* to live with each other whether we like it or not.

Contemporary interfaith dialogue is not primarily about conversion or assertion of 'my truth and your error' but of different religious communities recognising the fact of the other, learning about each other's faiths and, pragmatically rather than theologically, agreeing to develop strategies to live together, not without dissension and disagreement.

The history of religious encounter

The history of contact and encounter between different faith communities has largely been a bloody affair of conquest and the exercise of power, of forced conversions, misunderstandings, or at very best of ships passing in the night. Yet all the historical religious traditions and indigenous traditions in the aftermath of various imperial colonisations have developed models of religious pluralism.

These traditional models of living together, of accommodation, of the response to the living reality of the existence of religious and cultural others are important but inadequate. They are models of what one may call *prejudicial pluralism*, that is they have the merit of the recognition of others but they do so in a way that is prejudicial to the integrity, humanity, autonomy of other individuals and communities. Are traditional Muslim, Christian, Buddhist and Hindu models of pluralism really plural – *yes*; but do they offer full recognition of the other? *No*.

Consider, as an example of past religious 'dialogue', what is supposed to have taken place around 1391 between the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Paleologus and an unnamed 'educated Persian'; it was recently brought to our attention by Pope Benedict XVI. The text recording this conversation was apparently written down by the Emperor himself, and this may well explain why the points made by the Muslim Iranian are so truncated. In the seventh exchange between these two when discussing jihad, the Emperor argued that violence is opposed to God's teachings, and he condemned Islam outright. That is not dialogue at all but a literary exposition of one's own faith using the other as a didactic foil.

The last two centuries have witnessed huge migrations – colonial, economic and refugee. No place now has a single ethnic and religious population. New Zealand's own religious diversity has greatly increased. Our new societies are unified not simply by faith – there are many who profess no faith at all – but by citizenship and human rights. Moreover, religious groups are much less likely to exist in cut-off enclaves. We need to recognise that our current religious diversity is unprecedented and that our responses, too, need to be unprecedented.

The Sorbonne philosopher, Emanuel Levinas, established this rule for dialogue: ***whatever I might say you will not kill me.*** This is the bottom line before any meaningful dialogue can take place.

Draft Principles of

1. New Zealand is a country of many faiths, and our increasing religious diversity is a significant dimension of our public life.
2. Having no established or official religion, New Zealand is, in this sense, a secular state. The State is committed to dealing with all religions with equal recognition and respect.
3. All New Zealand religious communities have a right to safety and security.
4. Government and faith groups need to build and sustain good relationships with and between faith groups within the framework of democratic processes, the rule of law, and human rights legislation.
5. New Zealand is a signatory to international conventions that safeguard the freedom of religious belief and expression, at the individual and communal levels, and the right of not being discriminated against on religious grounds.

Contemporary examples overseas

1. London's one million Muslims are a visual and physical reality alongside large Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist and, of course, Christian communities and the non-religious from a variety of religious backgrounds. The tensions are real, and the lack of trust and enmity are evident. In France, once again Muslims are very visible but ideas about religious freedom and the limits to those freedoms have resulted in prescriptive laws about the wearing of the Hijab and other religious signs and symbolic garments. Islamic culture is being incorporated into mainstream European culture: the Louvre Museum has a new Islamic arts gallery, as does the Victoria and Albert in London. There is much French debate about the integration of the country's five to seven million Muslims but again little of this appears to be focused on religious differences. These discussions are taking place in the context of 'the war on terror' in a climate of increasing fear and distrust.

2. In Colorado Springs USA, home to more than 1500 Christian organisations, Professor Morris met Ted Haggard, one of George Bush's spiritual advisors, and gained some insight into the growth of the mega-church movement and the appeal of American style Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity. Ted's team was just back from China saving new souls, and the plans for a Kazakhstan mission were well underway. There is no room for non-Christians in this world view.

The international director of missions at *Focus on the Family*, when asked where he stood on Jews, replied: "we don't have nothing to do with Jews". The hostility towards Muslims and Jews and homosexuals and all other outsiders is fostered by well-meaning people whose response to pluralism and diversity is prejudicial – *convert them*.

Religious Diversity

6. The State and the religious communities have the responsibility to extend this right of freedom of religion to all others, including the recognition of diversity within faiths, and to include the right not to subscribe to any religion.

7. The reality of our religious diversity is that people differ, sometimes dramatically, in their beliefs about the world and the values they hold dear. Debate and disagreement are an inevitability.

8. The different branches of government (police, internal affairs, health and so on) at national and local levels need to develop religious diversity policies.

9. The principal avenue for successfully achieving these aims is education at the school and public levels.

10. Religious diversity needs to be recognised in the workplace where the increasing diversity of the workforce can be a challenge for New Zealand employers.

3. At a recent conference at the International Islamic University on '*The Muslim World and the West: Barriers and Bridges*', the emphasis was very much more on the barriers than the bridges.

Speaker after speaker condemned the West as morally bankrupt and doomed to extinction. Some spoke of a Western plot to destroy Islam and others of the destruction of Israel and the humbling of America as the precursors of any dialogue at all. Yet the people at the Conference were hospitable and charming.

The situation in New Zealand

Concerning our early colonial history: firstly, the immigration of non-Christians predated the establishment of a House of Commons by four years, acknowledging the religious diversity of the colony. Secondly, the newly formed House was to open with prayers, but not those of any one church or denomination. Finally and most significantly, there was to be no established church in New Zealand; religious adherence of New Zealand citizens was a private affair, and all faiths would be recognised as equal.

There is clear separation of state and religion in New Zealand; what is less clear is the place of religion in our society. We have a recent history of tolerance and openness to difference; our bicultural experience has created a climate where difference is respected and accommodated.

A *National Diversity Conference* in Wellington in August explored issues of increasing religious diversity. The final session discussed *Developing a National Statement on Religious Diversity*. Ten principles were offered (*see sidebar left*). Archbishop John Dew (Catholic), Bishop Richard Randerson (Anglican) and Rehana Ali, for the Muslims, all spoke in support.

It was proposed that a Working Group be established to develop a national statement, reporting back to a regional

interfaith dialogue in Hamilton in February 2007.

A Biblical basis

In the psalms we read: Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it (*Ps. 34,14*). Here the language is dynamic, nomadic, of movement, of leaving and seeking and pursuing. Peace – shalom – is a journey that you have to look for and then follow rather than a project to be erected. 'Good' is something that we can do, but shalom is something we have to seek and pursue.

Shalom is a word rich is resonance, from the root shalam to complete, finish, be whole. It connotes completeness, safety, friendship, welfare, health, prosperity, right-eousness and, of course, peace. Shalom is thus not simply the absence of war but a positive quality, a life that is complete and full. In Hebrew the standard greeting is *shalom aleichem*, "peace be upon you". The rabbinic tradition teaches that there is no higher blessing that that of shalom.

Peace, therefore, requires action. We need to ensure that we think through peace issues in our own religious communities. We need to reconsider some of our traditional teachings about others. We live in a world dominated by ideologies of conflict – a belief that good will come out of evil and violence, or that violence is inevitable and conflict eternal. In *Leviticus*, we discover an elaborate and wonderful portrayal of shalom, together with a practical guide to seeking peace and how to pursue it. This vision starts from individuals, then proceeds to families, tribes, the nation, nations. This journey leads to all peoples being under the *mishkan*, the protective tabernacle of God.

Shalom bayit, in *Leviticus*, contends that it takes peaceful individuals to create a peaceful home/family; only peaceful families can create peaceful communities; only peaceful communities can create peaceful nations; finally, only nations at peace can play their role turning the pacific vision into a peaceful reality.

In conclusion

New Zealanders must recognise:

(1) that we live in a pluralistic society;

(2) that we have religious rights;

(3) that we must afford the same rights to others.

For let all the peoples walk each one in the name of its god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever (*Micah 4,5*). ■

(Paul Morris is Professor of Religious Studies at Victoria University, Wellington)

A prayer for November – for the faithful departed

In the rising of the sun and its going down, we remember them.
In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of the winter, we remember them.

In the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.
In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

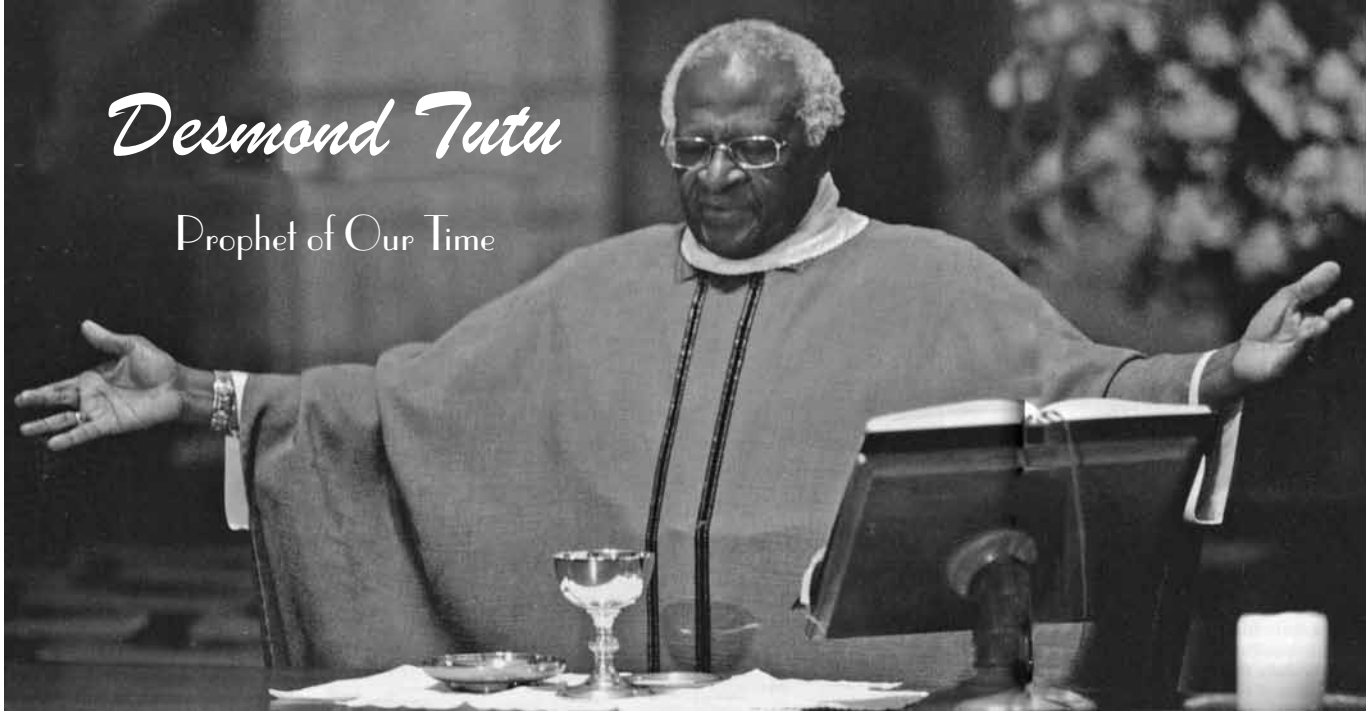
In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.
In the beginning of the year and when it ends, we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.
When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.
As long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us,
as we remember them.

O God full of compassion, Eternal Spirit of the universe, grant perfect rest under the wings of Your Presence to our loved ones who have entered eternity. Master of Mercy, let them find refuge for ever in the shadow of Your wings, and let their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal life. The Eternal God is their inheritance.
May they rest in peace, and let us say: Amen.

Gates of Prayer: Conference of American Rabbis 1975



Desmond Tutu

Prophet of Our Time

Now aged 75 and suffering from cancer, Archbishop Tutu continues his unwearying quest to bring peace and justice to the least fortunate. Christopher Carey follows his journey

In March 2006 on three consecutive nights, BBC television ran a series of compelling restorative justice meetings between protagonists in the Northern Ireland conflict. Called *Facing the Truth*, the programmes brought together former British soldiers, IRA gunmen, Protestant paramilitaries and relatives of murdered victims, in six one-to-one meetings which sought accountability, truthfulness, healing and reconciliation. The man who chaired those meetings was Desmond Tutu.

It will come as no surprise to most that the former Archbishop of South Africa should be engaged in such work. Desmond Tutu has been a world figure and prophet in the Christian church for decades. Long after most church officials have retired, this peacemaker for Christ continues to maintain a punishing schedule of public works, seminars on non-violence and speaking appearances.

Desmond Mpilo Tutu was born in Klerksdorp, Transvaal, on 7 October 1931. Twelve years later he moved to Johannesburg and studied at various Bantu colleges. He earned university degrees and was ordained an Anglican priest in 1960. He later studied in England at King's College, London, before taking up an appointment as the first black Dean of Johannesburg in 1975. This was an important breakthrough in race relations within the church in South Africa.

Ordained bishop soon after, he served in Lesotho for three years before returning to Johannesburg as Secretary-General of the South African Council of Churches, a powerful post. From this position Tutu was outspoken in denouncing South Africa's white-ruled government, consistently advocating reconciliation between parties involved in apartheid. He was also harsh in his criticism of the violent tactics of some of the anti-apartheid parties, including the ANC and the PAC.

In 1984 Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the same year he was elected Bishop of Johannesburg. Two years later he was elected Archbishop of South Africa, based in Cape Town. Now as the very public leader of 1.6 million Anglican Christians, his voice became even more strident, demanding the enfranchisement of all South Africans, the cessation of violence, the dismantling of apartheid and the withdrawal of troops from the townships. On more than one occasion, as he led protest marches along with trades union, community and other church leaders, he was tear gassed by police.

But always his message was the same. Non-violence was the teaching of Jesus. Non-violence was the only way South Africa should be freed. Although often accused of being a communist, his teachings were always based on an understanding of the teachings of Christ.

Wearing his bishop's violet soutane or shirt, clerical collar and crucifix sitting midriff, he became a familiar sight at funerals in townships or at protests. His face became known to billions worldwide, his tiny frame often dwarfed as he stood shoulder to shoulder with other progressive leaders in the non-violent struggle to end apartheid. No one ever had any doubt that this was a churchman speaking from a Gospel perspective to the events of his time.

Upon the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the subsequent all-parties election, Tutu and Mandela formed a formidable informal team encouraging the country to remain united in the face of huge social change and division. In his book *No Future Without Forgiveness*, Tutu highlights some of the real concerns that

➥

senior officials at this time had about civil war. Armed Afrikaner resistance was a real possibility. In the end these fears came to nothing. The newly elected government of national unity took power and immediately started addressing some of the critical issues the country faced – housing, healthcare, education, law and order, employment.

In a remarkable feat, Tutu persuaded the government to hold a *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* to help confront and heal the terrible scars of 40 years of apartheid rule. It was to be a national process of restorative justice based on acknowledgment of wrongdoing, acceptance, healing and forgiveness. Desmond Tutu was appointed its first Chairman. For three years he presided over the Commission as it heard more than 20,000 testimonials and received nearly 4,000 applications for amnesty. It reported back in 1998.

Now retired from the church and diagnosed with prostate cancer, his work seemed over. But this great prophet of our time was far from finished. He began a new initiative, travelling the world alerting countries and peoples to the need to confront injustice with non-violence.

He has in recent years been strongly critical of the Bush/Blair war alliance in Iraq, has supported *Ploughshares* actions in the United States and Ireland, spoken of his belief in restorative justice processes, challenged Israel's mistreatment of Palestinians and warned the ANC to be more just in government. Significantly, he has also called on the church to be more inclusive, especially of women priests and gays. And he has chaired meetings of previously warring enemies in Northern Ireland for BBC television.

If Nelson Mandela was the natural leader of the new South Africa, Desmond Tutu remains its prophetic soul. Long may he continue to trouble us. ■

Archbishop Tutu's own words

The 'haves' and the 'have-nots'

There is no neutrality in a situation of injustice and oppression. If you say you are neutral, you say you are a liar, for you have already taken sides with the powerful... All over the world the situation between the haves and the have-nots, between the powerful and the powerless is a form of global apartheid.

We can be human only together, black and white, rich and poor, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Jew. The first law of our being is that we are set in a delicate network of interdependence with our fellow human beings and with the rest of God's Creation... This is God's dream, and one which we must learn to put into practice before it is too late.

(*God has a dream,* Desmond Tutu 2005)

The arms trade a new slave trade

For many years, I have been involved in the peace business, doing what I can to help people overcome their differences. In doing so, I have also learnt a lot about the business of war: the arms trade. In my opinion, it is the modern slave trade. It is an industry out of control: every day, more than 1,000 people are killed by conventional weapons. The vast majority of those people are innocent men, women and children.

It is estimated that every year, small arms alone kill more people than the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki put together. Many more people are injured, terrorized or driven from their homes by armed violence. Even as you read this, one of these human tragedies is unfolding somewhere on the planet.

Take the Democratic Republic of Congo, where armed violence recently flared up again and millions have died during almost a decade of conflict. Despite a UN arms embargo against armed groups in the country, weapons have continued to flood in from all over the world.

Five rich countries manufacture the vast majority of the world's weapons. In 2005, Russia, the United States, France, Germany and the UK accounted for an estimated 82 per cent of the global arms market.

And it is big business: the amount that rich countries spend on fighting HIV/AIDS every year represents just 18 days global spending on arms.

(London *Times* 3 October, 2006)

The family of God includes all

"God's people are meant to be family...

"Jesus did not say: If I be lifted up, I will draw some. Jesus said: If I be lifted up I will draw *all, all, all, all, all*. Black, white, yellow, rich, poor, clever, not so clever, beautiful, not so beautiful... ***All*** belong. Gay, lesbian, so-called straight. ***All***, ***all*** are meant to be held in this incredible embrace that will not let us go. ***All***."

(*Sermon* in Pasadena, November 2005)

You Become What You Hate

Why is it that some campaigners finish up as evil as those they assail, asks Mary Eastham? Is it because they lose touch with their inner wisdom?

According to French sociologist and theologian Jacques Ellul, Hitler won the war. Why? Because the Nazi spirit prevailed; people were sacrificed to mere ideology, and technological means have continued to supplant moral ends ever since. The atom bomb and the arms race in the decades following more or less clinched his case.

And today? The recent pro-torture Bill of the Bush administration coupled with a new Bill to strip prisoners at Guantanamo Bay of *habeus corpus* – the right to challenge their detention, remind us how fagile democracy is. Yes, the terrorist attacks of 9/11 were horrible crimes against humanity. But the American reponse to terrorism has unleashed many further horrors.

A nation founded on moral principles may not "work the dark side", to quote Dick Cheney (2001), however insidious the foe it aims to defeat (*Time*, *9 October*). So now we must ask ourselves: are members of the Administration unwittingly destroying the very institutions they claim to want to preserve? Have they become what they hated?

Last month, Lord Charles Falconer, British Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, criticised the United States, saying: "keeping prisoners beyond the reach of law was a shocking affront to the principles of dmocracy" (*Manawatu Standard, 13 Ocober, 2006*).

As if the war in Iraq had not accrued enough bad karma for the United States, Larisa Alexandrovna tells us that nearly 70,000 men, women and children have been detained and in many cases tortured since the start of US aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq. Of the 35,000 detained in Iraq, only 638 were ever tried for any crime ('*Republican Torture Laws Will Live in History', 2 October, Alternet*). And what 'intelligence' have we gained from all this suffering? Difficult to say. But we have surely learned that while it takes years to build anything truly human – life, character, community, culture – sometimes only minutes are required to break down and destroy all of these.

It is probably no accident that the great Wisdom traditions do not dwell on evil. They simply acknowledge its existence and point us to the light. Perhaps this is because experience has taught that evil is endlessly fascinating, and that people can be all too easily contaminated by the very evils they wish to defeat. One often hears politicians claim that they do not want to be soft on crime. But are they ever as articulate in developing plans to build community, so that young people are not attracted to a life of crime?

The graciousness of the Amish community in the wake of the murder of five of its children gives us hope that goodness can triumph over evil. The Amish are teaching America about the power of compassion and forgiveness.

We marvel as much at Marian Fisher's request that she be shot first in the hope that the gunman might let the other girls go, as we do at her family's generosity of spirit to the gunman's widow inviting her to Marian's funeral to begin the healing process. We applaud the purity of the 13-year-old girl who spontaneously sacrificed herself to save the younger girls. No doubt Marian learned that she was her sister's keeper because she grew up in a community where people took responsibility for one another.

The Amish would not be Amish if they had adopted a spirit of retribution and vengeance toward the family who harmed them. God only knows what lasting legacy this generosity of spirit will have in the years to come. ■

A rich harvest of many theologies

The Jewish-Christian tradition has bred many theologies. All of them have prompted and nourished believers in their search for God. Pauline O'Regan investigates some of them

I love Catholic theology. More specifically, I love Irish Catholic theology. Not, mark you, the kind that was tainted so long ago by the spirit of Jansenism, that benighted heresy which left behind remnants of a narrow, judgmental outlook, a fear of 'the world', a certainty of being right, an élitism that can be traced directly to Calvin himself.

No, my delight is in the Irish Catholic theology that stems from its Celtic origins. It is broad and inclusive in outlook, embracing as it does all people and all creation. It does not fear the world because love drives out fear. It is tolerant and understanding of humanity. It is immersed in Christ and Christ is immersed in everyone and in all creation. It's the kind you'll find written on Saint Patrick's breastplate.

With the passing of the years, I've perceived a natural development that has its roots in the particular theology we espouse. The first flowering manifests itself as our spirituality and our spirituality, in its turn, is the seedbed for our holiness, our sanctity, our love-relationship with God. If I see anything clearly from the vantage point of my 85th year, it has to be this: that every theology, no matter how removed each may be from the other, has the capacity to engender holiness.

Too often we make the mistake of defining another's theology by its extremes. The Western perception of Islam in the present day is sad evidence of this. Yet, the truth is that when we perceive holiness in another person, we are recognising the health-giving theology in which it is grounded.

I remember well the point in my life when this truth came home to me in a special way. It was when I saw the film, *Babette's Feast*. The two sisters who lived in West Jutland, a windswept and barren peninsula, had been formed in a theology which would seem to us to be as narrow and sterile as its unforgiving environment. One of the sisters had renounced a precious, God-given gift and given up a brilliant singing career in Paris to return to the dreary monotony of her former life. She had done this for fear that her growing success might place the salvation of her soul in jeopardy.

Into the dull routine of the two sisters' lives came Babette, a political refugee from Paris, whom a mutual friend recommended to them for safe refuge. Babette, renowned in France for the incomparable food of her restaurant, represented the very heart of Gallic Catholicism. With her coming, two widely different theological outlooks came face to face: the sisters' fear of the world with Babette's love of it; their renunciation of the good things in life with her appreciation of them; their narrowness with her breadth, their caution with her recklessness.

But the bottom line of their theology was also the bottom line of hers. It was love. So, she was received into the sanctuary of their home with hospitality and gentleness and a non-judgmental acceptance. And in return, she gave to her protectors her integrity and her gifts and an unconditional generosity.

The climax was unforgettable. After some months, Babette heard the news that she had won a very large sum of money in a lottery. A lottery? The very thought of gambling was anathema to the sisters. With the money Babette asked if she might prepare a feast for them and their friends and, rather

than hurt her, they reluctantly agreed. And what a feast it was! It was such a feast as took on a Eucharistic quality. As the wine flowed and the exquisite dishes were eaten, old quarrels between neighbours were resolved, bitterness was dissipated and unfamiliar laughter was set free.

But the most beautifully poignant moments was still to come. The next morning the sisters came to the kitchen to offer thanks to Babette. In their care for her they advised that she keep her remaining money safe for her future needs.

Not a word was spoken, but as the realisation dawned on those two women, the look in their eyes could never be forgotten. It was a look that reflected their utter disbelief, their awe and wonderment and a dawning joy. They knew then that there was *nothing* left. She had spent every cent of her money on them. That was the moment when it came clear to me that different theologies, no matter how separated, are to be neither feared nor suspected if they are built on the foundation of love.

How else could we ever explain the sanctity of a Martin Luther King, for instance? He knew, as certainly as Jesus ever did, that his enemies "had a mind to kill him". Yet, like Jesus, he was ready each day to lay down his life for his people. Somewhere in his Baptist roots he found the strength, the grace and the love for that ultimate act of self-giving.

And what of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, steeped as he was in Protestant theology? He set his face against the evil of the Nazi system and, while so many other churchmen were finding convenient loopholes for compromise, he suffered loneliness and abandonment and the horror of Nazi imprisonment. In the end they killed him for his steadfast fidelity to the truth.

In our own time, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, ignoring the cancer invading his body, remains the faithful voice that calls for reconciliation in Christ, not just in Northern Ireland where he has been in recent weeks but to the whole world. Where does this old man garner the spiritual strength to do this, if not from the depths of his Anglican faith?

Countless books have been written telling us about the unspeakable inhumanity of the Nazi concentration camps. Yet for every story of horror there is a story that tells of those Jews who clung to their human dignity, cared for others and kept faith in God even when their God seemed to have forgotten them. To this day those saints of Auschwitz and Belsen give witness to us of the power of Hebrew theology which most of them would have studied from childhood.

the saints of Auschwitz and Belsen witness to us the power of Hebrew theology

I feel I cannot overlook my own immediate experience which has brought me into contact with the officers of the Salvation Army in our local area. I see Edwina and Dean as being completely faithful to the charism of their founders, William and Catherine Booth.

These two gather to their Centre the poorest of the poor: those recently released from prison, those struggling with a drug habit, the young without homes, young mothers with their babies, the old, the frail, the needy, the destitute.

I doubt if those two officers or their co-workers have ever heard of making 'an option for the poor'. They have no need to. The poor, most of whom don't feel at home in any church, come to them. They know themselves to be accepted and they are received with respect.

I have it in my heart to envy the Salvation Army who do all these things with such apparent ease. I know from experience that it is not easy, but it is so true to what Jesus did. Where, I ask myself, is the wellspring of their grace? Somewhere in their music and song, in the simplicity of their prayer, in their love of Scripture they must find soul-food in abundance, year after year.

None of this takes into account the holiness that springs from the various strands of theology present within the Catholic church itself. I can think back to a vibrant era in our diocese when we were passionately challenged to take the Gospel call to justice seriously. Few people who remember Father John Curnow could ever forget how 'our hearts burned within us' as he spoke and opened the Scriptures to us.

Yet it is interesting to also recall that, about that same time, Roger and Veronica Foley were pioneering the movement of charismatic renewal in our diocese, calling us to a more personal way of prayer, reminding us that we need not fear to let our emotions play a part in our relationship with God as surely as they do in all our other love relationships. John Curnow and the Foleys did not have a lot in common except for one thing: each was calling us to holiness, the one to follow the Jesus Way with greater commitment to justice and defence of the poor, the others to foster a more intimate relationship with Jesus and to express it publicly with a joyous abandon.

Everything that has been said of the Christian faiths is also true of the non-Christian religions. They, too, have given us men and women of profound holiness, people such as Mahatma Gandhi and Aung San Suu Kyi who offer us the Christ-like model of non-violence in the face of injustice and oppression. They are an article waiting to be written, but the purpose of this one is simply to remind us that where people are faithful to the true theology of their respective religions, they are also capable of becoming saints. ■

Pauline O'Regan is a Christchurch Sister of Mercy living in a small community in Linwood

Getting committed to *Tui Motu*: *how does it happen?*

Being present when something comes into being is a curious experience. It's only happened to me twice. Once in Wellington 36 years ago and second time in Auckland when a group of some 20 people decided in 1997 to establish an independent Catholic publication in New Zealand. On each occasion it seemed somewhat ordinary at the time, but you sense that you are letting yourself into something extraordinary. As the dust of decision-making settles down you become aware of a sense of commitment.

It was a daring thing to do. Truly hazardous from a commercial point of view as we hardly had enough funding to begin, not to mention publishing on a systematic basis; the field of religious publications was littered with gravestones. It was also an adventure, though of a spiritual nature, an act of faith really. In a paradoxical way this was at once an alarming yet sustaining experience. When the Holy Spirit gets involved, commitment does not seem so lonely. There is an innate feeling that, if you do what you can, God will do what you can't.

Subsequently, the solidarity of the board of directors also reinforced commitment. It has been a representative, balanced group, a useful blend of realists and idealists with an eye to the future and plenty of past experience to draw on; a mix of Religious of four congregations and active parishioners from various parishes around the country. We could only afford to meet twice a year, but those meetings certainly enhanced our commitment.

We drew considerable confidence from the knowledge that we had experienced editorial staff to lead the enterprise and lead it they did. In the arts of design and production they have been outstanding, their talent and energy inspirational. Beyond professional duties their readiness to be involved in the mundane but necessary tasks of a small enterprise – day to day office tasks, even packaging and mailing – attracted a bevy of reliable and capable volunteers.

The product spoke for itself. It was very saleable. Its content and appearance became more professional by the year. Promoters were able to approach parishioners with confidence knowing that they had something really worthwhile to offer. Access to parishes was critical as the TM budget for promotion was slender.

Almost all the bishops were gracious in assuring us that they were at ease with parish promotion as long as respective parish priests were. In the event at least 90 percent of parish priests/parish councils were welcoming, the same percentage as the bishops. I admired the sophistication of the bishops in being so tolerant of a newcomer over whom they would have no control.

As a promoter my experience in dealing with various parishes was vastly encouraging, especially when the celebrant introduced me with affirmative comments. One parish priest confessed to being a periodic reader, adding that his 82-year-old sister in Dublin read TM each month from cover to cover and declared "Ah! Martin, it's a great read!" At another parish a mother approached after Mass with her secondary school daughter to ask whether she could arrange a subscription for her daughter who wanted to study theology. Incidents like these deepened my commitment as it indicated that TM was speaking to a wide range of readers.

In the longer term commitment became a habit, the more easily acquired as TM's editorial pathway became more evident: as the links between ecology and theology were identified, as the role of women in the church was consistently explored, ecumenical subscribers and writers recruited, new commentators on issues of church and state introduced, and in accordance with declared policy, readers were invited to question, challenge, and contribute to the discussion of issues raised.

On the publication of its 100th issue, it is remarkable that TM remains part of the Catholic publications landscape. It is one of three independent Catholic periodicals in the English-speaking world. Even our big brother across the Tasman has not been able to put one together. We want to believe and ensure that TM will continue to be available for generations to come. That is why we have decided to celebrate the 100th issue by focusing upon the future rather than basking in the past; hence the establishment of the *Tui Motu Foundation* Trust. As part of the Tui Motu community, will you commit to supporting it in whatever way you can?

Tom Cloher

Jubile

Abundant thanks to all those whose labours have made *Tui Motu* possible: writers, printers, advertisers, sellers, volunteers, donors – and especially to you, our readers, whose dollars pay our bills.

Listing names would be invidious: nevertheless, the editorial team would like to express their personal gratitude to Tom Cloher, Board chairman for most of our existence. In 1996 Tom flew down to Dunedin from Auckland to appeal to the Directors of the *Tablet* not to close the magazine. His commitment to the vision of a

Joy of the

When my copy of *Tui Motu* arrives in the letter-box, its most identifiable feature is its large brown envelope. But once opened it offers a stimulating array of articles and ideas from various hands and often from distant places. You may skim over some items and suddenly find yourself confronted by a subject which challenges

Tui Motu offers to wayward pilgrims a watering hole. It's a place to pause, drink, muse, and then journey on… until the next month. Michael, Frances and the team have consistently offered us a plethora of material, largely written by New Zealanders, touching on many aspects of life and faith.

I like John's in-your-face politics. You'd never read anything like that in an Anglican magazine. Not that I agree with him all the time. Not that he'd expect me to. I like Humphrey's how-many-angels-can-dance-on-a-mitre stuff. It's comforting to know that all ecclesiastic institutions are remarkably similar. It's also quite depressing.

I like the eco articles. Not really my forte I confess. But like eating five fruits a day they are a neglected necessity in the spiritual diet. I like Eve's epitaphs, reminding us that despite religion's best intentions it often manifests terrible results. I admire her tenacity.

I like the occasional writings of Joy, Mike, and others as they play with ideas, construct new metaphors, and dig for meaning. It's a sandpit I know well. I smile at the way writers respectfully tiptoe around papal intransigence, saving their sharpest barbs for Vatican sycophants.

I like many things about *Tui Motu*, not least its bravery in printing me! I've only provoked two reproving episcopal letters to date. I hope I've provoked a lot more of you to exercise theological courage.

I hope and pray that *Tui Motu* will continue to offer its refreshing mix for years to come so that those inside, on the edge, or outside the church may find some sustenance, challenge, and even a chuckle. Aroha nui.

Glynn Cardy

e 100

vibrant, independent Catholic paper has never flagged and has sustained us and given us hope.

When Tom arrives eventually at the pearly gates, St Peter will say warmly: "*Welcome ... but next Sunday morning you'll be promoting* Tui Motu".

unexpected

your thinking, an insight which expresses the Christian life in a fresh way. It may be a full-length article; it may be a perceptive poem or a humerous one-liner. It conveys the joy of the unexpected.

One outstanding feature of *Tui Motu* is its layout, which guides the reader to discover these things. The cover and other illustrations by artist Donald Moorhead not only attract the eye but deepen the reader's understanding and enjoyment.

Albert Moore

When *Tui Motu* was being established, I expressed the hope that it might "tap into the faith enshrined in the lives of Christian people down the ages, speak about the hope that was theirs and is ours, and stimulate all of us in the ways of truth and love, justice and integrity, mercy and reconciliation."

I believe *Tui Motu* has done this, and for that we can all be grateful. *Tui Motu* was not established merely to repeat what Catholics can find in catechisms, or to publish only Catholic news.

In the words of the Second Vatican Council's declaration on non-Christian religions, we are urged to "acknowledge, preserve and promote spiritual and moral values found among them, and the values found in their society and culture" (*n.2*).

We might justifiably include the search for values that simmer within our own country's secular culture, looking, with St Paul, for "everything than can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise" (*Philippians 4:8*), always bringing to them the light of Christ to bear on them. It belongs to a truly Catholic culture to reach out in these ways.

Bishop Peter Cullinane

Kia ora e hoa ma,

We have been on a journey of a hundred spiritual miles, sometimes holding hands, sometimes agreeing to disagree, but always walking to the same music. We hear it every step of the way, beneath the breaking of waves, at the heart of the tui's song and in each other. What do we call it, this music? It has no name, so we simply call it God.

We began this pilgrimage by learning to walk. Then we danced a little. On the way we sang songs to the music, finding words for resurrections without end, and we paused to weep for our sisters and brothers who are still on the cross or in the tomb. We have come to know each other as family.

We have learned that spiritual journey does not guarantee comfort. On the contrary, we guarantee blisters and the occasional stone in the shoe. But the great obstacles that looked so threatening dissolved as we approached them. The music has a way of clearing the path, as it leads us on.

We look now at the next hundred miles. Since pilgrimage is also physical journey, no doubt this beautiful land will continue to speak to us of God. There will be parables in snow and on beaches, in morning traffic and the evening glitter of the Southern Cross. Fern and flax, pohutukawa, morepork announcing rain, everything will be instrument for the music of the way. Let us travel well, dear friends, and while the music brings us peace, let it also profoundly disturb us.

Kia kaha. Kia manawanui.

Joy Cowley

A mirror for Gaia

The bare spare beauty of the Yorkshire Dales in northern England

Reflecting back to Mother Earth what we see before us, the great act of creation, helps us both to make sense of half-felt intimations and to reconnect with lost intimacies. Daniel O'Leary recalls just such an experience.

I want," she said, "to live more deeply. My life is flat. It has no echoes." It was the kind of remark you tend to remember. With several painful relationships behind her, and a dismal Scottish tour with a doomed Country-and-Western trio, Shirley was now searching for a more meaningful life.

As often happens, late at night after long days, certain words, faces and moments flash across my mind before I go to sleep. Shirley's poetic, spontaneous little soul-cry reminded me of many empty moments in my own life, moments when I feel trapped in my blindness, quarantined within my own limitations. Something reachable remains just beyond my grasp; something attainable beckons from too far away.

The last time it happened was when I was travelling west along the M62. Just where the sign says "You are now at the highest motorway point (372m) in England", I pulled over and looked around me at the long vista of the Yorkshire Dales stretching forever to distant horizons on both sides of me. With the changing light, the shifting shadows and the sudden mists, I sensed an enchanted world out there, but one from which I felt excluded.

It was then that I began again to fret because I could not really feel part of that spare beauty around me. I could not enter into it, resonate with it, be fulfilled by it, expand with it, flow with it. It was as though an invisible filter blurred its impact on my soul; as though I were a spectator at something out there, distant and detached. There was no resonance between us, no "echoes", as Shirley had put it. My distress was nothing new. In recent years I have grieved over the loss of some magical qualities I had enjoyed as a child.

As I sat and reflected somewhat anxiously on these things, two lines of thought arose, in quick succession, in my mind. They emerged as a pair of disarmingly simple images calling me into another more contemplative way of looking at things. One – what

I call the mirror image – sprang from a belief about the part that each one of us plays in the continuing story of our growing world. As I was gazing at the undulating hills of heather, I tried to see myself as a mirror reflecting back to Mother Nature what she looked like, through the eyes of her own child, me. "Reflecting in the consciousness of each one of us", wrote Teilhard de Chardin, "evolution is becoming aware of itself". At some point creation became reflexive in giving birth to the human mind. This mind, according to John O'Donoghue, "is the mirror in which creation can behold itself. In the human mind the earth becomes conscious and aware".

Half-felt intimations were now becoming more clear. I saw myself as begotten by the world itself, flesh of her flesh and now needed by her, to bring home to her the unique beauty of her ever-changing face. Our human eyes feed back to Mother Earth what she looks like in every turning of the world's light. Without this moment the song of life would be forever unfinished, the universal story incomplete. These faint whisperings are too far-fetched for some: they are utterly and mystically natural for those others who feel in their bodies and souls the same heart-pulse as the universe.

So there, in that high lay-by, I thought, "I am a mirror for Gaia." (Thus named by the Greeks who saw the earth as a living, sensitive, growing mother; a term brought to current usage by the scientist James Lovelock and celebrated now by many of our best theologians.) Without us she would never know her allurement, never delight in the beauty that captivated the souls of her human family. We have sprung from her womb. A spirituality of creation forever reminds us of this truth. Something dies when it is forgotten. That afternoon a lost intimacy was restored when I felt myself to be my earth mother's mirror; a weakened bond was strengthened when I rejoiced in this special gift I could lay before her. In the grand scale of things I had my unique and necessary role to echo uniquely back to her what she could not see for herself. "Welcome home," she says, "I have missed and mourned you. Where have you been?"

As the eyes are to the body, so are we to the cosmos – and to God.

This brings me to my second image – the window. God created the world so as eventually to become human in it, and therefore to enjoy all human experiences. God so loved the world that God assumed human nature in order to enjoy it. The incarnational theology of the mystics holds that if God is to continue rejoicing in that created divine beauty, then all our eyes and senses are needed to be windows of wonder for God on to the strange beauty of, for instance, even those lonely moors and peat bogs.

The Risen Christ told St Teresa that he needed her eyes to look with love on people and places. "The real aim", wrote Simon Weil, "is not to see God in all things; it is that God, through us, should see the things that we can see." And touch the things that we can touch. And hear the things that we can hear. The theological giant Karl Barth, somewhat infatuated with the music of Mozart, surmised that when the horn concerto is on at full swell, "then our dear Lord listens with special pleasure". And do we dismiss too soon the stories of children playing their drums for God, or squeezing God in next to them for a ride and a chat in their new red and shiny fire-engines? After all, "God is sheer joy", wrote St Thomas Aquinas, when asked why God made the world, "and sheer joy demands company".

In *Sheep Fair Day*, Kerry Hardy writes:

I took God with me to the sheep fair.
I said,
"Look, there's Liv, sitting on the wall waiting;
these are pens, these are sheep,
this is their shit we are walking in,
this is their fear."
Then I let God sip tea, boiling hot,
from a cup and I lent God my fingers
to feel how they burned when I
tripped on a stone and it slopped.
"This is hurt," I said, "there'll be more."

Such an awareness makes the familiar delightfully unfamiliar again. The senses become thresholds to the Mystery, revealing an astonishing immediacy and intimacy with the universe and its Creator. You find yourself doing things you haven't done since you were a child – chatting to God as you walk or drive along, pointing out this and that, as you round each new bend in the road. You re-enter, in a completely new way, the childhood of play and wonder you once lived – but left too soon.

And what will Shirley make of all of this. Will she dismiss it as too cerebral, too remote or will it help her find, in some corner of her lonely heart, that eternal echo of intimacy for which she longs? ■

Daniel O'Leary, a priest of the Leeds diocese, is based at Our Lady of Grace presbytery, Tonbridge Cresc., Kinsley, West Yorkshire

Grown-up Catholic

Sandra Winton

As I get older, and I do seem to get older at an ever-accelerating rate, I find myself thinking of my first meetings with God, religion, church. I grew up in a small town, little more than a village. In my earliest years Mass occurred once a month. In winter my mother and I would battle through the wind and rain to get to the church, while my father, who had had a row with a priest over parish money, stayed in bed. The battle with the elements was preceded by the battle of the hat as my mother fought to impose a beret on my straight, slithery hair, while I wriggled against this confinement. I remember, one particularly cold and stormy morning, her wondering aloud if I would go to Mass at all if she were not there. She knew that the seed had fallen lightly in my soul and feared I might go the way of my father.

Inside the church I relished the chance to watch adults close up and at length: Mr Toomey who served Mass and grunted his hefty farmer's frame up off his knees when required; Mr Todd, who sat at the back and took up the collection. Then there were the women. A skinny child, I was fascinated at the way they could rest their bottoms on the seat behind while leaning their elbows on the rail in front. No amount of gymnastic endeavour could get my body to bridge this gap. Only age has achieved it. Most of all I would stare at my mother: how she would close her eyes or bury her face in her hands, outwardly quite still, while inside she was in some other place of her own, communing with an invisible confidant.

My father's feud with the church extended to a refusal of financial support and twice a year I would share my mother's dread of the reading of the Christmas and Easter dues. My mother was a shy woman, timid at times. Without looking I felt her beside me hold her chin up and brace her shoulders as the list was read, beginning with the biggest donations and ending with her five shillings or two and sixpence. She told me how she hated it and I was darkly outraged that anybody could do this to her.

When I was six my mother came into her own. There had been no First Holy Communion in the parish for a number of years. Children from my age to big boys almost ready for high school were gathered up and instructed after Mass. My mother and other women made a thick cushion for the altar rails so that the elderly priest could reach the children with the host.

How could I know of God's love if I had not known my mother's?

For hours, my mother and I sat in the sun cutting up rags with which to stuff it – I marveled at the strength of her hands when mine could not wield the heavy scissors through the layers of fabric. She also pulled out the unused organ and got it to work, writing to the nuns in Dunedin for the music.

On the day, she played and sang virtually solo, "How sweet to be a little child…" and "On my First Communion Day". She was unstoppable. She even found the money for a white dress, which she paid a dressmaker to sew, not trusting herself enough. Perhaps she wanted to see that I got a taste of what she had known when she had worn a long, white dress, had her hair in ringlets and scattered rose petals from a basket in front of the Blessed Sacrament, down the long aisle of St Patrick's Basilica with its hefty pillars and stalwart Irish saints. Years later I discovered the basket still there on the floor of her wardrobe, that mysterious place smelling of face powder and *Three Flowers* talc.

God and prayer were a place of refuge in her often hard life. When I made my first Communion she told me that I should love God even more than I loved my father and her. This seemed a task utterly beyond me and I prayed to rise to it some day. But how could I ever love anyone more than I loved her? Her love of me was the rock of my life and I longed for nothing so much as to see her happy.

As I grew older, I understood in more adult ways what I had sensed as a child: the absolute moral code by which she conducted her life, responding even in situations which were costly to her "because that's what Our Lord would do". I saw her freedom to base her decisions on her own principles even when she knew it went against what the priest would say. I learned about her capacity to forgive where it counted, even though she was by nature a woman who held the pain of hurts and insults. She was unswervingly faithful to the church and turned to it throughout her life for strength and comfort; at the same time as she was free to think beyond some of what she had been taught in it. In the end, the gospel was stronger in her than anything. She was a soft woman, gentle, sometimes disapproving of my opinions at the same time as she was fiercely loyal in her love for me.

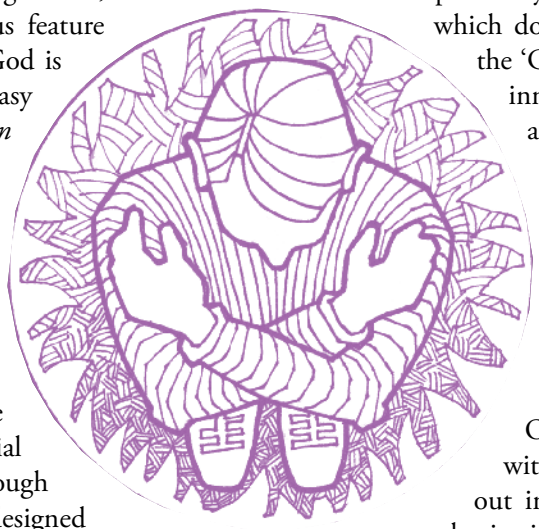
I know that the deepest layer of my belief is based on my experience with

Holy Ground

Paul Andrews

The editor sometimes introduces my articles in *Tui Motu* as by a priest-therapist. Fair enough; but allow me to explain.

After leaving a Benedictine boarding school, I felt strongly that stability, that precious feature of monastic life, was not for me. God is not in one place (I am always uneasy when people refer to us as *Roman* Catholics), though there are holy places. You remember Seymour's remark in one of J.D. Salinger's stories: *All we do our whole lives long is go from one little piece of holy ground to the next.* My faith, like Abraham's and my mother's (she was in her 32nd home when she died), is a sense of God's providential and personal care as we move through strange places to a city founded, designed and built by God. In fact I bridle at St Paul's word *city.* I'd like to think of heaven as country, with mountains, rivers and lakes, and free from crowds and traffic (reminds me of the South Island!)



The holy ground grows from inside us. My job as a priest-therapist is to help people to grow it. I have to be a methodological atheist: I don't take it for granted that anyone believes in God. But he gave us all a heart. If you can get back to the healthy centre of it, you can trust it.

I'm reproved by upright Catholics if I write something which does not stress the 'God factor'. I trust the 'God factor' if I can help people to their inner health and freedom. Freud was once asked to define mental health. Off the cuff he answered: *to be able to work and to love*. That is a beautiful definition. If you can help people to love again, or if you can help the love to flow again in a family, the Lord is there. You do not need to put up a label, or a picture of the Sacred Heart.

One of the scriptural phrases that stays with me is that the love of God is poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us. I see that in a tangible way when I encounter people who have serious problems, people who are weeping and live in enormous emotional tension, yet under their distress are still driven by love. What did St John of the Cross say, from his dark prison cell? *Love is the fruit of faith, that is of darkness.*

The ground does not need to be floodlit to be holy. ■

---

her. How could I love God or know of God's love if I had not known hers? Seeing her on her knees every morning and night embedded in me the roots of prayer. The sureness of her morality, grounded in love, justice and the example of Jesus still sits deep in me.

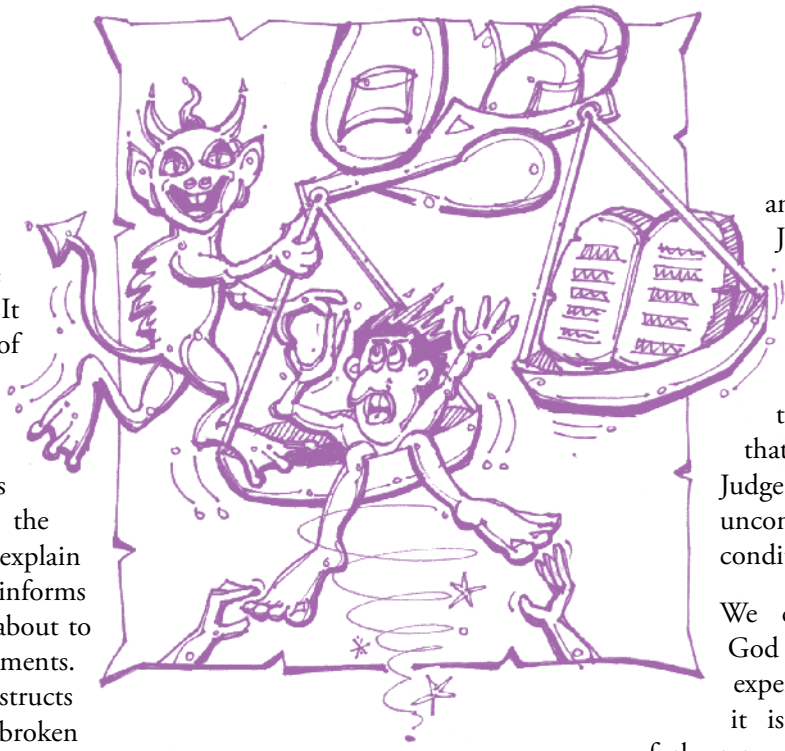
I began this article for the 100th edition of *Tui Motu* thinking about the people who read this magazine – adult Catholic people, or those of other faiths. I was asking myself how it is to be a 'grown up Catholic'. And I have ended up writing about growing up Catholic.

Reflecting on this has confirmed for me that the deepest roots of adult faith, morality and religious living lie in core experiences of parental love and in what a child knows of the depth of their parents' lives. Later experiences may build on this, modify or correct it but it is what primarily constitutes the church inside us. I believe that children watch their parents and know a great deal about them and that it is the truth of parents' lives, more than deliberate example or instruction, that carries into the hearts of their sons and daughters.

In these days when the local church is much preoccupied with the shortage of priests, the availability of Mass, buildings, money and programmes, it may be well to remember that it is the faith inside, the faith of the home, the inner programme upon which a person's life is lived, that counts most and builds strongest. Such faith and love can implant in children the kind of faith that can mature into adult faith and grow through changes that will make their lives inconceivably different from what we now know. ■

Close Encounters

Mike Riddell tackles one of the knottiest of theological riddles: how to reconcile love and justice. Which way will the scales be tipped? If we have to face a just evaluation of our lives, can we count on that 'seventy times seven' saving clause?



Possibly the most subversive faith story I've ever come across goes like this. It seems that all the masses of humanity were gathered before the throne of God, awaiting the final judgement. God welcomes them, before throwing to the angel Gabriel who will explain the procedure. Gabriel informs the vast crowd that he is about to read the Ten Commandments. After each is read, he instructs that everyone who has broken that commandment must depart into outer darkness.

Clearing his throat, he begins the process. After the reading of the first injunction, a huge crowd of sorry onlookers are guided toward the exit. And so it continues. By the time Gabriel has read the seventh commandment, there are not many people left in heaven. At this point God looks up at the pale-faced and parsimonious souls remaining. He contemplates the prospect of spending eternity in their company. Finally his great voice booms out: "Alright everyone; back you come. All is forgiven."

It is a subversive story because it seems to cut at the nerve of moral endeavour, and to trivialise the seriousness of eternal judgement. But in this, it is only slightly more audacious than the parable of the Prodigal Son. It does point up the theological dilemma posed by the doctrine of the last judgment: how to reconcile love and justice. For most people the two seem opposed.

On the face of it, judgment would seem to indicate the limits of love. We resort to it when we have run out of patience and mercy with those who have some claim to our love (which for people of faith is everyone). Perhaps the cry of exasperation marking this drift into judgment is the all too human one, "I've had enough." In some circles, this would be qualified as 'tough love' – the point at which tolerance is balanced by a call for responsibility.

But how are we to understand judgment when it is exercised by God? Our central affirmation as Christians is that 'God is love'; meaning that God not only has love or expresses love, but is indeed defined by love. And time and again in the teaching of Jesus, we discover that such love is scandalous in its liberality, and exceeds all human limits. If we as mortals are enjoined to 'judge not', how is it that God is portrayed as Judge? Does this mean that unconditional love is in fact conditioned?

We could of course excuse God on the basis of our own experience. We all know what it is to have our love and forbearance abused, and so to define our limits. Surely we could permit God similar latitude? The problem here is that to project onto God our own compromises is to move in entirely the wrong direction. Rather we should be trying to understand our own humanity in the light of how God has been revealed in Christ.

No, the starting point of our discussion must remain that God is love. It is the rock on which all theology and faith rests. Whatever divine judgment might represent, it can only be an expression of love rather than a limit to love. It is not that God has run out of patience or mercy, as if these were limited commodities in the heavenly economy. Grace is not regulated in its flow into the world.

The other difference between God's judgment and our own is that

human judgement is pragmatic and provisional, whereas divine judgment is eternal. To say it is eternal does not mean simply 'forever', but here carries also the meaning of 'decisive'. It is an ultimate judgement, from which there is no coming back. Society allows mechanisms of correction, an admission of potential fallibility; but there is no appeal against final judgment.

Jesus cautions us against the temptation to usurp God's role. In the parable of the wheat and the tares (*Matt 13:24-30, 36-43*), he warns against seeking to identify and uproot evil in our midst. It is an invitation to forswear our own claims to judgment, trusting instead in the judgment of God. In this way we can afford to love without compromising justice – indeed, even love our enemies – safe in the knowledge that justice will be done.

To delegate justice is not to dispense with it. And Scripture leaves us in no doubt that justice is high on the divine agenda. Without justice, the people perish; and not only the people who desire to dish it out. The key to understanding Biblical justice is to set it in the context of relationship rather than punishment. It is a function of accountability, and accountability is only ever possible where there is some connection between the parties. God can and must judge eternally, because God loves eternally.

We now approach the heart of divine judgement. The best allegory I have seen of it comes from the pages of C.S. Lewis's *The Last Battle*, the final in his Narnia series. In his portrayal of the last judgement, all creatures as they approach the gate of what we might call eternity are confronted by the figure of the great lion Aslan. As they do so and he looks them in the eye, they are either flooded with love for him, or with fear which makes them turn aside.

Two things are evident in this story. One is that the creatures judge themselves, and the second is that the judgment is one of relationship to the One who has given them life. The first of these truths tells us that God is not seeking punishment, but a revelation of the truth. It is perhaps the meaning of *John 3:19*: 'And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.' In the light of God's love, our own hearts are exposed.

The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* in South Africa was a human analogy to this type of judgment. The emphasis there was on uncovering truth rather than on exacting punishment for crimes. It also carried the second emphasis of setting justice in the context of relationship. The parties were encouraged to confront the humanity of those they had perceived as enemies, allowing whatever pain and healing might emerge from such an encounter.

When I was a teenager I had a keen interest in photography, and loved working in the darkroom. There was a wonderful sense of awe when a seemingly blank sheet of photographic paper was lowered into the tray of developer. Very slowly, light and shade would begin to emerge, gradually becoming defined enough to produce a picture. That which had been unseen became visible in the process.

Will God's mercy finally outlast our human attempts to resist it? Or is the power of human free will such that it can bind our hearts against even the love of God? Such is not for us to know. It is a mystery which should be left as such. The one certainty is that every soul will face encounter of the most intimate and searching kind, which will reveal that which is on the inside of us. ■

Tania was part of my education. She taught me how to preach, or rather how not to preach. I learned from Tania not to ask too many rhetorical questions. When I enquired rather whimsically from the pulpit, "What is safe sex, anyway?", Tania was on her feet to help out. "It's sex with a condom, Mike." Sadly, safe sex was a bit of vital knowledge for her, the sort of basic survival skill needed for the streets.

Tania's life came to a tragic end when she jumped from Grafton Bridge some years ago. She always seemed to me something of a child. My overriding impression of her was one of innocence. That may seem a contradiction when you realise that she practised prostitution to pay for the heroin she was doing. But Tania never really stood a chance. She was an innocent abroad in a tough world. She believed in love; she told me time and time again that we had to love each other. People took advantage of her loving and her innocence, and so at regular intervals we would see Tania broken, covered in bruises and crying.

I don't suppose Tania will make it in to the pages of history. There won't be any streets named after her or school prizes awarded in her name. If this side of life is all there is then she is just another tragic failure in the rat race of life. In terms of conventional Christian morality Tania would be condemned. Prostitution, drug addiction, suicide; any one of them would be enough to have her struck off the roll.

But I venture to suggest that it is for the likes of Tania that Christ came into the world and suffered and died. I will bet my life on the fact that if anyone among us gets to sit close to Christ in the kingdom, it will be Tania. I am grateful to Tania for teaching me something about simplicity. I have absolute trust that she is safe now within the love of God, where all the tears will be wiped away, and her body and spirit be given the chance to heal. I hope that she may she be there to welcome me into the doors of heaven.

Compassion the touchstone of faith

Glynn Cardy

If you want to judge a religion firstly judge how many constraints it puts upon God, then judge the religion by its mercy. The untameable God who pushes us beyond our boundaries has always and continues to prod and shove us towards the exercise of mercy and compassion.

Jesus was a reforming Jew who rebelled against love being turned into legalism. His ministry was one of constant and unbridled compassion. Nowadays it seems that many Christian fundamentalists are trying their hardest to turn love back into legalism!

Every religion needs to examine its beliefs to see whether they encourage adherents to be more or less merciful, more or less tolerant, and more or less compassionate. This is the touchstone of faith: does your church make you kinder? Does your church make the world a kinder place? And if it doesn't my advice is to ditch your church and go looking for God.

Kindness and compassion led St Francis of Assisi well beyond his comfort zone. There is a story told of Francis and a savage wolf. The citizens of Gubbio were wary and frightened to venture beyond the city walls. Francis, both compelled by and trusting in God, went out alone to meet this wolf. The brute appeared. Francis made the sign of the cross and spoke, calling the beast "Brother Wolf" and telling him off for all the suffering he had caused. The wolf, having made ready to pounce, became very quiet, and in the end lay at Francis's feet. The tradition records that "(the wolf from then on) lived in the city ...and was fed by the people ...and never a dog barked at him, and the citizens grieved... at his death from old age."

Let us note that, firstly, Francis was pushed by God to confront his fears. He ventured out, beyond where it was safe. Beware of the God. Secondly, Francis engaged with the wolf that others both feared and excluded. Risky behaviour. Thirdly, he brokered a deal that was of mutual benefit to both the wolf and the townsfolk, and built a lasting connection between them.

There was another solution available to the citizens of Gubbio: hire a hunter to kill the wolf. Time and again this has been what humans have done. Rather than befriend our fears we have killed that which has threatened us. It has led to the depletion and extinction of many animal species. It has led to many wars and generations fed by hatred. The story of the Wolf of Gubbio, on the other hand, invites us into building relationships of trust and mutuality with those we fear.

There are similar Francis stories around poverty and sickness – like when he hugged a leper; and around enemies and Islam – like when he visited the Sultan of Babylon. Each of these stories is about Francis being pushed by God beyond the limits of safety to embrace humans or animals others were frightened of and wished to exclude or destroy.

Our actions towards animals, or towards those who are labelled as deviant or different, or towards those with little status or power, or towards those of other religions or none… is the measure of our faith. This is not an easy or comfortable faith. Frequently you will find yourself consigned to the theological dog house. By siding with outsiders you become an outsider yourself. Ask Francis. Ask Jesus. Ask God. ■

Glynn Cardy is parish priest of St-Mathews-in-the-City, Auckland – Website: www.stmatthews.org.nz

Funeral at Ballygunion

Letitia James

It was the most solemn moment. The congregation were hushed, silent. Slowly the priest raised the host above his head. The bell gonged once. Heads lifted, gazing at the bread of life, then bowed. We were one with Christ. The supreme moment.

Then the phone rang. Well, not exactly rang. More jangled a singsong version of *The Fields of Athenry*. Behind me there was a sudden rummage through oilskin pockets and a muttered curse. *Athenry* started up again. 'What?' The voice was guttural, clearly male. Silence for a moment. Then, 'I can't Cahal, I'm in the middle of Mass.' More silence, 'Whatdayamean?' The bell gonged again. Slowly the chalice was raised. 'Don't be an eejit, Cahal, I'll ring you later.' Click. Pause. 'Eejit.'

It was a fine funeral. Ballygunion had turned out in its best attire to honour one of its own. Dark suits, many ill fitting but worn nonetheless. Jackets, shoes nicely polished, scarves, handbags. Thomas Mulveney was being farewelled. Sick for some time before he passed over, his body was encased in a varnished mahogany coffin made by Daniel Draper, the undertaker. Along the north side of the coffin (that is if you were facing east) a fine picture of the crucified Christ was attached. Along the south side (if you were still facing east) there was a 'Last Supper' engraved. It was, as I say, a solemn occasion.

Not that Mick and Seamus thought it so solemn. Hidden behind a wide concrete pillar near the rear doors, they muttered their way through the readings and right up until the consecration when *Athenry* reminded them of why they were there. "Sure, your man's looking older, Mick. I remember his father, old Tom. Named after him he was. Mighty man. Mighty man. Bit of a skinflint but a mighty man". "Aye, you're right there Seamus. We see his like rarely these days." And so it proceeded, loud enough to distract, not loud enough to be overheard except by those not praying properly.

An Irish country funeral has a lot going for it in this age of efficiency and quick turn around. The pace is leisurely. The people devout. Other than language, customs haven't changed a lot in the past century. Most have no worries about cell phones. They don't own one and couldn't work one if required.

A genuine handshake all round greets the sign of peace. Warm smiles, Firm grip. Not too much eye contact. Then we all collapse to our knees to await communion. Well, not all. The back pews contain many for whom communion would be a fresh acquaintance with an old custom. They stay put, backside propped against hard benches.

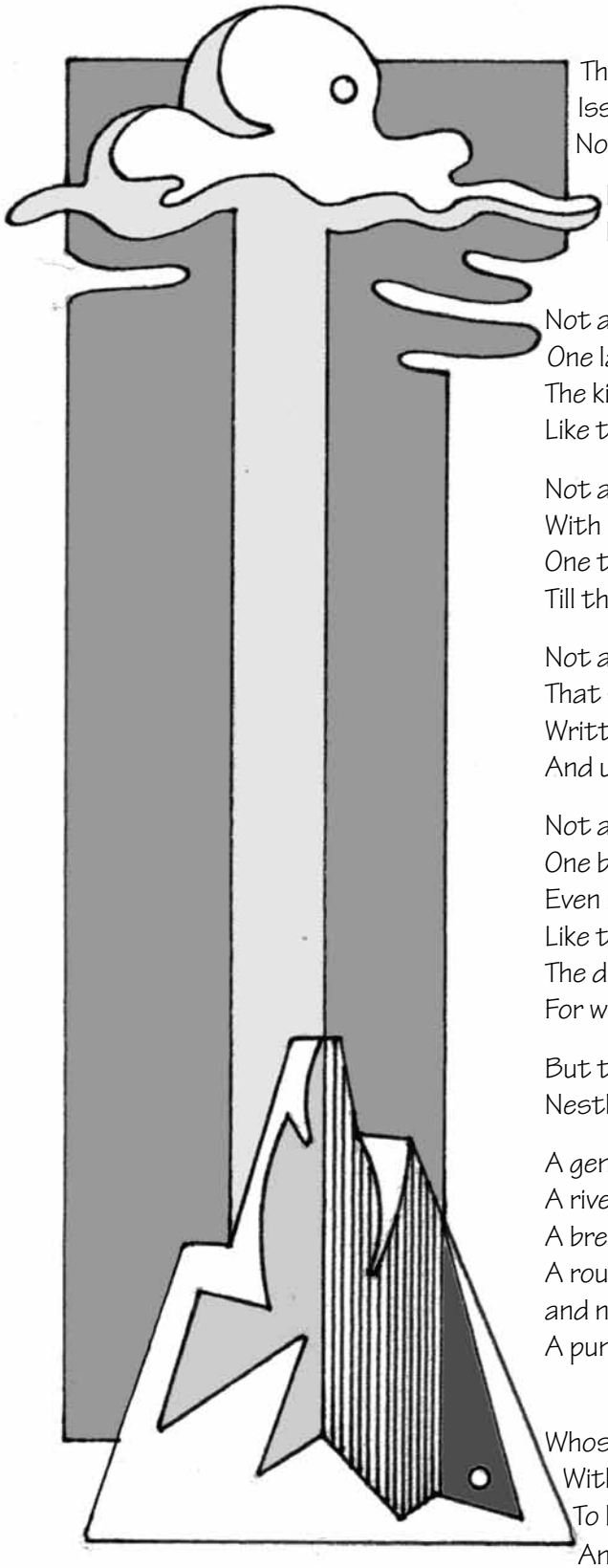
A fine tenor led us through *Be Not Afraid*, a favourite hymn now in Ireland. Most didn't join in, preferring to listen and continue their sweep around the rosary beads. The priest, without explanation thank God, blessed the body with holy water and incensed it. The rising smell of incense somehow reminded us of a greater wider world where the dead belong. Good symbols do not need explanation. Here there was reverence, there was feeling, there was custom and ancient ritual.

The pall was removed, folded and placed over the altar rails. This led to a long procession of the faithful moving from their seats up past the coffin, pausing to touch the shiny wood before moving to offer condolences to the bereaved. "Sorry for your troubles" was the frequent greeting as each paused momentarily with family members and shook hands. "It's a way of touching the dead, of saying one last goodbye", my friend explained. It made sense to me. So many put their emotions on hold at modern day funerals. This helped create an atmosphere of spirit, of oneness with the dead and the bereaved. A bit like the Israelites of old offering physical sacrifice to reach beyond the now.

They carried Thomas out. Four young fellows, eyes watering, grandsons all, on their shoulders. It's a lovely way to go. Solemn, reverent, respectful, the old man elevated one more time in pride of place before being lowered into the soil. One hopes they had treated him thus in life. Regardless, they were calling on all their best instincts to make sure they did granddad proud on the day.

The hearse moved off. They piled into their own jalopies and joined the cortege. Past his home in Beach Road, the dairy where he bought his *Irish Times*, the post office, the local pub where he had a favoured corner. The footpaths stood still, silent for a moment, hats off. Then he was gone. ■

A Naming



There is a word beginning to form in my womb
Issuing issue forth from my heart's blood
No more content to be contained

Not a harsh word this time
Not a word of slight or of need
or even of hope

Not an old word
One layered with the dust of expectations
The kind one bows down before
Like the relative you had to be polite to.

Not a shiny metal word
With its critical curves and sharp edged guilt
One that keeps you polishing its form
Till the reflection of yourself becomes too severe

Not a fragile, moon flower, taffeta kind of word
That shyly shares its fleeting beauty
Written only in the night
And upon whom a harsh word could melt it on the page

Not a given word
One bestowed upon your soul
Even if with love
Like the birthday gift you didn't need
The dress you had to wear to show your thanks
For what you did not want.

But there is a word down there
Nestled and fused by God in the flesh of my soul

A gentle mountainous kind of word
A river bold and tree rooted deep kind of word
A breath so light it flattens stone kind of word
A rough round the edges, wild, dirty
and not quite proper kind of word
A punching down through sodden earth to grasp the clouds
kind of word

Whose syllables are woven tight
With amber threads of pain
To be transformed within The Seamstress' hand
And birthed into my name.

Jacquie Lambert

The widow's Mite put in context

Mark 12:41-44

Susan Smith

The story of the widow who gifts her last money to the Temple treasury is described as a beautiful story of generosity or as a wonderful example of giving until it hurts, and therefore an exhortation for the reader to be similarly generous. But given the ongoing gospel narrative of Jesus' conflicts with the temple authorities, would he really have praised a widow for giving her last money to such an unscrupulous crowd, thereby neglecting her own legitimate needs? Just prior to our story, Jesus has cleansed the Temple, driven out the moneychangers, and then immediately after his praise of the widow, foretells the destruction of the Temple. This makes his commendation all the more surprising, suggesting we have to look for other interpretations for this text.

One of the big mistakes we make in reading scripture is to concentrate on the texts set for a particular occasion and to ignore their literary context. In Mark 13 Jesus begins the great apocalyptic discourse, and this important teaching is framed by two stories about exemplary women – the widow in 12:41-44 and the story of the woman who anoints Jesus' head with precious perfume in 14:3-9. Prior to the story of the widow, Jesus denounces the scribes who "devour widows' houses", and who, for the sake of appearance "say long prayers," while before the anointing at Bethany we learn that the chief priests and scribes were "looking for a way to kill Jesus." The women give generously – the widow gives what little she had and the other woman gives a great deal, ointment of pure nard worth 300 denari.

Jesus praises both women. Their attitudes toward wealth and money are in marked contrast to the scribes who "devour widows' houses" and to Judas who has been promised money by the priests for betraying Jesus.

These verses challenge contemporary readers about their attitude toward wealth and riches. There is little doubt that Mark intends his community to recognize the blessings and dangers that riches can pose for them in their life of discipleship. What is the significance of this for us?

There was a time when Catholics in Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly the early Irish Catholic settlers, were numbered among the less well-off. This is not so true of their descendants, as the Catholic school system ensured a certain upward mobility for the Catholic population. There is nothing intrinsically evil about money and while God surely has a particular love for the poor, God does not promote destitution. Nevertheless, the story of the widow merits our attention in a society where amassing of personal wealth is often proclaimed as one of life's important tasks. ■

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

Tragedy at Aramoana sensitively recalled

Out of the Blue
Film Review: Paul Sorrell

Dunedin will never forget 13 November 1990, the day a local resident, David Gray, shot dead 13 people in the quiet seaside village of Aramoana before being shot himself by police. In this close-knit southern city, it seemed that everyone knew – or knew of – someone who died that day. At the time, I was working at Dunedin Public Library; the bindery foreman, James Dickson, was one of Gray's victims. A small brass plaque in the library's ground-floor stairwell commemorates an unassuming but genial workmate.

Reliving these events through this powerful film, and seeing on screen the places I know so well, hit me with a raw intensity as I watched. In some sense, the film makes the audience into voyeurs, even while we resist this role. We – like director Robert Sarkies – struggle to establish a point of view, a stance that would give us a handle on these terrible events that traumatized a whole city. When Gray fires into a ute full of young children returning from a jaunt to the nearby Mole, the action is seen through the eyes of a teenage boy hiding up a tree. By experiencing the unspeakable vicariously, we are only just able to accommodate it.

Despite opposition from some Aramoana residents for whom the events of that day will always be an open wound, Sarkies' film is a sensitive and respectful recreation of what happened. The emphasis is not on the violence, but on the quiet courage and resilience displayed by ordinary folk – people like James Dickson's mother, Helen, an elderly disabled woman who gave selfless support to a severely wounded neighbour under harrowing conditions.

Sarkies does not simply throw us into the midst of these events. The first part of the film builds up a sense of community, showing us – with a genuine feel for the inflections of Kiwi life – the domestic warmth and conflict, joys and sorrows, hopes and expectations of a group of ordinary New Zealanders. We are also shown – through the skilful manipulation of the imagery of light and darkness, for instance – how deeply out of tune David Gray was with this simple community and the stunning coastal landscape in which it nestles.

While *Out of the Blue* once again confirms Sam Neill's thesis that ours is a "cinema of unease", seemingly most comfortable with the dark side of our national psyche, Sarkies' intense yet understated depiction of New Zealand's worst mass murder has already staked a place of honour in our national film pantheon. ■

A splendid compendium on Christian prayer

Prayer: does it make any difference?
by Philip Yancey
Hodder & Stoughton 2006
Price: $24.99
Review by Mike Crowl

Philip Yancey is one of today's most widely read Christian authors. I first came across him as the co-author (with Paul Brand) of *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, which came out around 1980, and I've read nearly everything he's written since.

He's neither a heavyweight theologian, nor a lightweight devotional writer. Almost everything he writes is tinged with his attempt – and eventual success – to rid himself of a restrictive and racist Southern American church upbringing. The result is that he has a great sympathy for those who haven't trodden a straightforward Christian path, but who may have been abused by tyrannical pastors, or driven by a legalistic milieu, or thought God to be a fearful ogre without a dash of love in Him. Not all his books are a success: I found *Reaching for the Invisible God* to be hard work, as I think it was for Yancey himself. It seemed to be clouded by unresolved questions, but perhaps its subject matter was beyond even Yancey's usually extensive capabilities.

His latest book, *Prayer: does it make any difference?* also, at first, seemed hard going. And then suddenly it began to move, and more than 300 pages later, it had asked all the difficult questions people ask about prayer, wrestled with them at length, found some answers, lost others, and in general agreed that there are some things about prayer we just can't grasp. But it had argued successfully that prayer is essential to our lives as Christians, and even more importantly, to our relationship with God.

Yancey looks at the topic from every angle, quotes dozens of saints and authors and worthies (as he usually does), discusses the practicalities of prayer and its mysteries, and reminds us constantly that however much we may know or seek to know about the topic, we have to take into account the fact that we're dealing with Someone whose mind is beyond our most profound understanding, and that there are some things in relation to prayer which we will just have to take on trust.

But perhaps the best thing about this book is Yancey's humility. He may be teaching us, but he never claims that he knows even the half of it; there are always people he's come across who are far more clued up on prayer than he is. Yancey is at the ordinary person's level, appreciative of the fact that prayer is something we do, or try to do, but that it is also frustrating, confusing, tantalising and irritating.

Scattered throughout the book are a number of 'inserts', letters and testimonies and stories of struggles with prayer from people who have written to Yancey over many years, or from people he's interviewed. They don't always seem to be relevant to the chapters they're included in, and in some ways they distract from the main text, but they add other voices to Yancey's, showing that prayer is a topic of huge concern to all of us who follow God.

Once my wife has finished reading the book, I'm going back for a second look. I know this is another of Yancey's books that is worth more than a single read. ■

Walking with Suzanne Aubert

Compassion Kiwi Style
Kilian de Lacy
Deltil publishing, Porirua
Price: $8.50 (see text)
Review: Michael Hill

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the death of Mother Aubert (1 October 2006) Kilian de Lacy has launched a series of daily reflections on her writings. Each volume covers two months and this first booklet is for October and November. The intention is to produce booklets every two months. The booklets can be purchased singly; or three issues ($24); six issues or one year ($45); 12 issues or two years ($90). The price includes GST and postage.

The format is very simple. There is a page of the booklet for every day, and each consists of a very brief quotation from Suzanne Aubert, a reflection of a few sentences and a brief prayer. The themes too are simple and homely: they correspond to the down-to-earth character of the saint. They are practical and suitable for anyone.

For instance, today Suzanne says: Pray especially from the heart. The heart which does not pray is like a censer without either fire or perfume. The reflection looks at a team which loses because the players did not have their 'heart' in it; and at a man who smiles without warmth. "God deserves better", the author comments.

If you buy this attractive little booklet you will find it ideal for a few minutes' use every morning – and hopefully the theme will return to you at intervals throughout the day. It will also make you more familiar with New Zealand's first saint. ■

Eminent author reveals his prejudices

Creators: From Chaucer to Walt Disney
Paul Johnson
Weidenfeld & Nicolson. London.
Price: $59.99
Review: Kathleen Doherty

Paul Johnson could be described as indisputably one of the great polymaths of this and last century. Catholic-born, educated by Jesuits at Stonyhurst College, and a graduate of Magdalen College, Oxford, he has swung wildly through the political spectrum, being editor of the New Statesman in the 1960s and speechwriter for Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s. Now 78, he has earned a reputation as a prolific jounalist and author of 40-odd books – history, art and religion have all engaged him.

The latest offering is the second book of a planned trilogy. The first, *Intellectuals* published in 1988, suggested that the dubious personal lives of certain writers disqualified them from being taken too seriously. He plans to complete his trilogy with *Heroes*, which will doubtless introduce the world to the moral flaws of those who have shown courage and leadership.

In *Creators* Paul Johnson explores the lives of men and a very few women who have been driven to express themselves in artistic fields as diverse as literature, painting, glass work, haute couture, music and film animation. He writes that the God-given level of creativity which results in great works can never be defined or explained, but only illustrated by looking at the lives of the creators and he has picked an oddly-assorted group for the exercise.

Chaucer and Shakespeare are his heroes. Bach is cited as "the best example of the importance of heredity or genes in the development of creativity" – 80 distinguished musicians of that name are listed in one musical encyclopaedia. Victor Hugo is described as "the genius without a brain". Picasso is considered to be a self-promoter and on a personal level "without any redeeming qualities of any kind" although he does concede that if you substract him from the history of art in the 20th Century you leave an immense hole.

The chapter headed "Jane Austen: Shall We Join the Ladies?" is the only segment giving more than a passing reference to women as creators. Out of consideration for my blood pressure I had to take this one very slowly and in small bites. The general theory is that the three women discussed – Jane Austen, George Eliot (Mary Anne Evans) and George Sand (Aurore Dupin) – had one characteristic in common which led to their being free to create literature: they were plain and therefore not subject to the frivolity of life as attractive women! In the case of Jane Austen this meant that she did not marry and instead of producing children she produced novels, which Paul Johnson considers a good thing.

Confirming that he understands neither women in general nor Jane Austen in particular, he compares the author's having to write in her notebook in a corridor and cover up the manuscript when people were coming, to the activities of President Clinton in a White House corridor which also had to be covered up when people approached. "…Clinton's awkward interruptions were precisely the 'follies and nonsense' that would have made Austen laugh." I think not.

By far the most favourable press in this work is given to Walt Disney and Mark Twain, the former because he changed the way we view the world, the latter because he made us laugh. Making people laugh is one of the most important aspects of creativity for Paul Johnson. In his introductory chapter he writes "We live in a vale of tears which begins with the crying of a babe and does not become any less doleful as we age." How can anyone who claims, by dint of his religion, to know God, be so joyless?

Read this book. You will learn things about the construction of organs, the techniques of working in glass and the fine points of dress designing that you never knew before. And it could start some excellent arguments. ■

Where lies the 'axis of evil'?

"States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, aiming to threaten the peace of the world."
George W. Bush 2002

Since 2002 the world, according to George W. Bush, is falling apart. His inept handling of negotiations with North Korea has led to that country achieving a nuclear capacity in order to counter threats from the United States – such as a military attack and the isolation of the country with crippling sanctions.

The "axis of evil" reference has come back with a vengeance to haunt the Republican Party. Twelve years of sanctions against Iraq, threatened sanctions against Iran and now North Korea have guaranteed the collapse of any possible international entente. Single-handedly, Bush has "threatened the peace of the world" and impoverished entire populations.

The human rights abuses of Kim Jong II are undeniable but excluding the country from the international banking system and coercing others in the United Nations to support John Bolton's rabid ideas of blockades, inspections at all ports and crushing restrictions on international trade are counterproductive.

America has tried for years to isolate North Korea as punishment for even daring to think of nuclear capability. It is this very policy that has kept the Kims in power and which guarantees the support of the common people against "the foreign aggressor", America. Sanctions reinforce the power of despots. It is always the common people who suffer.

Consider the results of the Bush "war on terror". NATO is struggling to stabilise Afghanistan, Iraq could be termed a failed state and Iran pursues its own nuclear ambitions which threaten Israel. Now the Korean Peninsula will receive a visit from Condoleezza Rice – an ominous sign. Who is at the very centre of the axis of evil? Who has threatened the peace of the world?

Crosscurrents
John Honoré

Comfort for the afflicted

Women suffering from the aggressive form of breast cancer in New Zealand continue their battle with Pharmac over funding for an expensive drug that reputedly could give them a reprieve from certain death. Often when men are diagnosed with a specifically male cancer, they learn that their condition is terminal. These situations raise the questions of what solace is there for the individual faced with the certainty of a death that is imminent and how does the patient cope.
To answer these questions about forces beyond our control and how to come to terms with death, those with religion through to agnostics have offered advice on how to cope with, and prepare for, that inevitability. Perhaps these terminal sufferers are fortunate in having been given a space to settle their affairs, to beg leave of their loved ones and be thankful for the time, the experience and a life for which, surely, there is a lot to be thankful. G.E.Lessing, the eighteenth-century playwright put it beautifully, "One single grateful thought raised to heaven is the most perfect prayer".

Exploring this feeling of gratitude brings a new experience in human relationships and sharpens the awareness of the wonders of the world and of the people who inhabit it. Feelings of physical pleasure in the sharing with a loved one the gift of the life-giving sun, the beauty of the landscape and the presence of that familiar companion, are all the more deeply appreciated when there is gratitude. There is no need for vocal expression, an empathy born of years of such shared moments make conversation unnecessary.

When gratitude enters the heart, there is a common reaction. It is the automatic and universal exclamation, "Thank God!". It is gratitude for having been a member of the human race in a beautiful world and for our own small part in it. The joys and the sorrows are all a preparation for another unknown but hoped-for existence. The moment we thank God, we acknowledge our dependence on nature, on people and society. Then it can really be said that we are "giving thanks".

100 not out

A hundred issues of *Tui Motu* is an achievement to be celebrated. Congratulations to the editor and his charming assistant for their dedication and drive – necessary qualities in order to produce an authoritative and lively monthly. The articles in this Catholic monthly have always been informative and truthful in an environment not always open to criticism.

I am proud to have been associated with the magazine for over five years, never once being instructed on what to write but sometimes receiving a suggestion that perhaps "that comma would be better there".

I share the magazine's respect for language and presentation and its capacity to surprise and inform. My copy must pass the scrutiny of Mavora, my better half, who acts as proof reader and censor. An eagle eye for grammar and discernment on subject matter are imperative before submitting the final draft.

The Dunedin team is aware of my *bêtes noires*, George W. and the Israel/Palestine conflict. I thank them both for their tolerance of me persisting with articles on these two themes and I hope the readers of Page 30 will do the same. Well done *Tui Motu!* ■

The watchdog function – 'keeping the bastards honest'

I recently had the pleasure of acting as host to an English priest who was briefly visiting New Zealand. As he is the director in his homeland of *Redemptorist Publications*, an enterprise whose monthly budget would make our editor, Michael Hill, green with envy, I diffidently loaned him copies of *Tui Motu*. I explained that it catered in this country for somewhat the same type of reader as does the prestigious London weekly, *The Tablet*. I was much heartened when he returned me the copies with the comment, "It compares very well with *The Tablet*".

We have in New Zealand two publications that divide between them the coverage of the news and comment that *The Tablet* deals with as a single journal. *New Zealand Catholic* is primarily devoted to covering the news. This it does in such excellent fashion that in the last ten years it has won 53 awards for excellence in religious journalism. *Tui Motu* on the other hand reflects in greater depth on various issues and comments on them in a fashion that is not the role of its sister publication. As *Tui Motu* celebrates its one hundredth issue, I reflect on the role of commentator and even critic that I play on its pages, or more properly, on the second last page. I am humbled by the number of people whom I meet who say to me, "I always read your contribution first". I hope it is not just because the editor makes me keep it short.

I cannot help recalling the role of one of the smaller Australian political parties, the *Democrats* (no relation to their U.S. namesakes). They have federal representation only in the upper house, the Senate. They have in the 30 years since their creation resolutely refused to enter into government through coalition arrangements with a larger party. Usually they hold the balance of voting power in the Senate. Normally they support the passage of legislation coming through from the lower house. But they perform a watchdog function. Individual bills they consider against the public interest they refuse to let pass into law. Asked to explain their role in parliament, an early leader of the party said, "It's our job to keep the bastards honest". I would like to make his words my own.

Not that I am impugning the parental legitimacy of those who run the church from the distant eyrie of the Roman Curia. I use the term 'bastard' in the wider, even quite friendly fashion we employ in the New Zealand form of speech that the *Congregation for Divine Worship* wants outlawed from employment in the liturgy. We would cheerfully call a Lotto winner "A lucky bastard". We might even consider curial officials to be "well-intentioned bastards". That does not mean that we necessarily judge their views to be correct and their decisions requiring to be meticulously observed.

The church happily has a long tradition of scepticism about the role of law and of commands coming from authority. The Code of Canon Law lays down that law is to be balanced by custom, can even be overturned by custom. There is a grey area of course, a period of time during which failure to observe the law of the command has not yet moved to the sanctity of being custom. But the liberty, even the responsibility, of at times challenging authority is a sacred heritage officially recognized in our church.

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

I will continue to exercise at times that liberty. I hope that I do so with due respect for those in authority and to the profit of all concerned. ■

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

Boys fighting over pink plastic gun

Oil painting (155 x 120 cm), 1978

by Michael Smither

Michael Smither sees himself as a painter of 'ordinary' life in New Zealand. Born in New Plymouth in 1939, he has painted memorable scenes of Mount Taranaki and the beaches and gardens around New Plymouth, as well as the "hills of gold" of Central Otago. His vivid paintings of his own young children from past years elicit a gleam of recognition from parents and children still.

He is also a great colourist; and in this picture he captures the colour and action of two boys fighting in an Auckland street for possession of a pink plastic gun. Their power struggle is infantile, as is implied by their wearing nappies. Yet their bodies and actions seem to be more those of older children, and the expressions on their faces are like those of contentious, sneering adults. What is this power struggle all about?

Smither has transposed the scene to New Plymouth, with three chemical storage tanks and a smoking chimney in the background. The conflict can be about a threat to the environment. In the 1970s concern was being raised by such books as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Smither remarks that the chemical company in New Plymouth which his father worked for, forbade their employees from reading Carson's book!

We may, in the 21st Century, see here a renewal of the military power struggle in the North Korean government's assertion of the right to test nuclear weapons. Or, to come closer home, we may see the fighting boys as feuding politicians in Parliament. This picture of ordinary life turns out to be not only colourful but also a stimulus to think critically about what is happening to our country and to our world.

How do you see it?

Albert Moore

No pedestals

The famous equestrian statue in Venice of the mercenary soldier, Bartolomeo Colleoni, by Verrocchio – a symbol of arrogant power (right) detail of face

In one of Venice's many broad piazzas, resplendent high on a tall pillar is one of the world's most famous sculptures. It is the equestrian statue of the famous mercenary warrior, Bartolomeo Colleoni, sculpted by Verrocchio. Tourists and students of art flock to Venice from all over the world, and few would miss spending time admiring this magnificent work of art.

But not the Venetians. They scurry by paying it as much attention as a passing lamppost. The Venetians were the great republicans of the Renaissance. They elected their ruler, the Doge, who was allowed to live like lord for a few years before returning to the ranks. Little wonder they remain unimpressed by the haughty demeanour of this paid thug.

I was reminded of this famous Venetian monument when a dear friend died recently. Peter had been truly a 'pillar' of our parish. When the priest who was to conduct his funeral visited him a few days before his death, he gave strict instructions regarding the eulogy. "No pedestals!", he said.

No one would ever have described Peter as a blushing violet. He had been a salesman in his working life. His retirement was spent using those same talents 'to the glory of God'. His gift was to invite, to inspire, even to insist – but never to bully or browbeat. He encouraged by love, not fear.

There are strong characters who make an impact on the world by making people fear them. Teachers, bosses, politicians, even priests can fall into this trap. Jesus taught – and lived – another way. He told his disciples that they were not to 'lord it' over each other. They loved him for it, and judging by the stupid things they occasionally said or did it is difficult to imagine that any of them feared him.

The noblest human achievements, I suspect, are those which have remained anonymous. The greatest saints have been unsung. For which reason we seek no pedestals for *Tui Motu*.

M.H.

Colouring The City

Sun breaks through the clouds
Igniting the rain-drenched road.
The world looks new
Washed and gleaning
Glistening as the fairies dance.

Pink is a powerful colour
Favoured of the young princess
Pirouetting in the privacy of her room.
Yet it is largely absent from the tie racks
of downtown business.

Colour is political in the city
Blue and red compete for allegiance
Green is a brand without a billboard.
Brown, bent, and cold are
the colours of poverty.

The fairies dance up the road
Dodging the traffic, slurs, and unbelievers.
Only little children hold their breath as
imagination confronts the colours
offering an inkling of hope.

The hope of the city is found in the contrasts
– of ideology, beliefs, people, and colour.

G.C.

Rogan McIndoe colour ad

Nau mai Haere mai Welcome

THE SISTERS OF MERCY

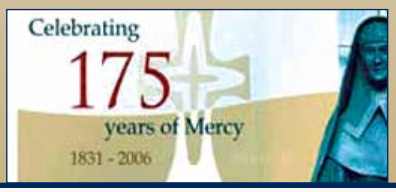
invite you
to the inaugural

Catherine McAuley Lecture

'Mercy in Word and Deed'

by Dr Alice Sinnott rsm

Hamilton: 30 November 2pm
Assisi Home and Hospital
Dunedin: 3 December 2.30pm
Holy Cross Centre, Mosgiel
Timaru: 5 December 7pm
Sacred Heart Parish Centre
Christchurch: 6 December 7.30pm
Bishopdale Parish Centre
Wellington: 9 December 2.30pm
Mercy Centre, Thorndon
Auckland: 10 December 4pm
St Mary's Convent, Ponsonby



Work for a world free from poverty and injustice...

become a

One World Partner

As a regular donor with our One World Partnership you will be supporting whole communities – not just individuals – in their struggle against poverty and its causes.

A regular monthly contribution of twenty dollars or more is all it takes.

For more information contact Caritas on 0800 22 10 22 or visit www.caritas.org.nz

oneworld partnership

Caritas
Aotearoa New Zealand
The Catholic Agency for Justice, Peace and Development

Caritas Aotearoa congratulates Tui Motu on their fabulous Jubilee achievement