

Tui Motu

InterIslands

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the planet under threat

- *environmental disaster*
- *the menace of war*
- *te waipuna puawai*
— *wellspring of hope*

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Cover picture: Religious sisters involved in rescue operations during recent catastrophic floods in Central Europe. More frequent floods and droughts are symptoms of global warming, one of many environmental disasters highlighted by Sean McDonagh SSC (see pp.12-19)
photo: agence france presse

Fouling the nest

The threat of war in Iraq hovers over us as a result of the bellicose postures of President Bush. A “pre-emptive strike” by one state against another, without warning or ultimatum, was outlawed in Europe following the ending, in 1648, of the terrible *Thirty Years War*. Only Hitler and Stalin in recent centuries have stooped to that degree of savagery. Until George Bush.

So far our government has remained steadfast in its loyalty to the United Nations as arbiter of Iraq's fate. To its credit. It was good to see how swiftly the New Zealand Churches brought out a statement of absolute condemnation. (*see page 4*)

The clouds of war are serving to obscure from public gaze an equivalent threat. Environmental issues – global warming, the destruction of species, pollution, over-consumption of energy and raw materials, Genetic Engineering – combine to produce a menace of apocalyptic proportions. The report of a recent visit by environmentalist Sean McDonagh and accompanying articles need to be carefully read and pondered (*pages 12-19*).

Good news to the poor

If you turn on the radio chatshows, how often you hear a catalogue of woes principally directed at alleged perpetrators of violence or injustice. If you open the morning paper, how often the news stories are dominated by the latest violence in home or street or the latest sexual scandal in the church. Do you ever long for a bit of good news? Is the world really as bad as our media pundits paint it?

Well, we can all rejoice at four good news stories published in this and recent issues of *Tui Motu*. The latest, from Auckland, is a wonderful initiative by the Sisters of Mercy in an area of the city where there are many poor, immigrant

McDonagh describes a moment in 2000 when the BBC screened a programme by naturalist David Attenborough cataloguing the current wanton destruction of animals and plants. By 2050, half the species on earth could be lost. McDonagh expected this bombshell to be echoed on every newspaper front page the following day and to be preached about in every pulpit. Not a bit. The programme produced scarcely a ripple of interest.

This degree of apathy is illustrated in our own country by the recent election when people voted for the rabid racism of Winston Peters and the soft soap of Peter Dunn ahead of the impassioned advocacy of environmental concerns by the Green Party.

Pope John Paul has declared that humankind is “humiliating the flower garden of the universe... and is no longer the Creator's steward but an auto-nomous despot”: strong words but perfectly fitting the crisis we have on our hands. We wait for our churches to pursue these issues with the same energy shown in condemning US war fever.

families. Our correspondent describes the venture as a means “to empower the most vulnerable members of the community, giving them confidence, boosting their parenting and partnering skills and equipping them for the job market”.

Often these schemes arise as a result of the initiative of a single, visionary person. Invariably they involve a lot of voluntary labour. Usually the beneficiaries are people who fall through the public net, although the state or local authority may often provide funding. We could do with more of these tales of encouragement. And *Tui Motu* is delighted to print them. *M.H.*

The Folly of the Cross

On October 7 2001, the US launched a war against Afghanistan in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11. Despite the availability of alternatives to military action under international law, the New Zealand government, in the hope of finalizing a free trade agreement with the US, contributed SAS troops. It remains the responsibility of the church not to allow our shock, horror and grief to be cynically manipulated to pursue an agenda of racism, hatred and violence; and to ensure Christians follow the example of the life of Christ, who chose to suffer rather than kill.

It remains the responsibility of our church to awaken us from our collective amnesia and remind us that al-Qaeda was armed and financed by the CIA via the Pakistani military when it served US global interests in ousting the Soviets from Afghanistan.

It remains the responsibility of our church to cry *Thou shall not kill* after 11 months of constant aerial bombardment that has further exacerbated the Afghan humanitarian crisis. Over 3000 civilians have been killed; villages, Red Cross buildings and wedding parties bombed. There is no end in sight to a military occupation of Afghanistan that has terrorised children, women and men.

The latest instalment of the 'war against terror' is the planning and preparation for a second war against Iraq. Our

church must not succumb to another bout of amnesia. Instead we should be reminded that Saddam Hussein came to power via a military coup supported by the US, his poisonous gases and deadly arms happily supplied by the West when he pursued an agenda favorable to Western interests.

When Saddam was perceived a threat to US oil interests, the 1991 Gulf War subjected Iraq to the most concentrated bombing campaign in history. The Pentagon conducted 110,000 aerial sorties, dropping 88,500 tons of bombs. The war resulted in 67,000 Iraqi deaths as well as grave damage to Iraq's infrastructure with losses estimated at \$170 billion. Deliberate bombing of water treatment facilities during the Gulf War degraded water quality leading to the outbreak of diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

Sanctions-based 'holds' have blocked the rebuilding of much of Iraq's water treatment infrastructure. Additionally, sanctions have blocked the rebuilding of the electricity sector that powers pumps and other vital water treatment equipment. This has resulted in 800,000 Iraqi children becoming 'chronically malnourished.' Even with conservative assumptions, the total of all excess deaths of the under five population exceeds 400,000. Combined with the deaths of older children and adults, this adds up to a great and unjustifiable humanitarian tragedy.

Since the Gulf War, further military operations have been launched against Iraq, by aircraft and cruise missiles, at a rate of one strike per week. Some of these attacks targeted sites in Baghdad or other populated areas and resulted in civilian casualties. The US and UK are once again engaged in cynically manipulating us to justify another war against the 'least of our brothers and sisters'.

As a church we profess much in the way of peace, justice and mercy. But how do we witness to the redemption it promises? Members of our parish recently went on retreat for a day together to discuss what underlies the 'war on terrorism', our own complicity by way of our silence, and the subsequent despair we feel. Our reflections reveal we continue to be under the obligation to be faithful to the teachings of the non-violent Christ.

We discover we learn compassion and justice by what we do 'for the least of our brothers and sisters'. We pray to be led by the Gospel and teachings of our church when responding to crises, and to be wary of agendas in contradiction to our faith. We want to take our faith to the public domain and speak against the planning and preparation for war. By doing so, we reaffirm our belief in the ultimate victory of good over evil, of love over hatred. It is a path not accepted by the world. As Dorothy Day said: "We are trying to spread the Gospel of Peace – in doing this we are accounted fools. It is the Folly of the Cross in the eyes of an unbelieving world."

Moana Cole



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

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A reconciling church

I read with interest Susan Smith's article *Mission Today* (*Tui Motu* September).

An issue that concerns me is how we as the Catholic church can reach out to those in second marriages who feel alienated/estranged from the church. Many become bitter, and that feeling can carry through to their children and others they associate with. This is an opportunity to reach out – is it mission? I include ex-religious in this disaffected group.

The question I ask is: "What would Jesus do?". The answer, I believe, is compassion; to the adulteress, Jesus said: "You are forgiven; go and sin no more". What is this compassion in our day? I hope there would be room for reconciliation in genuine cases.

I am also of the view that it would be difficult to unravel second marriages, as there would be further hurts for children, and bitterness would compound. By comparison, a murderer can be reconciled and receive Eucharist. My question is: "how can we reach out in mission to many in this group who would welcome a way back into our congregations?"

Bill Jorgensen, *Papakowhai, Porirua*

The wisdom of Dr Dominian

I believe *Tui Motu* is a good vehicle for discussing issues that are relevant to senior school students.

I have been using the article by Dr Jack Dominian: *Do I need to go to bed to show I love him?* It has provoked enormous discussion. We need more of this type of insight.

Simon Roughton, *Wellington*

letters



injustice might prove difficult without risking public scandal, attention to the latter problem is well within the rights of our New Zealand bishops.

Likewise, it is within their province constantly to harass the Congregation of Worship with regard to the appalling insistence in our public worship that God is male. How Catholic women have stood for this colossal insult to their existence as equal members of the human race is beyond imagination.

Desmond Smith, *Auckland*

Praying the Kaddish

Why does Kathleen Doherty (*Tui Motu* August) presume that author Michael King is unaware that the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the dead, is to be recited by ten Jewish men? When my part-Jewish husband died, I said the Kaddish for him. I didn't have ten Jewish men available, so I got my children, a five-year-old grandson and one of my husband's friends to recite it with me.

I'm sure that in both Michael King's case and mine the Almighty didn't mind at all.

Marina Pavlovsky, *Wellington*

Church abuse and power

The open letter to the Catholic bishops by Dr Anna Holmes (*Tui Motu* August) is surely deserving of comment and support. Authority has often been confused with infallibility in our beloved church. So much so that it is almost looked upon as heresy for one to disagree publicly with pronouncements or decisions.

Dr Holmes notes with disdain the failure of Roman Congregations to listen to the bishops in particular areas and also the practice of local bishops in appointing pastors to individual parishes without any consultation with members of those parishes. While correction of the former

Church Leaders condemn war against Iraq

We Church Leaders meeting in Wellington on 10 September wish to share our deep anxiety over the US threat of war against Iraq.

We state unequivocally: **Pre-emptive war is not a just war.** The problem of terrorism cannot be used to justify an attack on Iraq... the arrest and trial of terrorist agents in properly appointed courts of justice is justified; a pre-emptive military campaign against a sovereign state is not.

Christian reflection on the justice of going to war allows nation states the right of lawful self-defence once all peace efforts have failed, and there is no international authority with the necessary competence and power to maintain international peace and security. None of these conditions are met in the present case.

- First, pre-emptive war by one state against another is always immoral. It is also illegal under the June 1945 United Nations' Charter.
- Second, initiating a war before all peace efforts have

failed is immoral.

- Third, by-passing the appropriate international authority which does exist, the United Nations Security Council, is immoral.
- Lastly, war on Iraq will result in numerous deaths of innocent civilians... the condition for a just war is that the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The indiscriminate destruction inevitably brought about by modern means of warfare must weigh very heavily in evaluating this condition.

Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Jesus Christ. He offers all people reconciliation with God and with one another. He is the Prince of Peace who declared that the peacemakers are blessed.

We believe that an attack on Iraq would be immoral, unjust and illegal. The present course – wars and threats of war – is leading to human disaster even greater than that endured on September 11.

Signed by representatives of the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist,

Another September 11

Des Casey recalls Chile's Day of Horror, 11 September 1971.

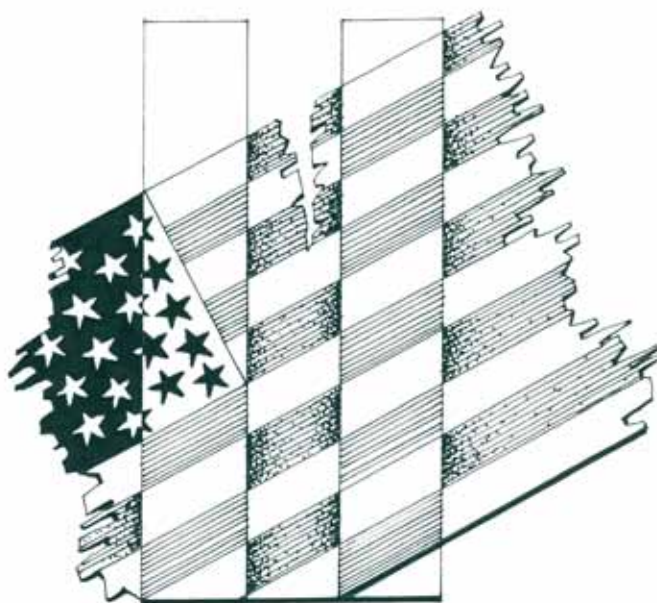
He was in Santiago for the overthrow and murder of President Salvador Allende.

The irony is – in 1971 the Americans were the terrorists

As the news bulletins came through and graphic pictures of planes smashing into the Twin Towers were repeated again and again, I stood fixed to my television screen. Later that morning – September 11, 2001 – discussion abounded as to who was behind these horrendous actions. I was very clear. For almost 30 years September 11 had never come and gone without my thinking of Chile. Those behind the Twin Towers and Pentagon attacks *had* to be a Latin American group or organisation, disaffected by US participation in their countries' poverty, debt and compromised governments. September 11 was the ideal moment.

I was wrong, though the timing intrigued me. So too did the non-appearance over the following days of any reference in news or commentary to what happened on that other September 11, in 1973 – Chile's own day of horror. Was it simply that 28 years was too long to remember? Or was it too difficult right then to be reminded that many of the planning and operational activities at the Twin Towers and Pentagon were too similar to the operations the US had indulged in to help bring down Chile's democratically elected government.

Soon after the election of Salvador Allende's Popular Unity party in 1970, US government and business began working alongside opposition elements within Chile to topple his government.



The role of Henry Kissinger, then Secretary of State, is well documented. His was the responsibility to authorise plans to destabilise Chile's economy and government, and to begin working closely with sectors of the Chilean armed forces. Part of the plan was to exploit Chile's economic dependency

*the Presidential
Palace became Chile's
Twin Towers – Allende's
body was never found*

and sabotage Allende's efforts to regain control as he set about nationalising its internal sources of wealth, especially copper mining. The wealth from such resources had for a long time disappeared into the coffers of overseas multinationals. A military junta, led by General Pinochet, would serve these interests better than democracy under Allende was doing.

Into the fray stepped US multinationals such as International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT) and the mining giants Kennecott and Anaconda. With them the US Government set about encouraging the overthrow of the legitimate government of Chile, the country in Latin America with the strongest democratic history. It was a democracy with policies the United States did not like. Santiago's *Moneda*, the Presidential Palace, became Chile's "Twin Towers"; Allende's body was never found.

Allende had started a policy of nationalisation, which he saw as the only way for Chile to develop. In an opening address to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in April 1972, he pointed out that copper mining companies had made a net initial investment of \$30 million in Chile, and in 40 years had withdrawn \$4,000 million without any further investment. Anaconda, for example, had placed 19 percent of its investment, yet obtained 79 per cent of its profits world wide from Chile. Eighty per cent of Chile's wealth depended on copper. Clearly, in the eyes of the United States, the copper did not belong to Chile.

The extent of US involvement was surfacing a few weeks later while I was in Santiago. Stories abounded of Henry Kissinger flying into Santiago for meetings with coup d'état planners.



▷▷ Chilean military were being trained by US military in the Panama Canal Zone during the months leading up to the coup. Worst of all were the stories of torture, brutality and death that I learned from people on the run, hiding from imprisonment, torture and death.

The soccer stadium in Santiago was used daily, and screams of pain and terror echoed from the stadium every night. It was said that Hercules planes regularly flew out into the Pacific to drop their live cargo of human beings into the sea. The carnage and cruelty were unimaginable. The West was reluctant to hear of what was taking place, but gradually the voices won through – friends and associates of Pablo Neruda, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Joan Jara, wife of Chile's legendary singer, Victor Jara, was tortured and murdered in the stadium; Sheila Cassidy, an English nurse, and Isobel Allende, the President's daughter were

taken. In time the enormity of this attack on democracy reached the international media. I found myself arrested and given 24 hours to prove I was either a British or American citizen – something I was unable to do! Foreigners as well as residents were disappearing at will.

In September last year it was Osama bin Laden and the al Qaeda network deciding who was to live and who was to die. In 1973 Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon participated in the same kind of decisions for Chileans. Bin Laden is still at large – and so is Henry Kissinger. America now has two reasons to commemorate September 11 – one as victim and one as co-perpetrator. Both events equally were gross acts of terrorism.

Last September 11 it was under-standable that Americans did not want to look back. But this year, to remember one event and to mourn its casualties while excluding the other, is to continue the

callous and cynical selection process about what grief is due and what is not, whose lives have value and whose do not, whose cause is right and whose is not.

September 11 and Salvador Allende are stains on the conscience of America. ■

Des Casey is a Counsellor and Family Therapist, in Auckland

In Memory of ...

*When I see, in my mind's eye,
that Boeing entering the side
of the World Trade Centre,
I think of the spear piercing the
side of Jesus, draining away
the last drop of His life's blood.*

*When I see, in my mind's eye,
that great edifice crumbling and
the people fleeing in fear,
I see the apostles fleeing
the scene which would
impact upon their lives
for all time to come.*

*When I see, in my mind's eye,
the tear-stained face of the woman
whose husband spoke briefly
in fond farewell, her baby not yet born,
I hear the Magdalene's cry,
'They have taken away my Lord
and I know not where they have laid Him.'*

*When I see, in my mind's eye,
the hijacker who wrote in his will,
'Wear gloves to touch my body,' and,
'No women at my funeral,' only
to take them with him to his funeral
pyre,
I hear Jesus say,
'Woman where are they who
condemned you?'*

*When I see, in my mind's eye,
the gnarled hand of the woman
from Afghanistan, on the palm of which
lay Bread that was broken,
given by a stranger to feed her
and her five that day,
I wonder. Wonder.*

June Macmillan

Another Voice of America

*Where was God on September the Eleventh?
He was begging in old clothes in the subway
beneath the World Trade Centre.
He was homeless in Gaza,
imprisoned in Afghanistan, running the
gauntlet to her school in the Ardoyne.
Starving in Somalia,
dying of AIDS in an Angolan slum, suffering
everywhere in this fast-shrinking world:
and boarding a plane unwittingly in Boston,
heading for an appointment on the 100th floor.*

*Now we know the kind of story that it really is,
– united by this common enemy,
sin's terrorism, that we never dreamed could
bring such devastation. This is war.
We line our weapons up:
faith, hope, obedience, prayer, forgiveness, mercy,
the explosive power of love.*

Written by American poet and musician Godfrey Rust and quoted by Bishop Richard Randerson at a Mass of remembrance in the St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland, on 11 September.



There is another way!

*Writing from Chicago, Kevin Toomey OP
(pictured left) offers a Kiwi perspective on how some
Americans have been remembering September 11*

On September 2, I spent the best part of a rainy, grey day in New York with four Dominicans, two priests and two sisters. They had just begun an open-ended fast for peace and non-violence under the banner: *There must be another way*. They set up their colourful banner near one of the many exits from the subway on Union Square, just a kilometre away from Ground Zero in Lower Manhattan.

That morning a priest visitor made a special trip from New Jersey to thank them: "It's time the church made a reasoned stand for peace." He was reacting, of course, to statements about pre-emptive strikes on Iraq. The monsignor's strong words surprised me into thought. I would like to share three thoughts.

Reflection No.1: Imagine a ten-day diet of corned beef and cabbage. Even with the best hot mustard and mashed potatoes, this old favourite would become completely inedible after a few days. I would be longing for a bowl of thick vegetable soup.

In early January, I realized I needed a new news diet. After days of syndicated radio newscasts from the local classical station focused only on Afghanistan, terrorism at home and abroad, home security, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it hit me like a thunderbolt that I was being not so subtly indoctrinated. How I longed for a good dose of the BBC or Radio New Zealand!

I had become aware of the Bush propaganda juggernaut to win the minds and hearts of the American people. And, like fish in the sea unaware they

are swimming in water, the American people largely are oblivious to this. An American friend with whom I shared this, scoffed at the idea. But a few days later, she returned to say: "You may well be right!"

No wonder that the favourite word on talk-back shows, 'patriot', has taken on a new meaning – a person willing to enforce the American way by any means necessary. Anyone questioning that is un-American and disloyal. Where have I heard that idea before?

Reflection No.2: During this northern summer I helped out at St Agnes Cathedral parish on Long Island, a dormitory of greater New York. Fifty-four victims of the WTC were buried from the Cathedral. That sorrow continues to be palpable. Bernie O'Brien, the daily server at the 6.30 am Eucharist, lost a son and a son-in-law. When I sympathized with him he replied, "Yes, Father, it's tough, but you've got to get on with it." Sure, life continues, but Bernie's love and grief shone in his eyes.

Addressing a rally of those attending a first anniversary 9/11 vigil at the United Nations Building Plaza, Timothy Radcliffe, former Master-General of the Dominicans, used this story:

A native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt about the tragedy on September 11. He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is vengeful, angry, violent. The other wolf is loving, forgiving, compassionate." The grandson asked him, "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?" The grandfather answered, "The one I feed."

My hope is that voices of forgiveness

will emerge strong enough to strip from American hearts that desire for revenge never very far from the human breast.

Final reflection: The Peace Corps was a strong plank of J.F.Kennedy's presidency. For all its faults it worked, giving that generation of young Americans a way of sharing the JFK dream. President Bush noticed among American people after September 11 a "gathering momentum of millions of acts of decency and kindness" that showed themselves in an upsurge of solidarity among people, increased racial and religious tolerance and a general public spiritedness. He at once began to capture this spirit in an initiative called 'the USA Freedom Corps.'

Mr. Bush's priorities, however, lay elsewhere. This potent idea has died to a whimper. Yet such a whole-hearted challenge to the idealism of American youth could create a new sense of purpose in national life: to look outside oneself and encourage pro-programmes of sustainable self-help in countries where poverty and despair continue to breed terrorism.

Put simply, these reflections are about renewed faith, compassionate forgiveness and practical love. This nation is avowedly Christian, and hard as it may be, they need to think of ways of seeking collective forgiveness for deeds that may have prepared the way for September 11. There *is* another way – the way of compassionate, practical love. Other-wise, this UN-proclaimed *Decade of Non-violence* may turn into one of unwanted war and carnage. ■

*Kevin Toomey was University chaplain and parish priest in NZ before serving for eight years on the Dominican Curia in Rome.
See also [HYPERLINK](http://www.dominicanfastforpeace.org)
<http://www.dominicanfastforpeace.org>*

Te Waipuna Puawai

Wellspring of hope

*This is the fourth of a series of stories of hope
and new life brought from roundabout New Zealand cities.*

Jackie Brown-Haysom visits a wonderful project in Auckland's Eastern suburbs

Statistics paint a grim picture of life in the Auckland suburb of Glen Innes. Money is short, housing and community facilities substandard, educational levels generally low and many families so beset by social and economic problems they seem to have little chance of dragging themselves out of the poverty cycle.

But in a sunny, freesia-scented backyard among the state houses is a scene that tells a different story. Half a dozen Maori and Pacific Island women sit in the sunshine, talking, while their children scramble over play equipment. There is a sense of belonging, a sense of community and, most importantly, a strong sense of optimism.

These women are some of the dozens to whom *Te Waipuna Puawai* Mercy Oasis has become a second home – a place where they can pop in for a welcome loaf of fresh bread to ease the strain on the family budget, where there is always someone ready to lend a listening ear or a helping hand when it's needed, and where women who have never before had the opportunity, can take their first faltering steps on a journey of personal development.

The Mercy Sisters came to Glen Innes in 1990, at the invitation of Maori community workers. At first they operated a small emergency house, under the leadership of Sr Agnes Browne. From the outset the refuge provided more than a safe place to stay. Its residents received help, not only with language difficulties and the potential minefield of benefit applications, but also with personal growth, to help them make sense of the things that had happened to them, and move on to better situations.

The project worked well, but in the mid 1990s, the Sisters decided it was time for review. "We thought maybe there were other unmet needs in the community that we could be fulfilling," says *Te Waipuna Puawai* co-ordinator, Sr Cheryl Connelly. That was the beginning of a four-year consultation process, in which the Sisters worked closely

with local residents and other community agencies to determine Glen Innes' real needs. "At the end of that very long conversation we identified the greatest need as education – to offer personal and professional opportunities for women on low incomes."

It was a way to empower the most vulnerable members of the community, giving them confidence, boosting their parenting and partnering skills and equipping them for the job market. But to succeed it needed teachers with specialised skills and experience.

The Sisters went to Unitec's School of Community Studies, proposing a partnership.

If Unitec tutors would come to Glen Innes to teach their Certificate in Community Skills, the Sisters would recruit and enrol students, provide a suitable venue and make sure funds were available to pay course fees.

Gravin Rennie, head of Community Studies, says his department was keen to be involved. Similar off-campus projects had already taken place in out-lying parts of the Auckland region, and this time the involvement of a strong community group made the proposal even more attractive. It was agreed that the first course would begin in term one of 1999. With Sr Agnes due for sabbatical leave, Sr Cheryl and Sr Marie Brown were appointed to oversee the new venture.

Their first challenge was to find students. Sr Marie began the arduous task of knocking on doors, inviting everyone in the area to come along – if not to the Unitec course, at least to the less formal craft and cooking programmes being offered by the Sisters. These home visits were an eye-opener, confirming both the need for education and the difficulties of convincing women they were equal to the challenge.

"Many of them had left school at around 11 or 12 years of age, without any secondary education," Sr Cheryl says.



“These were women who had lived on the streets or been involved with drugs, but now had families of their own and were wanting to offer their children a different way of being.”

They were looking for ways to change, but lacked confidence to take the first step. The Sisters promised to meet them halfway, providing childcare and transport for those who needed it, and vowing that no one who wanted to take part in the courses would miss out because they couldn’t afford the fees. “Sr Marie has a way of encouraging so that people believe they can do it and will be supported, and people responded to her,” Sr Cheryl says.

The women who came to *Te Waipuna Puawai* found they were able to move forward at their own pace. The small groups run by the Sisters provided instruction in basic skills, in a nurturing environment. The women learned to trust, saw their children were happy in the creche and found, to their surprise, that their classmates had as many doubts and fears as they did. As they grew closer to the others in their groups they gained confidence to move on, accepting new challenges together. By the start of the first Unitec course – an eight-week module in self-awareness, 13 women were enrolled.

“Numbers were quite low that first year. We ran only one Unitec course each term, but as the women found their feet in the initial groups they became incredibly motivated and excited, realising that this learning was available to them in their own community, and they could manage it.”

Since then the project has taken wing. Hundreds have come along to the Sisters’ courses, with 120 of them going on to enrol with Unitec, notching up some 500 modules between them. Over the last two years there have been nine courses a year, with an average of 20 people in each one. In May a moving ceremony at the local Ruapotaka community marae saw the first seven graduates awarded their Community Skills Certificates, after completing 13 modules over two to



Te Waipuna Puawai Team

Top: Marie Brown rsm, Cheryl Connelly rsm, Serena Tagoai.

Below: Janet Diamond, Ashleigh Toetu'u, Agnes Browne rsm. three years. Another dozen are expected to complete their certificates by the end of this year, and some are making plans to go on into degree courses in 2003.

“I think one of the things that has made it work so well is that we do all the enrolling,” Sr Cheryl says. “It gives us an opportunity to work with the people and find out what fears and blocks and anxieties they have, so we help them find solutions right from the start.”

For many new recruits, the first step is a four-week personal growth course, led by Sr Agnes. With only six people to a group, participants are able to talk about their lives and backgrounds in a safe environment. As the course works through topics such as making choices, setting goals and managing stress, other issues often emerge, drawing group members into the close bonds that result from shared vulnerability. Professional counselling and healing therapies, the latter also provided by Sr Agnes, help through the bad patches, giving the women strength to progress.

And the one-to-one support does not stop once Unitec courses get underway. If anyone is missing from a session without explanation, Sr Marie pays a visit. “She might find a mother at home with sick kids, or no food, or no dry clothes. She can step in straight away and say: ‘What can we do to get your children to school and you to class?’ It works, and the tutors are so understanding, but if these courses were held on campus, no one would know if someone didn’t turn up, and they would probably drop out because they would be too ashamed to tell anyone they were having problems.”



From left: Elizapeta Maka, Trudy Cook, Ray Komene and Sr Bridget Crisp, all of whom completed their certificate of community skills this year.



▷▷ The people who have been drawn into *Te Waipuna Puawai*'s vision have become crucial to the project's success. These days the Sisters work alongside a trained counsellor and a community worker. Each week 25 volunteers, many of them also students, help with childcare, cleaning, driving, tutoring and a host of other essential chores. One elderly Burmese woman travels across Auckland each week to work with Burmese refugees in the sewing classes.

The Unitec tutors, too, add an extra dimension to the programme. "Our tutors are hand-picked. Not everyone would be comfortable working out in the community like this, but the ones we've got are terrific. The women love them."

The tutor who led the first *Te Waipuna Puawai* course, Gillian Bowie, is still an enthusiastic participant in the project, taking one module each term. She describes her involvement as 'pure pleasure'.

"It's a huge privilege to see these women, many of whom are entering education for the first time since they were 12 or 13, being transformed," she says. "The Sisters assess their readiness for the programme with quite a degree of acuity, so when they come to me they are just raring to go. It's amazing to watch them go from strength to strength. The biggest challenge for me is to keep up with them."

The days of knocking on doors to try to fill classes are long gone. There are pamphlets in the local WINZ offices, but word of mouth has proved a

better means of advertising. These days, Sr Cheryl says, new referrals average 15 a month and courses are often over-subscribed. "We try to let everyone come, but there are ceilings on the numbers. Often we'll sneak in a few extra because sometimes people are just so ready to learn, and if we miss the window of opportunity, we may lose them forever."

True to its Mercy tradition, *Te Waipuna Puawai* remains in dialogue with its community, particularly local iwi, to identify and fill emerging needs. A new addition to the programme this year is a marae-based programme in Tikanga and Te Reo – Maori customs, protocol and language. Students attend the course in whanau groups, with their children and partners. By term two there were 53 people in 11 whanau on the roll, and Sr Cheryl says several women are now confident enough to lead the karanga at community events.

Community consultation has also been a vital part of plans to replace the present tiny premises with a purpose-built centre. The need, Sr Cheryl says, is pressing. At the moment the former women's refuge serves as the administrative hub, creche, counselling centre and hosts a few small courses. Other courses rely on the availability of various halls and meeting rooms. This term the well-attended craft classes have been forced into recess because the school hall where they are held is undergoing refurbishment.

"A crucial factor in the choice of our new site has been the involvement of Glen Innes residents and community workers," Sr Cheryl says. "They stated a preference for a centre that was within easy reach of home, but physically removed from the day-to-day problems and crises." The ideal site was available, on land adjoining the Mercy Parklands age care facility in Ellerslie. It has already been gifted to *Te Waipuna Puawai* and plans are under way for a multi-purpose facility, making the most of the park-like surroundings.

"There is a lot of fundraising to be done, but we are working towards that day when we can provide a real oasis of peace and beauty for everyone who needs it." ■

CENACLE MINI SABBATICAL

Thursday 6th MARCH – Tuesday 15th APRIL 2003

In Mark 6:30 Jesus said: *"Come away to some quiet place all by yourselves and rest for awhile".*

A Sabbatical gives time set apart –

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

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

For further information:

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

The mosaic disc is in the garden at *Te Waipuna*. It was made by Tristan and other women from the centre, using ceramics and paua etc.





Tristan's story

family that it took a toll.”

The marriage didn't last, and by 1999 Tristan and her five children were in Glen Innes, struggling to live off a benefit. “I was a stereotype, a DPB mum, stuck in a monotonous routine, day and night, and feeling imprisoned by my own four walls.”

When Sr Marie Brown came to the door, inviting Tristan to *Te Waipuna Puawai*, it was, she says, like a karanga. “It was the same spiritual feeling, welcoming, drawing you in, opening up a connection to your tipuna – something that stirred your spirit, but not something to be afraid of.”

Intrigued, Tristan put her name down for some classes, and found herself at the beginning of an amazing journey. “The Sisters could see my rawness and acknowledge it, without trying to pretty it up. I just opened up like a bud, because I found that it was okay to shed my skin and reveal my vulnerability, without putting on a facade.”

The decision to enrol for her first Unitec module – a self-awareness course – in late 1999, was “the beginning of my branching out. For me, this course has been like a whirlpool – a lot of stuff has

re-surfaced, including the Maoritanga I learned from my grandmother.”

With her 13 module Certificate of Community Skills now complete, Tristan's passion for learning and self discovery remains unabated. “Psychology is an area I love. The counsellor at *Te Waipuna Puawai*, Jan Diamond, has been feeding me a lot of information, and the Sisters at St Mary's College, where I have a part time cleaning job, gave me some old books. It's just awesome the way it's all starting to connect.”

Next step will be a Unitec BA in social practice. Tristan had hoped to enrol for fulltime study next year, but the cost of replacing her ageing and unreliable car has meant this is no longer an option. Instead she is planning to do part-time papers that will allow her to keep up her cleaning job. “If I study two days a week it will take me six years to finish, but at the moment I'm just focused on November 14th, when the applications have to be in. Just having an application form for a BA in your bag is something really special.”

For Tristan, a lot of things are starting to bloom.

Te Waipuna Puawai Mercy Oasis

I came to you with great unease in my heart.

*I came to you wearing many masks upon my face.
I appeared with a smile, BUT HID, a darkness, a rawness, a vulnerable side from you.*

As I continued to visit you, I felt an overwhelming sense of strangeness, a curiosity, an awareness begin to grow from within.

Who are you? – that I can feel a sense of touch beneath my outer skin.

You have heard my cry, acknowledged my voice, empowered my mind, enriched my soul, nurtured my heart and embraced my spirit.

Breathed through me, and brought forth my inner beauty, wisdom, strength, mana, wairua, my courage in recognising my unique qualities as a special precious individual, as a mother, a daughter, a child that is a part of God's creation.

To our Heavenly father, my Whanau and I are forever indebted to you.

You invited and welcomed us into a safe, warm, loving, spiritual atmosphere.

As I grew to know you, I felt all my flaws, and unspoken secrets begin to unravel before me, leaving a bud that now begins to bloom and blossom.

I now allow myself to breathe deeply, filling my world with an abundance of joy.

In connecting with the loving spirit, I'm learning to nurture, comfort, pamper my children with the wonderful energy and presence that uplifts and inspires us

Who are You? You are my friend, that I have entrusted my heart and soul to, a friend who chooses to walk alongside, to both comfort and guide me in my times of joy and sorrow.

You bring forth the aromas of flowers, the essence and colours in my world, to see my unique beauty, as part of your creation.

This poem was written by Tristan for the Sisters of Mercy's 150th jubilee. It was inspired, she says, by reflecting on the many people who have walked the pathway to Te Waipuna Puawai's front door. It was read at her graduation ceremony.



The Rape of the Earth

Sean McDonagh(left) is a Columban priest whose missionary experience in the Philippines made him an environmental crusader.

On holiday last month in the South Island, he threw out this challenge to the church to extend her Social Justice horizons

Recently, environmentalist Sean McDonagh asked a group of young Irish people if any of them had ever heard a skylark sing. None of them had. The 'lark ascending' (as celebrated in Vaughan Williams' music), the song of the lark which Sean recalled from his Irish boyhood, has now become merely a folk memory in his native Ireland. For him this is a graphic symbol of the mass destruction of species which humanity is systematically executing at this present time.

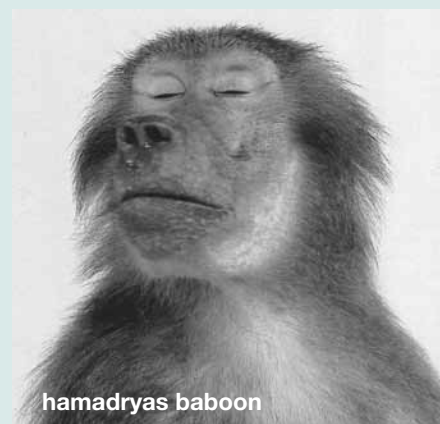
Sean McDonagh describes himself primarily as a *missionary* – not an ecologist or a theologian. He grew up near Nenagh in Co. Tipperary, in a world close to nature, an agricultural countryside along the Shannon river. He followed a vocation to the Columban Missionaries and received his priestly formation straight after Vatican II. It

The social teachings of the church were seen to be much more at the heart of Christian mission than ever before. But there was as yet no focus at all on Creation theology. Then, in 1964 New Zealand Columban Cyril Halley visited the seminary in Ireland and encouraged Sean constantly to ask the question *why?* He also inspired him to study anthropology, the human background to people and events.

Going to the Philippines as a missionary in 1969 initiated for Sean what he calls a "dialogue with life". It opened his eyes to the plight of indigenous peoples as well as of those Filipinos living in grinding poverty and injustice under the Marcos regime. Often in the afternoon he would spend time burying young children and babies dying from malnutrition. The local Catholic church had become the protector of the poor and the advocate of social justice. This attracted considerable persecution, with church people being gaoled and even killed.

After studying anthropology and linguistics in the United States, Sean went back again to the Philippines and began to focus closely on the lives of one indigenous tribe, the Tabali, observing how the destruction of the forests had a devastating effect on their lives. "If the forest is destroyed", Sean said to himself, "these people are gone... their livelihood, their culture, their poetry, their music, their pharmacology – their whole 'personality'." This experience with the Tabali gave him a passion for environmental concerns, seeing them as fundamental to a missionary's vocation.

The transnational logging companies had moved into the Philippines during the '50s: timber was needed for a growing economy and for export. The lowlands were being cleared to make



hamadryas baboon

rice paddies. This development was generally seen as a good thing – new roads, better education, more wealth. Until, as Sean discovered, you looked closer and saw the consequences. New hydro schemes and clear-felling were taking away the livelihood of indigenous people. Many of the people who were destroying the tropical rainforest would be at Mass on Sunday. For them it was simply a job.

Sean went back to the central house one evening and was chatting to an elderly Columban, Archbishop Cronin, who had been in the Philippines for years. Sean complained: "Why isn't the church doing something about it?" The Archbishop said to him, "You are part of the church. Why don't *you* do something about it?" That conversation launched him into a career of thinking, writing, education and environmental action.



all animals pictured, along with our own kiwi, are in danger of extinction

was a time when the barriers of the previous 400 years were coming down. Catholics were rediscovering Scripture; there was a new thrust for missionaries to work with those of other faiths.

He spent an “extraordinary” 14 years amongst the Tabali people helping them live better in harmony with their natural conditions. He came into a world devastated by logging and hydro schemes. The slash-and-burn regime of the loggers not merely destroyed the vegetation, it resulted in mass erosion of topsoil. After every flood the topsoil was simply bleeding off the mountains. Sean saw at first hand in the Philippines what is still happening in the Amazon basin – and worldwide.

Yet he conceived there a new vision – a local vision where the indigenous people could work together towards fashioning a better world, both socially and environmentally. Everything they did took into account the total earth community, promoting a sustainable way of life for the future. This new vision, says Sean, needs to be inclusive. It isn't sufficient to train people to be clerks for the logging companies: their mission must be to heal the natural world surrounding them. In general, tribal peoples live in harmony with their natural world. Often their agriculture has enhanced the world they live in.



asian small-clawed otter

Sean's personal crusade is to bring this vision into the heart of the Catholic Christian tradition. What, he asks, is at the heart of the Catholicism? It is Eucharist, which is itself a communion with God and the peoples of the world: “where we consume ‘fruit of the earth and the work of human hands’”. The Eucharist, says Sean, ritualises what the Johannesburg Conference is basically speaking about – how to enhance rather

than destroy our relationship with the rest of creation.

Catholics have always held the notion of grace building on nature, yet we have failed to produce an adequate sacramental theology to meet these urgent modern challenges. Catholic leaders have been wary of modern science since Galileo and Darwin, and feel happier issuing critiques of economics and sociology. The churches have often fallen short on environmental concerns.

As church, Sean maintains, we take options for the poor and we champion human rights. But we are equivocal when it comes to environmental issues – Genetic Engineering for instance. There is a moral imperative needed here: the churches should speak with a clear voice. A theology needs to be built “from the rocks up” – starting at the local level, but then speaking universally.

A new Theology of the Earth

1. Firstly, the environmental issue must never be divorced from justice and human rights. Over the last 30 years the gap between rich and poor across the world has tripled. This for a whole series of reasons, but primarily because neo-liberal economic policies deny to developing nations the sort of protection for nascent industries and production enjoyed by wealthy countries during their own time of expansion.

The current economic imperative keeps in place a millstone of debt round the necks of developing nations. These debts should be cancelled at once, otherwise dependency is simply being set in concrete for these Third World economies.

One side effect of rampant poverty in developing countries is the deaths of seven million children each year. We need to ask ourselves: are those lives less important than the three and a half thousand lives destroyed in the USA on September 11?

2. The crisis is urgent because its scale and speed is catastrophic. Thomas Berry calls these changes in the earth's predicament as “of a geological order of magnitude”:

- changing the composition of the atmosphere in a timescale that would in nature take 800 million years;
- causing the worldwide erosion of 80 billion tons of top soil;
- plundering the diversity of species, so that on a world scale half of all the world's species will have become extinct in the next 30 or 40 years. A good image



florida panther

is a piece of knitted fabric: if you pull out half the threads the whole fabric will fall apart. This organic diversity took three and a half billion years to develop. Its destruction will be the sixth and the most catastrophic major extinction of life in the earth's history – and we humans are presently causing it.

Pope John Paul stated in 2001: “Man is humiliating the flower garden of the universe (Dante, *Paradiso*)... and is no longer the Creator's steward but an autonomous despot, who is finally beginning to understand that we must stop at the edge of the abyss.” The mass destruction of species is an irreversible legacy we are leaving for future generations. The statistics are so appalling that people cannot take them in. Thomas Berry says that humanity is ‘autistic’ in its collective amnesia of a crisis looming so large before it.

3. The church has to develop an organic theology of the universe: celebrating the wonder of creation, reversing the literal biblical imperative to “subdue the world” (*Gen 1,26*); seeing destruction of the earth as grossly sinful; reversing both the dualism of our Greek heritage and the loss, due to Newtonian science,



Aotearoa, Covenant and the GE debate

The Biblical meaning of the Land

The Old Testament is a story of the gift of good land and the loss of that land. From the first the sacred writer saw it as a story of disharmony between men and women, between shepherd and farmer. Interwoven in this story was the battle of the people to find good soil and become rooted in it. At the heart of this growing understanding of land was the notion of covenant.

The covenants with Abraham (*Gen. 17.1-21*) and Moses (*Ex 31.12-17*) set out to restore harmony and balance in relationships between God, human beings and the earth, and among humans themselves and with all the other creatures of the land. Foundational is the cosmic covenant between God and Noah. Yahweh promised Noah never to obliterate life from the face of the earth again (*Gen. 9.12*). This pledge is also made “between me [Yahweh] and the earth.” (*9.13*)

An effect of this is that the Jews must see themselves more as tenants than owners: “The land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is mine, and you are but aliens who have become my tenants” (*Lev. 25.23*). Yahweh is not just a tribal deity attached to a certain plot of land: “All the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (*Ex 19.5-6*). The Jews are God’s instrument to bless other nations and to teach them his love, so ultimately bringing all peoples back to his word and worship (*Gen. 12.1-3, Is 42.1-4*).

Since this land belongs to God, the Jews have duties as

tenants. The first is that of gratitude: “... when you have eaten your fill, you must bless the Lord, your God, for the good country he has given you.” (*Dt. 8.10*) They have obligations to the animals, plants and people already living there. The law even prescribes the correct way to treat animals, e.g. “If, while walking along, you chance upon a bird’s nest with young birds or eggs in it and the mother bird is sitting on them, you shall not take away the mother bird along with her brood; you must let her go, although you may take her brood away. It is thus that you shall have prosperity and a long life” (*Dt. 22.6-7*).

Aotearoa/New Zealand : also a Treaty/Covenant Land

At the time of their principal settlement (possibly 12th-13th century) Maori found a land covered in dense forests. It abounded in birds, seals and seafood. Apart from a couple of native bats there were no mammals. Instead a staggering variety of birds flourished: swan, pigeon, falcon, rails, snipes, even the largest eagle ever identified (Haast’s giant eagle).

The migrants expected the same lush fertility as in the other Polynesian islands they had settled. At first it must have seemed like paradise. The flightless birds, like the 11 species of moa, had no enemies, apart from the occasional giant eagle. Remains of moa found in burial middens point to somewhere between 100,000-500,000 killed and eaten.

Maori occupation led to the annihilation of many species: the native swan, giant goshawk, coot, crow, rails, snipe,

▷▷ of an organic sense of the world. The natural world is not a machine; it’s an organism with a unified harmonious design, where every part is unique and not interchangeable.

As Christians we believe the world created by God is good. We believe that Jesus became part of our world, that the Incarnation gives a new meaning to nature. In the light of the cosmic Christ all nature is sacred and bears the stamp of God’s presence. The care of the earth and its creatures is strong in Christian tradition. And at the local level Celtic or Maori spirituality reinforce this sense of the sacredness of creation. All this needs to be articulated and taught. And it needs to be celebrated daily as part of

our liturgy: the world we are given, the trees, the mountains and the birds. This will help focus our prayer, our action and our witness.

4. Finally, if we look at the wealth of today’s world it appears like a wineglass – cup and stem. The top 20 percent of people, in the First World, enjoy 82 percent of the world’s income; the bottom 20 percent, in the Third World, receive only 1.4 percent (*1993 figures*). There is no way the natural world could support the bottom 20 percent being brought up to our level: the resources are simply not there. We, the top 20 percent, must start to live more simply. The science to achieve this is already available to us. We could live comfort-

ably on one-tenth of the resources we currently use. It could be the basis of a new Christian asceticism.

What the world presently lacks is the political will. This is the lesson of the abject failure of the recent Johannesburg Conference. The world is like a heart patient who goes to his doctor for a remedy and comes away with the prescription to smoke more cigarettes ! Surely the call to the Christian churches is to challenge this appalling outcome and provide a faith and a philosophy to rekindle that political will. ■

Sean McDonagh SSC is the Columban Fathers’ Co-ordinator for Justice & Peace & Integrity of

wren. Early Maori burned off large tracts of lowland forest, particularly on the East Coast of the South Island, places where moa were numerous and it was possible to grow the sandy gardens the iwi favoured. Surrounded by such plenty, the settlers may well have been surprised how rapidly moa populations became non-sustainable and collapsed.

As a result, scattered groups of iwi coalesced to share their labour and resources better and to defend them against other raiding groups. At the same time there seems to have been a deepening awareness of the spiritual links between the people and the fruits of the land. To preserve the vital life force of the land (*mauri*), rules concerning tapu and rahui were developed and intensified.

They put certain sources of food and places out of bounds during some periods, so respecting their need for rest and protection. Such times and places had their own spiritual guardians (*kaitiaki*) to ensure their inviolability. It is not hard to see similarities between such notions and the Jewish ideas of a covenant with the land.

European impact on the land was immensely greater than that of the Maori. Kauri forests once covering 1.5 million hectares were reduced to 7,000 – a 99.5 percent destruction. Settlers also clear-felled most of the remaining lowland podocarp hardwood forests, leaving just 15 percent remaining. What little forest remained was soon profoundly altered by introduced species such as deer and possum. Flocks of sheep and cattle spread over the paddocks of clover and grasses sown for their coming.

Whatever the mixed motives and different understandings of the signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi, both Maori and pakeha tried to create a covenant to enshrine the status of land, forest and fisheries. The notion of *rangitiratanga* or dominion is much deeper than just who has the power. It touches the deepest spiritual links between Maori and the land in which they were rooted. That is why Crown failures to defend the Treaty go beyond legal ties of justice. Land and much of what lived in and on it was devastated in some areas. Destruction of habitat and species, pollution of major waterways, land subsidence and flooding, and contamination of traditional coastal seafood areas are the legacy of this failure.

GM Food and Organisms

We can never return to our pristine land, but we can learn from the mistakes that our ancestors, both Maori and pakeha, made. We can also learn from the covenant model of relationship in the Jewish scriptures. Humans have always shaped the dominant ecosystems to their own needs and that also is part of nature. We must reflect upon the needless scars they have inflicted upon the earth. We have destroyed 41 species of birds, some of them unique on our planet. The GE debate must be conducted in the light of our history.

In respect of both genetic modification and engineering the questions most commonly asked are:

- *why is this procedure necessary or beneficial? What dangers are involved? Who benefits?*
- *will GE increase or diminish the respect we owe to this unique land and its life-forms that is God's gift to us?*

The commonest justifications for GE are development of our world food sources, and research, especially medical. The first of these is important in a world where 18 percent of the population is still constantly hungry. But the main problem here is not one of production. Both Koffe Annan and the FAO have recently stated that there is ample food to feed the entire planet. The problem is that because of internal policies such as farm subsidies in the European Union, the 800 million who hunger cannot afford to grow or buy their own food.

Raising productivity e.g. by testing to see whether an introduced gene can inhibit wet rot in potatoes, may be commendable. If our dominant motivation is economic, e.g. catering to well-developed consumer or niche markets, then it is necessary to acknowledge that honestly and to face the other questions such as, *at what risk?, for whose benefit?*

GE research is often touted as the great hope for producing a cure for appalling diseases such as cystic fibrosis or Huntingdon's chorea. Again, who could possibly question such goals? Yet long experience of efforts to find cures for cancers and AIDS have pointed to the need for long trials,



turning up multiple drugs and procedures that bring about gradual incremental improvements. But we have to ask whether in the long run it is pharmaceutical firms that will be the main beneficiaries.

This leads us to the question, *at what risk?* The danger of accidental release of transgenic organisms or cross-



The GE debate – a postscript

*Should New Zealand lift the moratorium on the release of GE material – or not?
What do the authoritative Christian voices tell us.*

Sean McDonagh rejects Genetic Engineering on two grounds:

- *on principle*. “Do we as one species,” he asks, “have any right to interfere in a destructive way in the genetic integrity of another species?”

GE tends to do away with species boundaries; instead we have genes, viruses, atoms, chemical compounds, and these may be freely recombined and engineered to suit commercial or pharmacological demands. Species boundaries, once seen by biologists as uncrossable, are usually regarded as sacred by those with Biblical faith.

- *the risk factor*. Transferring genetic material from one species and putting it into another is always to place it in a new and strange environment. No-one can be sure of the consequences. The risk is therefore unwarrantable. And once the boundary is crossed there is no way back.

These points were put to the Rev. Greg Hughson, a trained biologist, now a minister and chaplain at Otago University. He was a member of the *Interchurch Commission on Genetic Engineering* (ICC) which put submissions to the recent Royal Commission.

Greg observes that scientists evaluate GE in a utilitarian fashion by weighing up the benefits against the risks.

Engineering a bacterial strand of DNA may enable us to make abundant quantities of insulin for the treatment of diabetes. This degree of ‘interference’ appears justifiable, they maintain. Biochemists at Otago maintain there has never been an escape of a genetically engineered bacterium because safeguards are built in to ensure that the manufactured bacteria cannot survive outside the lab. The bacteria have been transmuted into tiny factories, so their whole nature is changed.

Greg notes that once we move up from bacteria to plants and animals, there arises – even among scientists – a degree of ‘*intuitive dis-ease*’. The transfer of human material, for instance, into cows and sheep is seen as unethical by many. It is repugnant to Maori who see the life force operating uniquely within each strand of creation: mixing these streams is spiritually abhorrent.

“Maori would affirm the sacredness of all life including the sacredness of DNA. The Treaty of Waitangi enables us all to adopt a more holistic approach to issues of GM” (*ICC submission to the Royal Commission para 63*). Research biologists at Ruakura rejected this Maori perspective, even threatening to move their operations to Australia, where there is no Treaty of Waitangi to inhibit research.

When you genetically modify sheep or plant material, they say, the sheep is still a sheep. It simply possesses one or two alien genes among many thousands, and this produces one human protein. But this protein may be used to treat life-threatening diseases, like cystic fibrosis. For sufferers this new technology is their lifeline. The Green Party response is that GE is not the *only* way to produce these therapeutic proteins, however attractive and economical it may seem.

Greg Hughson summed up his own view :

- the ICC prefaced its submission to the Royal Commission with an attitude of humility before the Creator – reverence for God and creation.

How often in the past have scientists been proved wrong?

- New Zealand is a unique context: not merely the uniqueness and remoteness of our flora and fauna but also the Maori spiritual perspective which is enshrined in our founding Treaty.

- The current biological revolution demands wisdom, not just clever research. The wisest course would be to keep in place the present moratorium on field trials and release of GM materials. The history of science is on the side of caution when implementing radical new discoveries. ■

▷▷ contaminations of crops cannot be totally discounted. The same may be said of a totally unpredicted transgenic hybrid, the sort of event that forms the basis of Paul Adam’s frightening novel, *Genesis II*. In such examples haste to get a product on the market for commercial advantage proves a key factor.

In our New Zealand situation, if the moratorium on the public release of GE is to be lifted, the stipulations of the Royal Commission must be adhered to strictly, that is, case by case consideration with meticulous analysis of risks and benefits. Among the goods to be defended must be the protection of the last remaining pockets of wilderness in New Zealand and our unique species. This is a Treaty value whose defence may help to deepen a bond between Maori and pakeha, one built

on the sense of tapu and guardianship, the sense of the holy and protected in the midst of the profane.

For pakeha New Zealanders, especially Christians, this is a chance also to rediscover the spirituality of land hidden in the Bible. Beyond the battles and injustices that have divided the two peoples may lie a new unity founded upon a common determination to treasure the land that now sustains us all. For such a hope to be deeply rooted, it cannot rely merely upon financial expediency but must rest on a deeper spiritual vision. ■

*Dr Neil Vaney SM teaches at Good Shepherd College, Auckland.
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Website Nathaniel Centre: www.nathaniel.org.nz*



Harijan woman (an Untouchable) preparing food for the family's evening meal

Parents can't afford 50 cents a week for school fees. Please help these children

Priests and nuns caring for families in one of the poorest areas of India appeal for funds to help educate thousands of school children whose parents are unable to pay the 50 cents a week school fees.

The extreme poverty in our region can be solved by education. Without education, most Indian children will probably never gain employment and will suffer the crippling effects of extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition all their lives.

We must help the people to help themselves. But this we cannot do without financial assistance. So, we are appealing most earnestly for funds to help finance the education of these children.

School fees are just 50 cents a week, \$20 a year.

The reward for you is the realisation that you are helping the most deserving of God's children to achieve a better way of life. They will always be grateful to you. Whatever you give will be greatly appreciated.

Cheques should be made payable to "New Zealand Jesuits in India" and posted with the coupon.

Mr and Mrs Tom and Carole Ryan

New Zealand Jesuits in India (est. 1954).

P O Box 25922, St Heliers

Bay, Auckland 1005

I enclose \$.....to help provide education for India's poorest children.

Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

Address.....

New Zealand Jesuits in India...care for the poorest of the poor



Song of the Earth

A liturgy of 7 candles

*As part of the Earth Bible project
(see March issue p 7) Lutheran pastor Norman Habel
and his team in Adelaide are preparing a series of
Earth liturgies, to be published in 2003.*

*Below are extracts from the first completed liturgy.
We are grateful to the team for permission to print this
abridged sample for congregations to try.*

Invocation

Leader: God, our Creator,
who rolled back the waters of chaos
to reveal God's Earth,
Jesus Christ,
who became earthy human flesh,
to reveal God's love on Earth,
Holy Spirit,
who opens our eyes to creation
to reveal God's presence on Earth,

People: Open our eyes and our hearts
to discover the wonder of Earth,
the mysteries of creation
and your presence deep within. Amen.

Reading 1: Old Testament – Genesis 1.1-25

Reflection: *An introduction to the creation theme that informs this liturgy. The focus is on the story of Earth in Genesis 1 and the response of Earth at the Resurrection... Central to the creation theme in this liturgy is the celebration of 'Earth revealed' as depicted in Genesis 1.9-10.*

Invitation to praise

A Version of Psalm 148

Leader: Mother Earth, who once rose,
a majestic glistening orb,
from the dark primal waters,

People: Celebrate your birth with us!

Leader: Molten rocks rising from the ocean floor
and breaking through the swelling waves,
colliding continental plates thrusting upward
to form great mountain chains across the land,

People: Celebrate your breakthrough with us.

Leader: Flooding rains and swirling winds,
gentle breezes and trickling streams,
weathered peaks and alluvial plains
alive with the creating spirit of Earth,

People: Celebrate your spirit with us.

Leader: The green of Spring and the gold of Autumn,
the cool rainforest and the warm atmosphere,
the soil that sustains and the water that revives,
and the blessing of Earth that is life itself,

People: Celebrate your life with us.

Leader: Fragile Earth, delicate web,
intricate world, wild and wonderful,
resisting the forces of destruction
and rising each dawn from the deep,

People: Celebrate with us!
Rise again with us!
Rejoice with us.

Each candle is located in front of a symbol at stations around the church. These symbols represent the seven days of creation connected with earth. After each 'day' of creation, a day of destruction then follows; a candle is taken from its station, placed in an Earth Bowl at the centre of the church and then extinguished. Seven extinguished candles remain until the Commintment at the end of the liturgy.

Confession

Station 1: Crystals reflecting Light

Leader: On the first Day of Creation You split the darkness and created Light.

People: On the first Day of Destruction we split the atom, exploded nuclear devices and created a black mist of darkness/death.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth: I quaked, I called, I groaned, but you did not hear.

Station 2: Feathers from the Sky

Leader: On the second Day of Creation You created skies filled with clouds, stars and fresh air.

People: On the second Day of Destruction we began burning fossil fuels, pumping fumes into the sky, and created pollution.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth...(as above)

Station 3: *Soil and Seeds from Earth*

Leader: On the third Day of Creation You gathered together the waters revealing Earth, the source of rich vegetation forests, streams and seeds for new life.

People: On the third Day of Destruction we began to strip the land, creating barren salt plains for no life to grow; then we began to woodchip and burn the forests removing over half Earth's vegetation in less than a human lifetime.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth...

Station 4: *Sunflowers*

Leader: On the fourth Day of Creation You created the Sun and the Moon and differentiated the day, the night and the seasons.

People: On the fourth Day of Destruction we threw aerosols up into the sky ripping apart the protective ozone above and changing sunlight from friend to foe.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth...

Station 5: *Sea Shells and Sand*

Leader: On the Fifth Day of Creation You called the sea and air to bring forth life of many kinds to wonder and delight in.

People: On the Fifth Day of Destruction we created DDT, killing the fish of the seas and destroying the unborn birds of the air.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth...

Station 6: *Horns from Animals*

Leader: On the Sixth Day of Creation You watched as the creatures of the land emerged crawling, leaping and playing games of life.

People: On the Sixth Day of Destruction we tried to look away as multitudes of species disappeared through the destruction of their habitation.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth...

Station 7: *Musical Instruments*

Leader: On the Seventh Day of Creation you gave creation the blessing of rest to celebrate and sustain all life.

People: On the Seventh Day of Destruction we created the relentless drive for progress, exploiting all life to increase profit.

Chorus – The Voice of Earth...

Absolution

Leader: Let us ask Christ for forgiveness for these Days of Destruction.

People: God, our Creator, forgive us for our crimes against Creation, our days of destruction on Earth, and give us the courage in Christ to work with Earth to bring healing and peace.

Leader: I speak for Christ. I speak for your cosmic and risen Companion. I forgive you all your wrongs against creation and fill you with the Spirit of the Creator so that you may learn to work together with Earth to renew our planet.

In the name of the Creator, Christ and the Spirit.

People: Amen.

Here prayers of the faithful or hymns may be added

Commitment

Reading 2: *Matthew 28.1-6 This Gospel reveals that not only the disciples celebrated Christ's resurrection, but that Earth also responded with the energy and excitement of a 'great earthquake'. The seven persons who extinguished the candles in the Earth Bowl, now light them again and return them, at the appropriate points in the Commitment which follows, to the seven images stationed around the church.*

Leader: On the Day of Resurrection, Earth quaked and celebrated with a bright light in the empty tomb.

People: On this day we celebrate light and promise Earth we will strive to remove all nuclear darkness and death.

Leader: On the Day of Resurrection, Earth quaked as an angel descended from the skies.

People: On this day we celebrate our skies and promise Earth we will find new ways to keep our atmosphere fresh and clean.

Leader: On the Day of Resurrection, Earth quaked as a stone rolled back to reveal an empty cave.

People: We celebrate our rocks, our soil, our caves and we promise Earth we will work to save its soil from salt and its forests from destruction.

Leader: On the Day of Resurrection, Earth quaked as the sun rose on a very new day.

People: We celebrate our sun, our moon and our seasons, and we promise Earth to refrain from ripping into the ozone layer and destroying life on Earth.

Leader: On the Day of Resurrection, Earth quaked and tidal waves swept across the seas.

People: We celebrate our seas with all their glistening life and we promise Earth not to deposit more toxins that kill the creatures of the ocean.

Leader: On the Day of Resurrection, Earth quaked and all life on Earth felt the rumble of Christ rising.

People: We celebrate all life that emerges from Earth and we promise Earth that we will work to save all threatened species, including humans.

Leader: On every day of Resurrection, Earth quakes somewhere reminding us to celebrate and sustain life.

People: We celebrate with all creation and we promise Earth to hold life sacred and find ways that sustain all forms of life.

Blessing:

Leader: May the sand beneath your feet connect your body to Earth,
May flowers in bloom connect your senses to earth,
May butterflies in flight connect your soul to earth,
And may God, the Creator, Christ, the Cosmic One,
and the Spirit, the Sustainer, bless you and connect your spirit to earth.

People: Amen ■



Fretting over the garden weeds

Sandra Winton reflects afresh on a familiar parable – and, she suggests, experience in the garden can help shed new light

Another parable he put before them, saying, “*The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the householder came and said to him: ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No; lest in gathering the weeds, you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’*” Matthew 13: 24-31

“An enemy has done this.” “He did it.” “She hit me first.” “It wasn’t me.” “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree and I ate.”

How easy it is for us human beings to put the blame elsewhere. There is a story that when my family arrived as settlers to Otago on the *Philip Laing*, they brought with them, thrifty Scottish crofters that they were, a cow and a bull. In the landing, one of these fell overboard and drowned. I have no

doubt that William Winton, like his sons to follow, cursed his wife, “Woman, why did ye not hold that cow as I told ye?”

From the broadest landscape of the current world stage to the most personal, individual and inward arena, a spontaneous human reaction is to see evil as coming from outside. In this way we try to save ourselves from shame and guilt. Anger and hitting back are more comfortable. Evil comes from other people, other races, even Satan. Eradicating it means destroying, removing or making invisible the other. We want to find the weeds and rip them out. Immigrants, terrorists, ‘them’, terror itself. In this angry activity we are saved from looking at both the evil in our own hearts, and the good in others’.

I used to be a ‘clean up’ gardener. Gardening meant weeding. The garden was a potential weedbed to be controlled. Now I’m learning the pleasure of planting, tending, feeding the soil. It’s about growing.

I grew up in an environment suggesting that the spiritual life was about eradicating my sins and faults. Confession was a kind of spiritual *Roundup*. After my first confession I believed that I was pretty close to the required perfection. Perhaps another one or two confessions would do it. So I thought at six. My mother took my

question seriously and explained what I should say to the priest when I had no sins. She clearly thought I was near to perfection too. Funny that it never quite happened.

It seems that there is a great human tendency to aspire to weedless lives. We want families without rows, marriages without tensions, organisations without difficulties, hearts without hatred, greed and envy.

But this parable says, *Perfection is not for this life*. Our job is to live humanly, with our limits, bad impulses, evil desires, difficult relationships, struggling communities and flawed church. This is it. It is not our job to root out evil. To do this only implicates us in destruction and violence. We destroy the good with the bad. The parable says – *this* is it. This life, this marriage, this family, this community, this world. This is not a recipe for doing nothing. But it does suggest that we remember that there is bad as well as good in our own field.

The problem with a weeding mentality is that while I’m focusing on weeds I don’t see plants. While I’m seeing evil in others I don’t see it in my own heart. There is more to working for justice than extirpating terrorism. There is more to holiness than eradicating faults. ■

Cactus Plant

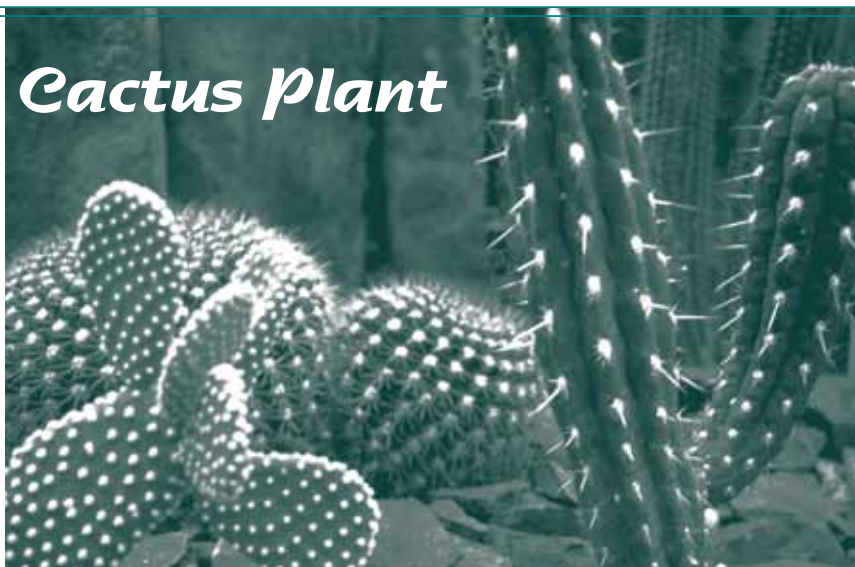


Photo: Paul Sorrell

*My potted cactus
swells from its base
to its rounded top
like a Chinese vase
glazed matt green*

*Don't be deceived
by its delicate
orange hairs
they look strokeable
and seem innocent*

*but are able to give
my invading finger
a penetrating pain
In revenge I have
deprived it of water*

*thinking it takes
a masochistic delight
in longing for
a drink in the
winter of its desert*

*as the Psalmist sings:
my soul is thirsting for you
but I will not let you get
into my succulent
green flesh*

*I will fire
orange poems at you
and hooked barbs
to keep you
at spikes length.*

Peter Rawnsley

Through the Whirlwind: Te Puta I Te Tai-awhiowhio Disability, Spirituality and Faith Conference 2003

Through the Whirlwind: Te Puta I Te Tai-awhiowhio is a conference to explore the issues of Disability, Spirituality and Faith and will be held at the Brentwood Hotel in Wellington 1st-4th May 2003.

We are inviting workshop/paper presentations on conference topics:

- Pastoral Care • Grief • Mental Health • Creative Rites • Bioethics • Different faith perspectives • Networks & resourcing • Justice • Family relationships
- Caregiving • Tensions • Theology

People who have studied in the area are welcome to put in proposals too.

Please contact Vicki Terrell by email: vterrell@actrix.gen.nz or ph (04) 934-3792 Call for papers closes on October 31st.

The Wellington-based planning group of over 20 people, themselves with a range of disabilities, is seeking funding and support. This can range from sponsoring speakers, events or sessions to helping with publicity and venue costs. Congregations may wish to sponsor attendance by individuals from their community who experience disability.

For further information, contact: Rev David Nimmo, 04 475 9085, Nimorr@paradise.net.nz or Teresa Stuart, teeee@clear.net.nz



The Faith Will Survive...

*...the institutional church, on the other hand,
is in serious trouble suggests Joan Chittister*

What, in the long run, will be the effect of the paedophilia scandal on the Catholic Church? Speculation ranges from predictions of total collapse to total reconfiguration. Given the long lessons of history, neither hypothesis is likely, perhaps, but we may have already been given a mirror into the future of change. Let me tell you what I've seen already.

In 1996 I was in Dublin writing a book. I had gone away to live alone in a small townhouse on the canal. For a while, there were no distractions at all. But then the first paedophilia scandal erupted in Ireland. I found myself as immersed in the story as the rest of the country was, but, as an outside observer, more concerned about the overall effects than by the cast of characters. I began to see that the Irish, too, were dealing with this situation differently than they had in the past.

They had already had to deal with the case of a bishop who had fathered a son years before, supported him financially all his life, but never acknowledged him. They had read themselves weary about the young pastor who dropped dead leaving a mistress housekeeper and their children who were now suing the diocese for his estate. They had watched the church battle the government over the legalization of contraception. The Irish, it seemed, were well battle-tested on sexual scandals. Paedophilia, however, was a very different thing.

The new scandal galvanized society in a way no clerical sexual issues had ever been able to do so in the past. Paedophile priests went on being priests, went from parish to parish, went on preying on children, went on reaping the harvest of status and privilege, trust and authority that priesthood had managed to garner over centuries – and not a word said about it by the hierarchy, not a single man defrocked. Indeed, paedophilia went beyond individual criminality to the heart of the system. The Irish drew a line at this.



RTE, the national broadcasting company of Ireland, launched a survey to determine the emotional response of a people, who were almost 98 percent Catholic, to a scandal that darkened their most sacred institution. Question number one: *“Has this scandal affected your faith?”* I remember groaning out loud in the chair. The reporter announced: *“97 percent say no.”* I snapped to full attention! “Impossible!” I thought. “I can’t believe it. How could this not affect the faith of a country so completely identified with it on every level?!”

Question number two, the announcer went on: *“Has this scandal affected your relationship with the church?”* The reporter announced, *“97 percent say yes.”* My head began to reel.

Given such an overwhelmingly unanimous response, the reporter began to interview passers-by on the street to determine the reasons behind the answers. “Jesus and the sacraments mean everything to me. There’s nothing wrong with them,” the people asserted. But, in response to question two, the effect of this latest of clergy sexual problems on their relationship to the church itself, one man put it bluntly for them all. “We mean,” he said,

“that they’re not going to tell us again what’s right and what’s wrong any more. From now on, we’ll be figuring those things out for ourselves.”

I sat back and watched the world change in front of my eyes. I saw a whole people distinguish a spiritual tradition from the institution that was its storehouse. I saw the moral authority of that same institution brought to a tragic low.

Now, years later, church attendance is down in Ireland – the most religious, least secular, country in Western Europe. The government no longer looks for a nod from the church before introducing new legislation. Court cases on clerical abuse abound. Seminaries are closed. The voice of the church on social issues is every day less impacting.

Meanwhile the Catholic Church in the United States, rocked

by scandals of long-standing clerical pedophilia and its accompanying episcopal cover-ups, stands at the margins of a similar watershed. The question is whether or not a new set of rules about celibacy, another kind of process for dealing with complaints, a better way of communicating with victims, can possibly restore trust in the church. The answer, if the Irish situation is any kind of model, is that the question itself is worse than useless.

The basic problem isn't how this particular and immediate issue was handled. It is why the problem could possibly be handled this way at all.

The question that must be asked is what in the clerical culture itself leads to this kind of debacle in the first place. Otherwise, whatever rules they apply to this problem won't mean a thing toward the resolution of the next one. And there will be a next one if the culture of "Princes of the Church" – and all that kind of systemic fealty implies – is permitted to continue in the modern world.

There are three dimensions of ecclesiastical mediaevalism still part and parcel of the church today: *the culture of silence, the culture of exclusion, and the culture of domination*. All these elements of a clerical world lead to the very fiasco that brings good people – priests, bishops, and cardinals among them – to make choices geared more to saving the system than to saving the people.

Though the church prides itself on the fact that it is not a democracy, it forgets at its peril that even monarchies are these days subject to both public scrutiny and legal accountability.

The *culture of silence* requires that the business decisions, agendas and processes, the struggles and conflicts of a closed system be hidden entirely from public view. The intention, some argue, is a good one: the people must be protected from scandal. Perhaps – but the scandal of silence can itself at times be far more damaging than the scandal of fallibility. The results can be disastrous. Silence is what enabled the system to move paedophile priests from place to place. Silence covers up. Silence hides problems in order to deny them. And it buys silence from others, so that the rest of the society can never know that they are also in danger.

In the end, silence makes it impossible for a system to acknowledge the problems destroying it: the difficulties of priesthood, the ruptures in theology from one era to the next, the discontent of the masses whose questions are ignored or dismissed or ridiculed or labeled heresy. It carries a fox under its toga, eating it up from the inside out.

The *culture of exclusion* denies to a system the expertise it

needs to resolve its difficulties. When a system defines itself outside of the rest of the human race, it reduces its resources at exactly the moments it may need them most. When the most-needed consultants are kept out of a conversation because a system has become a world unto itself, it can, at best, only hope to replicate its past self along with old, tired ideas. With little in the way of fresh creativity to re-energize the system, with no insights into other systems, the system of the church dooms itself to stagnation.



It creates the image of a *special* world with power so special it can never be questioned. It hoards one kind of power – appointed power – and so in the end diminishes the very power it seeks to protect by trying to exercise it in areas beyond either its experience or its competence. Those appointed to power are denied the support of those who have a more convincing claim to power, that which results from expertise or natural gift.

A culture of *creeping infallibility* is almost bound to run roughshod over the powerlessness of others. Abuse of power becomes its mainstay, even at the healthiest levels. At its lowest levels, when it imposes itself on women, on children, on its heretics and outsiders in general, it flirts with the demonic. The power of the insights, experience, ideas, and persons of others are simply dismissed for the image of the system, for the "integrity" of the system, for the power of a system whose effectiveness rests largely on power alone.

When the culture in question is the church, then the institution and the faith, the system and the Gospel, the theology of the Holy Spirit and the theology of the priesthood, separate like oil and water. The Irish have already figured that out. *The faith will survive*. The system as it is, will not. If not felled by this problem, it will surely be struck down by the next one that will undoubtedly be spawned out of the same mentality.

There is no doubt that unless this church addresses the questions behind the present issue – silence, exclusion, and domination – the long-term effect of this situation, itself only a terrible symptom of a far more sinister sickness, will be that members of the American church, like the Irish, will begin to make a distinction between the faith they hold and the authorities they follow. In that case, it is clear it will be the authorities who will stand to lose. ■



Sojourners Magazine, July-August 2002. Joan Chittister, OSB, a Sojourners contributing editor, is executive director of Benetvision and the author most recently of *Seeing With Our Souls: Monastic Wisdom for Every Day* (Sheed and Ward, 2002).

Was Professor Ivan Snook right...?

when he condemned (issue) Catholic schools and parishes
for failing to take seriously the call for social justice

Certainly not . . . replies former National MP and educationalist **Margaret Austin**

I do not mind being challenged so I will respond to Ivan Snook wearing multiple hats, first as a member of Government when “Tomorrow’s Schools” and “Learning for Life” policies were developed and implemented, then as an educator committed over a long period of time to quality education and the pursuit of excellence and finally as Chancellor of Lincoln University and Chair of the National Commission for UNESCO NZ.

There was an economic revolution in the ’80s and I will not back off from supporting the need for it then or now. As a nation we had lived beyond our means for over a decade, we were riddled with debt and the economy could no longer sustain our welfare, education and health expectations – not even at tax rates which had reached 66 per cent. We needed to develop a culture of service, efficiency and accountability.

That the transformation was painful is not disputed but I know of no one wanting to revert to retailing restricted to 9.00am to 5.30pm, to import licensing of goods so that only the wealthy had access to them, or to lack of investment in new technologies. I remember well people waiting a minimum of six weeks and often six months for a telephone connection. New Zealand was unshackled in the 1980s – thank God.

There are no shortcuts to any country being able to support social policies, supporting those in need and providing employment opportunities, other than a growing economy. There is no social justice without enterprise success and

profitability and one does not have to travel far in New Zealand or elsewhere to be convinced of this truth.

Education too was reformed at the end of the ’80s. Schools became almost self-managing – a change for which many of us had waited more than 30 years. Participation in Post-compulsory Education and Training (PCET) became a reality with a three-pronged approach that included ACCESS (later TOPS) for those without secondary qualifications, Polytechnics and Universities. The result has been recognition by the OECD (2000) that participation rates in PCET are among the best in the world, that more women graduate with first degrees than men but that men attain more advanced research degrees.

New Zealand like other nations is grappling to provide for mass tertiary education. As citizens we must acknowledge that there are private benefits as well as public good from engagement but perhaps we have yet to resolve an acceptable ratio for the two.

Whether we like it or not those receiving public funds and using public investment in infrastructure, such as the whole of the education sector, must be accountable for the education provided and the prudent management of financial resources. That they are required to do so in no way diminishes scholarship and the pursuit of excellence in teaching and research. The public expects it and so do the students.

The institutions have always had managers whether they provided professional leadership or financial

services. Further, much is made of the costs to students and the debt levels but they too need to place a value on their education and readers need to know that 80 percent of students with debt (about 64 percent of all students) have debts of \$20,000 or less.

The Private Schools Conditional Integration Act (1975) was a milestone for Catholic schooling in NZ. The schools effectively became “special character” State schools subject to the same National Curriculum and Administration Guidelines as State schools. There is no logic in stating and no evidence to support the notion that Integrated Schools are aligned with Private Schools.

My involvement as Chair of the Villa Maria College Company Board assures me that the college meets Ministry of Education and Education Review Office requirements and that it also pays much attention to the spiritual life and development of the girls and it lives the values common to our culture.

Education is about achieving excellence academically, in cultural pursuits and in sport. It has to motivate young people to aspire to the heights so that they will be fulfilled as adults in their family life, their work and their spiritual development. We expect them to contribute to the community and to use the advantages of their education for the good of others.

Professor Snook is welcome to his rhetoric but that is of no use to anyone without a blueprint for the solutions. ■



Yes, but. . . says **Br Joe Lauren**, former rector of St Kevin's, Oamaru and Christian Brothers Provincial

Ivan Snook's reminder that a Christian is one who serves others is challenging and timely for each of us and for Catholic schools, in particular. I agree with much of his analysis that self-serving economics have dominated national and personal decision-making in recent decades. Witness the politicians who advocate joining a war on the people of Iraq so that New Zealand's chances of a free trade agreement with the US might be enhanced!

The gap between the very rich and the very poor is widening both between countries and within countries. In 1998 it was estimated that US\$30 billion would be enough to provide basic education and healthcare, adequate food, safe water and sanitation for all the world's people. The Sultan of Brunei alone, only the third richest man in the world, had at that time a personal fortune of US\$30 billion!

Dr Snook is right in challenging us to take seriously the Church's continuing call to tackle the root causes of poverty. He is right to ask whether our schools are doing anything about making students aware of Christ's message of social justice. It would be wrong however to draw the inference that little is being done. In fact, many of our schools have advanced projects which experientially aim to make their students aware of their Christian call to service.

The September issue of *Inform* reports Catholic Cathedral College students:

- * building a replica leper hut for dismantling and re-erection on Quail Island
- * remembering Hiroshima with prayers

and the release of 57 helium balloons

- * holding a mufti day for the Battered Women's Trust
- * raising money for Multiple Sclerosis
- * knitting baby clothes for poorer families
- * St Peter's in Auckland, every two years, takes a group of students for a month to India. There is reflection in the preparation for the visit, on each night during their immersion experience (which includes working with Mother Teresa's Sisters and other groups), and when they return. This process follows the best practice in Community Service Learning. It combines the experience and reflection on the experience and that assists students to see the world through new lenses.
- * Student Leaders from Christian Brothers' schools undertake a similar though briefer immersion service experience at the beginning of their year of leadership.
- * 100 students from St Bede's have been pounding the roads in preparation for a massive distance sponsored run to support CANTEEN and 150 students from the same college assisted with Daffodil Day collections.
- * Support and Community Service are common in many Catholic secondary schools, as are Young Vinnies, Amnesty International and a variety of other service groups. Most schools have prestigious awards for outstanding service.
- * St Thomas of Canterbury Year 13 students usually have an Immersion Retreat where students spend time at places such as spinal and brain damage units, schools for the handicapped, schools for the deaf, and food banks, reflecting before and afterwards on implications on their lives as Christians. I am sure such examples could be many times multiplied.

In my experience schools today are very much more aware of the need to inculcate a spirit of service, if only

because of the prevailing hedonistic and self-serving milieu of much of our society. The National Religious Education course assists them to study the issue but some schools are looking to develop Community Service-Learning (both service and the learning that comes from it) as a more integrated part of their curriculum. The challenge will always be there to move beyond Charity (concerned with present symptoms) to Justice (concerned with underlying causes).

There are examples of recent past students of our Catholic schools taking this service to heart. In Dunedin for more than a decade and now in Auckland, University and senior school students take a week of their holidays to give a holiday to children who would otherwise not get one. Others have worked as volunteers in Africa and East Timor. Challenge 2000 in Wellington is testimony to the altruism of youth fired by the Christian message.

I consider there are numerous good news examples of how our Catholic schools are trying to make their students aware of structural injustice and its effects. The temptation is still there for our schools to try to prove how successful they are by being just like the favoured neighbouring State school and even to raise financial barriers which might exclude the very people Christians ought be most committed to serve. But most schools have their prophets who challenge, as did the Jesuit Father General Peter Hans Kolvenbach to his teachers:

We need graduates who will be leaders concerned about society and the world in which they live, desirous of eliminating hunger and conflict in the world, sensitive for the equitable distribution of God's Bounty, seeking to end sexual and social discrimination, eager to share their faith and love with others. ■

Becoming attached to those we love

Jack Dominian

There is no doubt that love is the most complicated human experience. Our first love experience is in childhood in the hands of our parents. The care we receive there is our tutorship for being recognised, wanted and appreciated.

John Bowlby, a British psychoanalyst, postulated that the bond between child and mother was not sexual and based on food (Freudian libido theory) but on an evolutionary basis of human attachment and bonding. He suggested that the infant forms an affective attachment to its mother through vision, by recognising her face and then the rest of her body; through sound, by recognising her voice; touch, by holding and being held; and smell. Through these dimensions the child forms a link with its mother, who becomes a secure base. From this secure base the child explores the world around it and, when frightened or anxious, returns to her for security. The observation of any child will give credence to this theory. Bowlby maintained that attachment behaviour characterises human beings from the cradle to the grave. The subjective experience of falling in love is a form of attachment behaviour.

Below I trace the similarities between the infant care giver and the baby and adult lovers:

- The mother provides a secure base and the baby feels competent and safe to explore. *Lovers' real or imagined reciprocation causes a person to feel confident, secure and safe.*
- When the mother (in all instances, the mother can be substituted by father or another adult) is present, the baby is happier and less afraid of strangers. *When the lover is viewed as responding, he or she is happier, more positive about life in general, more outgoing and kinder to others.*
- When the mother is not available or not sensitive, the baby is anxious and preoccupied. *When the lover is uninterested or rejecting, the beloved is anxious, preoccupied and unable to concentrate.*
- Bonding includes proximity, contact seeking, holding, touching, caressing, kissing, rocking, smiling, following and clinging. *Romantic love is manifested in wanting to spend time with the loved one, holding, touching, caressing, kissing and making love.*
- When afraid, distressed, sick or threatened, the baby seeks physical contact with its mother. *When afraid, distressed, sick or threatened, lovers like to be held and comforted by their partner.*
- Distress at separation or loss leads to crying, calling for the



mother, trying to find her, becoming sad and listless if reunion is impossible. *Distress at separation or loss, crying, calling for the loved one, trying to find them, and becoming sad and listless are the hallmarks of adult separation.*

- Upon reunion the baby smiles, greets its mother with shouts of joy and wants to be picked up. *Upon return, lovers rejoice, become ecstatic and rejoice.*
- The baby shares its things and toys with its mother. *Lovers like to share experiences and gifts with one another.*
- The baby engages in prolonged eye contact and is fascinated by the physical features of the mother. *Lovers frequently engage in prolonged eye contact, are fascinated by each other's bodily features and like to explore them.*
- The baby has a balance of closeness and distance with the mother. *Lovers have a balance of physical and emotional distance with each other.*
- Although the baby can be attached to more than one person, there is usually a key attachment that is often the mother. *Whilst adults feel that they can love more than one person, intense love tends to occur with only one partner at a time.*
- The baby coos, 'sings', utters baby talk and its mother responds in the same style. *Lovers too coo, sing, exchange baby talk, use soft tones to one another and there is much communication which is non-verbal.*
- The responsive mother senses the infant's needs and has a powerful empathy with it. *Lovers feel equally powerfully understood and empathised with.*
- The baby gets tremendous pleasure from its mother's approval, approbation and attention. *Lovers, particularly in the early stages of the relationship, get tremendous happiness from each other's approval.*

This long list is persuasive that attachment behaviour in childhood is very similar to falling in love and courtship in adulthood. It is given here as the most powerful example of experiences in childhood which are repeated when falling in love in and is offered as our main psychological understanding of the prelude to sexual intercourse. ■

Jack Dominian is a leading contemporary Christian psychiatrist. This extract from his book *Let's Make Love*, Darton Longman & Todd Ltd, is available from the NZ distributor Catholic Supplies, Wellington

Religious films with a difference

Signs, directed by M Night Shyamalan
The Others, directed by Alejandro Amenabár

Review: by Mike Crowl

M Night Shyamalan's latest movie combines his love of tension with a story about a broken family, a loss of faith – and aliens. Whether there really are aliens or not, I'll leave you to see, since this isn't primarily a sci-fi film. *Signs* is a movie about relationships – as indeed Shyamalan's brilliant *Sixth Sense* also was. There's the same concern with reconciliation, and with having to leave things behind.

Mel Gibson plays an Episcopalian priest, Graham Hess, whose wife has been killed in a freakish car accident. He's having to bring up two small children with some help from his simple, but not simple-minded, younger brother. As a result of his wife's death, Hess has lost his faith, and rejects being called Father by his former parishioners. The film is basically about the restoration of his faith, about his becoming Father again both to his children and to his flock.

The film also discusses what faith is. The children have the most simple faith of all, belief that their father can do anything, that what they read in books is true. The younger brother, played with both strength and humour by Joaquin Phoenix, has worked out what faith is for him, and propounds it with a hilarious story. When the crunch comes, he's the one who has something to hang on to.

Hess himself has come to the point of hating God, and yet continually has to face the fact that while he may have rejected God, God doesn't appear to have rejected him.

There is a marvellous build-up of tension, several sudden shocks, some hilarious moments (watch out for the second appearance of the silver hats, and the impromptu pharmacy

confession) and an emotional depth to the characters. Gibson underplays his role almost into stillness at times, but it works, and the outbursts of grief, when they come, are all the more effective. Shyamalan, who wrote the script, directed the film, and plays a small but significant role in it (!) is a master at building tension, then suddenly dropping us into an absurd moment.

A few words about another tension-filled movie with a spiritual component. *The Others* stars Nicole Kidman as a repressed mother of two children who's waiting in her large, and apparently ghost-ridden, house for her husband to come home from war. He's long overdue. The older child claims to see ghosts, but Kidman and her young son only know that something is seriously wrong.

Three former servants of the house arrive, and seemingly begin to take over. Are they up to no good? Are they ghosts

themselves?

Alejandro Amenabár, another multi-talented director – he wrote the script and the music as well – works hard to create a nail-biting atmosphere, but somehow misses the boat. Furthermore, the Catholicity of his characters has an off-putting strangeness. Kidman's character is neurotic – she insists that each of the house's fifty internal doors be locked at all times – so it's hardly surprising that her astute daughter continually questions her views on the afterlife, with its odd details of Limbo, but nothing of Heaven and grace.

Shyamalan's approach to faith won't ring true with every viewer, but at least it comes closer to reality than the questionable Catholicity in Amenabár's script. *Signs* engages the viewer far more, too. Somehow *The Others* keeps the viewer at a distance, and in the end, fails to deliver on either its ghostly or spiritual promises ■

Mike Crowl is a Freelance
 New Zealand Writer

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Plays with a justice message

Peace Plays: Charlie Bloom, Hautu, Shanty & the Angel

by Kathleen Gallagher

Published by Doygal Press, Christchurch

Price: \$20 (193 pages)

Review: Peb Simmons

It is a sad irony to review this book of three plays, each speaking words of peace, so near the anniversary of 11 September 2001.

We might relate to the event, but don't hear the deafening sound of gunfire, explosions, screams; or feel the appalling heat of fire; or choke on the rising dust. Kathleen Gallagher's *Peace Plays* should wake us out of apathy. Her simple, almost artless style creeps past the reading eye into the brain, so that it is impossible to escape.

Read *Charlie Bloom* in one sitting. Charlie Bloom, in Samoa in 1966, became an accidental victim of a rainout hotspot, in consequence of a 120 kiloton bomb exploded over Mururoa. The straightforward words in weaving, reminiscent manner, reveal the slow inevitable deterioration in Charlie Bloom's health. The awfulness of what happened to Charlie and his wife Ola is played out against a background of characters, ordinary happenings, singing, and music. Almost at the play's conclusion Ola explains: "In the grim band of latitude the nuclear fallout clouds followed the spinning earth."

We are left with the indifference of powerful nations to the suffering they cause to unsuspecting peoples. Deservedly *Charlie Bloom* was a finalist in the 1996 NZ Radio Awards.

Hautu reveals the life of conscientious objectors and their families during World War II. Hautu, a detention camp near Lake Taupo, was no holiday camp. But in New Zealand, with the fear of imminent Japanese invasion and thousands of her men and women facing brutal war in Europe,



Book reviews

anyone who objected to joining that war machine was loathed and reviled.

The play does not answer the insoluble problem how to defeat rampant evil intent on destroying civilisation. Through the words of imprisoned men and their families at home, we are immersed instead in the forgotten tragic events for which no one earned a medal. It closes with the bombing of Hiroshima. We are left to ponder our involvement in the past, and how we might use the future. *Hautu* was first played by React Theatre Christchurch in March 2002 and later in the Christchurch Cathedral – on Hiroshima Day, August 6.

Shanty & The Angel, a Radio Play first produced in November 1991, is set

in an Auckland street at dawn. Present time and events mould the actions of 13 characters who, through music, words and human sounds, portray their sufferings caused by a destructive economic climate. The play blends everyday chatter, humour and community relationship into a serious statement of how impersonal, commercial, political decisions impact on unsophisticated working people.

Peace Plays subtly plead for a change of focus by governments and citizens alike, stimulating us to be concerned for those in need; encouraging fairness in the distribution of wealth, and, most urgently, to aid lasting world-wide peace. Eventually we might understand why so many people are angry with the Western world and why some felt justified in plotting and instigating the Twin Towers slaughter.

Peace Plays should be required reading in all High schools, for the younger generation to understand where society has come from and where it might go. Kathleen Gallagher received the New Zealand Playwrights Award in 1993, and her first book of four plays *Mothertongue* was published in 1999. We are fortunate such a visionary dramatist lives and writes in our midst. ■

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A book of celebration

Spirituality in Aotearoa New Zealand: Catholic Voices

Edited by Helen Bergin and Susan Smith

Published by Accent Publications

PO Box 47 086, Ponsonby, Auckland

Recommended retail price NZ\$35.00

Review: Joy Cowley

This is the book we'll be giving each other for Christmas. Like a family album, it has images we recognize, situations we share and a faith background that is as familiar as the shape of Aotearoa. It's a book of celebration and not just for Catholics. Here we have the Catholic Church flinging open doors to share its story with its Christian cousins. It's a good story, a collection of essays put together with honesty and insight. It's about our history, social responsibility, education, family life, justice, vocations. Underneath are our faith values, and beneath these again, the penetrating light of Christ. Which is why it's a book of celebration. It was written by people of prayer.

Hugh Laracy's history of the Catholic Church in New Zealand, steers a fine course between social and religious phenomenon. He writes: "while the Church is in the world it is not entirely of the world. There are mysteries at its core." He goes on to describe the settler Church, the local Church, the school systems, the evolving character of the Church in modern Aotearoa-New Zealand, and then he comes back to mystery with lines from Eileen Duggan:

"I beg [for]...

The faith of a willow in winter,

Or a blind hound nosing the knee."

Pa Henare Tate's writing on Maori Spirituality brings us again to the threshold of mystery in the Maori tradition, as he defines Tapu, Tika, Pono, Mana and Aroha and their place in the sacred life of the Marae. His explanations are designed to help readers with little knowledge of Maori Spirituality, and he writes with a warm gentleness and authority that is never patronising.

Diane and Bob Strevens' spirituality for Christian Marriage will get enthusiastic reception from all those couples who have grown tired of hearing about the superior virtues of monasticism. Good stuff! On lay spirituality, Michael Pender writes about the driving force of God's love. "The central reality of our faith, then, is love... this love is the basis of all our desires. Some may be inclined to dismiss such thoughts as too emotional... but being an emotion, love must be expressed..."

Neil Darragh writes about *The Spirituality of Priests*, John Dunn has an article on the Parish-based Catholic: A Pastor's Perspective, Tui Cadogan RSM invites us to the Cross in the story of Wahine Maori, and Ann Gilroy RSJ gives us Pakeha Women's Spirituality. Chris Duthie-Jung writes about Young Catholics, Susan O'Donnell takes us into the Catholic School and Youth Spirituality. Susan Smith RNDM deals with the Spirituality of Catholic Sisters, Terry Dibble writes passionately about a Spirituality of Justice, Alice Sinnott RSM has Spirituality Rooted in Wisdom and Vince Hunt reclaims the fire of the Imagination in Spirituality. Helen Bergin shares thoughts on the Holy Spirit in today's world. It's all good stuff! Marvellous stuff! It's the kind of reading that has us standing on our hands and clapping our heels in gratefulness. ■

Catholic Voices Ad pdf file in Links

Fonterra milkshake turns to custard

Fonterra, the dairy giant, had its first annual meeting last month and it did not vindicate Helen Clark's hope of its changing itself from a third world exporter to a First World exporter. In fact, the milk powder it sells to Third World countries seems to be turning to custard.

Fonterra is a merging of three big companies in order to create a monopoly for selling a low value product, milk, to the world. But monopolies are never competitive. They create a top-heavy management structure and already *Fonterra's* accounts carry excessive salaries and bloated overheads. There are nine executives who are paid more than \$1million and the number of people who earn over \$100,000 has doubled since the merger. The board spent \$72 million on consultancy fees. To consult on what?

No doubt the directors would argue that this expense is a one-off, but we are talking about a company which converts milk to milk powder then on-sells it. This is not rocket science. They have leases on upmarket buildings in Parnell and Remuera, which seem to me a long way from farmers' milking sheds.

Fonterra, NZ's largest company, made a loss of \$50 million in its first year and has announced a much lower payout next year. This will result in a \$130,000 average loss to dairy farmers. *Fonterra* will take all the milk that can be produced, but then it must sell it. CEO Craig Norgate, a big man, has a big problem. The milk is turning sour and so are the company shareholders.

The dogs of war

George W. Bush's speech to the UN presents no new evidence that Saddam Hussein is harbouring weapons of mass destruction, but Bush's determination to go to war with Iraq, with or without Security

Crosscurrents

John Honoré

Council approval, now seems his only consideration. The lies, media management, spin and distortion of facts – the basic tools of propaganda – continue unabated. The public is subjected to wave after wave of images that add up to nothing.

A murky satellite photo of a building somewhere in Iraq, a warning that Iraq seeks aluminium pipes, arrests inside the US of suspected terrorists who have photos of Osama bin Laden in their apartments and even 'Orange' alerts on the very anniversary of September 11, all contribute to the exploitation of grief and fear. These are the dogs of war.

Bush now has some hubristic notion that he is 'saving civilisation'. His Manichean world view is of a lone figure, a defender of liberties, who is fighting in the name of patriotism. His "either for us or against us" policy is beginning to paint Bush into a corner. It is difficult to see how he could backtrack on his endless slogans about "regime change" without losing face and credibility. He has made a war against Iraq seem inevitable.

Bush's rhetoric has outraged most of the world (apart from Tony Blair) and even Nelson Mandela declares that the "US is a threat to world peace". Germany and France are vehemently opposed to unilateral action by US, as is New Zealand. I hope our government remains staunch in that view.

The US propaganda machine rolls on and is creating a scenario reminiscent of a Hollywood B grade movie. Why should we not believe Mohamed al-Douri, the US Iraqi ambassador, when

he criticises Bush's UN speech as being motivated by "revenge, oil, personal ambitions and the security of Israel"?

No zimmers in sight

The aging of New Zealand's population has often been discussed by politicians in negative terms. They cite the perennial problem of superannuation and the cost to the public health system. I suggest that society would collapse without the 'wrinklies' (I am one myself, you understand).

Recently we invited two octogenarian couples for tea at our place. The husband of the first couple rang to say that they would be a little late because he was opening the local tennis club, playing a set or two (only doubles these days) and saying a few words because he had assumed the role of President. The wife of the second couple rang and said that they would have to leave a bit early because they were picking up two of their grandchildren for a night's stay at their apartment, in order to give the parents 'a bit of time to themselves'.

One of these friends, an ex-professor of Lincoln College, spends time in the City Mission peeling potatoes for the communal meal prepared for the needy. His wife is formidable at raising money for the new Christchurch Art Gallery. Another of the ladies still teaches Yoga. All of them are aware of world events and can converse intelligently on subjects which would leave a younger generation out in the cold. All of them cherish and support their grandchildren and speak positively of the future and their own active role in it. We finished the afternoon gathering with a toast from the Yoga instructor – "here's to our parents' children".

"Hear! Hear!" I said, "let's hear it for the 'wrinklies'. There is not a Zimmer frame in sight ■

Wars – and rumours of wars

One is allowed as the years pass by to reflect on the experiences of one's youth. The reflection can be highly relevant to current times. I cannot help comparing the threat of a new war in the Gulf and the likely consequent chaos throughout the Middle East with what it was like to live through the first months of 1939.

Due to school and family influences, I had a precocious interest in world affairs. In the closing years of the 1930s, war with Germany was becoming more and more likely. The Munich crisis of late 1938 bought a temporary stay of war at the price of the Czech people and their freedom. That crisis was all the more real for me as at that time I was with my parents on holiday outside New Zealand and we feared that the outbreak of war might strand us in a foreign land.

The first six or eight months of 1939 were a strange period I still vividly remember. All went on as normal. Everyday life in New Zealand was unchanged. But at the same time there was in so many people's minds the almost complete certainty that war was coming. We had peace for the moment. But we would not avoid war.

Just how disastrous war would be we could only guess. As it turned out, for New Zealand the experience of war was nothing like that of other countries. We were not occupied by a foreign army as were the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore. The name of our nation did not disappear from the map, as happened to the three Baltic states. New Zealand was spared deportations, slave labour camps, mass killings. But anxiety and bereavement came into a great many New Zealand homes.

The only male of military age in my own family, my cousin and foster brother, spent four years in a POW camp in Germany. He survived, fortunate to be in the hands of the German army and not of the SS. But the anguish and uncertainty that my parents, who had cared for him since he was orphaned at the age of six, endured over those years was great, even though compared to others, the war touched our family lightly.

As I write, the threat of American action against Iraq increases day by day. China, Russia and the vast majority of the counties of Europe oppose such action. The Arab states warn that action against Iraq, unaccompanied with any attempt

to relieve the enslavement in which the Palestinians endure, would release a storm of protest and reaction. But an American administration, conscious that the United States is the only super power, presses ahead with plans for war.

How did one react in the first half of 1939? Basically by accepting the inevitability of a war one did not want but felt had to be fought. Today, one's position is different. War may be almost as inevitable. But it is not a war that one sees as legitimate and necessary. Our government rightly questions the appropriateness of military action in the Gulf. If there is a case for "regime change", it would be healthy if the American people were debating the appropriateness of regime change in their own land rather than in a country half way across the world.

I hope and pray the present threat of war will not lead to the reality of conflict. One would also wish that humankind be spared months of uncertainty about likely impending disaster, an experience that those of my generation went through sixty years ago. ■

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

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For us women – and our salvation *too*

Many women I know, who have left the church would, I believe, gladly return. They are simply waiting for some sign that the official church is overcoming its extraordinary fear of women. How else can we interpret the deliberate use of a language in the liturgy that so intentionally excludes women? And that in an age when virtually every other institution has changed to language that includes womenkind?

After Vatican II, Rome approved a new church body to do a translation of English for the liturgy. Many of its members were bishops in close touch with their people. Rome has now supplanted this group with a new body of its own. This deliberate move is not entirely about language, of course. It has two distinct layers. At one level it

constitutes the challenge to the role of the local Bishop to decide such matters as appropriate language in liturgy and underscores the desire of the Roman Curia to centralise control over the Church. This is an ongoing struggle over the theology of leadership, which asks who exactly are the successors of the Apostles?

The second layer, however, is much more immediate to us lay people. It concerns liturgical language and we are presented with this on a weekly basis at Sunday Mass. I have a parish priest who always uses inclusive language so I have not had to make such ludicrous statements as *For us men and for our salvation* in the Creed, for 20 years. But that is what the official Church now wants me to say.

The first signs of this regression became apparent in 1994. The Vatican set aside

the translation of its own approved body which had used inclusive language, and ruled that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* be written in male-oriented language. In its Introduction we read: *God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men...* The translation written by the other group had read: *God calls and helps each person, all human beings, to seek, know and love him with all their strength.*

In all this, I have a puzzling question that calls for an answer. Why is it that the Church removed the word *men* from the words of consecration in the Mass? Instead of hearing, *It will be shed for you and for all men* as we used to do in years past, we now hear: *It shall be shed for you and for all.* I can only thank God that in the most sacred part of the Mass I am not excluded. ■

Pauline O'Regan



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