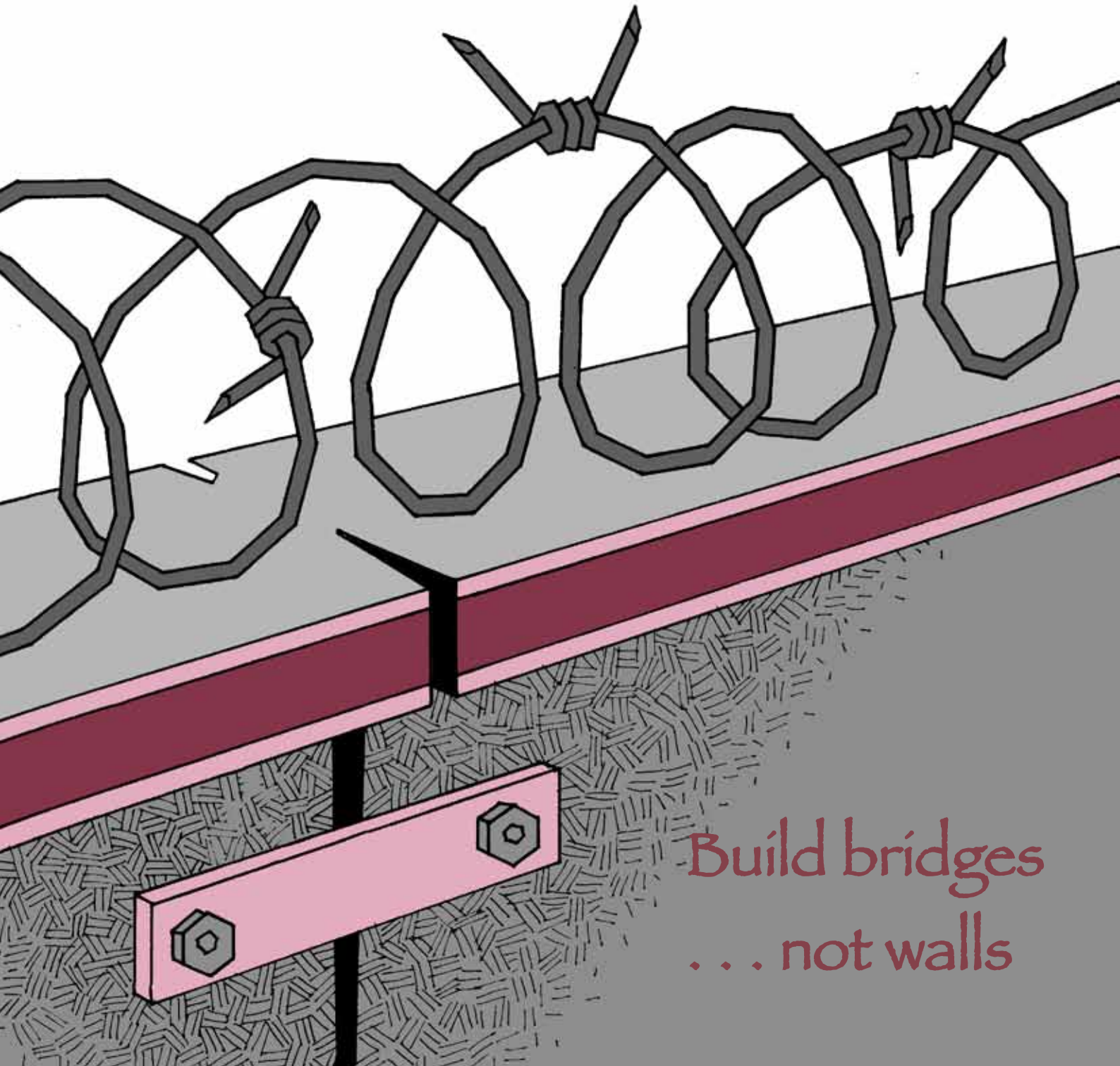
Tui Motu

InterIslands

September 2004 Price $5



Building bridges

Contents

Thanks – to *Priests and People* for permission to reproduce Albert Nolan's article, "The South African Experience", from their March 2004 magazine.

A couple of years ago Pope John Paul urged the Israeli leaders to 'build bridges, not erect walls'. They took as little notice of the Pope as they did of the United Nations or anyone else. Yet, as communications become easier and the world smaller, bridge-building between peoples and communities becomes more urgent than ever.

There has been no more symbolic event in our times than the tearing down of the Berlin Wall. Not only did it mark the end of a divided German state; it was the sign for the overthrow of Communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe and the USSR. While not everyone will applaud the sort of societies that have succeeded in these areas, the fact is people are freer and many have taken major steps towards prosperity. Peter Stupples vividly describes the new Russia on pp 20-21.

Yet not so long ago partition was a favoured solution in creating new states. Britain proceeded to split up India and Israel, following the example of Ireland. In each case the problem of co-existence between differing cultures or faiths was simply postponed, and their subsequent history has been fraught with wars and dissensions.

There is of course no easy solution, especially when one minority group feels threatened by a dominant majority. Ghandi, the father of modern India, was appalled at the prospect of its partition. Would there have been less bloodshed and less Hindu and Muslim fanaticism, had Ghandi's dream been followed?

When we look to the first Christians, we find they practiced and preached inclusiveness. When a major problem arose over how to treat Gentile converts, Paul came to Jerusalem to debate and resolve the issue. "Neither Jew not Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female," Paul said to the Galatians (3,28), "you are all one in Christ Jesus."

When the church today is preaching this to others, is it practising inclusiveness within its own culture? In his two articles (*August* and pp 12-13), Andrew Greeley throws out this challenge to the Roman Curia to put its own house in order before preaching to others.

Nevertheless there are hopeful signs. In Athens, nothing was more striking at the Games opening than the appearance of a united team from Korea, symbolically closing a painful era of war and division. On pp 7-9 Dominican Albert Nolan sums up the achievement of post-apartheid South Africa. Significantly, political change has been achieved there by leaders who sought reconciliation rather than revenge, by the persevering efforts of the Christian churches, and by moral pressure from outside.

And we have just received a heartening report from a regular contributor, Peter Frost, who went with his wife to Jerusalem in mid-August to be part of a world-wide peace initiative involving Christians, Muslims and Jews. Happily, the Spirit of shalom still works miracles even in today's fractured world.

M.H.

ISSN 1174-8931

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

An unusual meeting of over 60 representatives of the Catholic Church, Non-Governmental Organisations and politicians from developed and developing nations was held at the Vatican last month. Usually this would be an opportunity for the Pope to take the initiative in speaking out to politicians about moral issues, but this meeting was at the instigation of Gordon Brown, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The background to Brown's plan was the failure of the rich nations to honour the *Millennium* agreement they made in 2000 to allocate 0.7 percent of their national income in order to halve poverty in the Third World by 2015. The aim was to eliminate avoidable infant and maternal deaths and ensure that children everywhere have access to primary education. Brown proposes a scheme to borrow from international capital markets in the form of bonds that will boost direct and immediate aid to the world's poorest nations.

Looking back at the rhetoric of the past few decades, one can't help but be cynical about such schemes. Rich countries totally dominate organisations which make the conditions for the allocation of aid. Time after time they impose restrictions which still leave poor countries with huge and unsustainable debts.

These organisations have the power to save millions of people, but while they haggle over details, people are dying. Gordon Brown's plan may seem appealing but eventually his proposed loans have to be paid off. Aid money will have to be used as payment and so the vicious circle continues.

It is easy to be critical of the 'big players' on the world scene. But what about our record in New Zealand? I contacted Peter Zwart, the International Programmes Manager of ***Caritas NZ***, for his thoughts. He is adamant that, as a well-off nation, we should have a much stronger commitment to help solve the global tragedy of poverty.

Our overseas aid has fallen from 0.52 percent of Gross National Product, in 1975, to 0.23 percent last year. New Zealand is fourth from the bottom of the 22 OECD donor countries. (The United States is bottom!) We need to more than double our aid to be even near the promised figure of 0.7 percent. ***Caritas*** is also calling for reform of trade practices, such as tariffs and subsidies which penalise poor countries at the expense of the global economic giants.

One of the main reasons for prolonged poverty is that because of the burden of interest on debt poor countries carry they never get ahead on their repayments. ***Caritas*** lobbies to have the rich creditor nations cancel the debts owed to them, so that the millstone of crippling interest payments will be eliminated.

What do our politicians say about our efforts? By coincidence, as I was writing this, (*12 August*) Aid Minister, Marian Hobbs, was asked this question on Radio New Zealand's *Morning Report*. I taped her reply: "It's all a matter of priority", she said. "If I measured the number of letters that come in to me as a Minister requesting support for special education in New Zealand, versus the number of letters asking us to increase aid overseas, I'd have to say that generally our community is expressing a need for more help at home rather than help overseas."

I listened to this statement a second time to make sure I'd heard it correctly. Is this the way we want Ministers to make their policy decisions – Ministers who, for example, happily donate over $30 million of our taxes to yachting's Team New Zealand?

In the gospel readings from *Luke* over recent Sundays we've heard Jesus say a lot on the subject of greed and selfishness; the story of the good Samaritan, the man who built bigger barns to hoard his surplus wealth, the admonitions: "Sell your possessions and give alms"; "A man's life is not made secure by what he owns"; "Who will give a stone when asked for bread?"

These all prick our consciences and prod us to ask ourselves how we personally shape up when it comes to our response to the needy. But there's also the opportunity to ask what we can do to ensure our government pulls its weight on the international scene.

Next year is election year, and we should pin our candidates down as to what their policies are on the aid question. Are they committed to the 0.7 percent of our national income which was promised at the time of the Millennium? If Marian Hobbs is to be taken seriously, let's flood her desk with letters telling her that we don't have to choose between honouring our aid promises and having a good special education programme at home. She and her Cabinet colleagues are forever telling us what a healthy economy we have. We can do both! ■

Jim Neilan

Cardinal Williams' statement

I was deeply distressed by Cardinal Williams' public statement that New Zealand is fast being converted into a moral wasteland. As a Catholic I wondered what people might think of us.

My second thought was if the cardinal had had the opportunity to read and ponder Mike Riddell's excellent article *People they ain't no good* (*Tui Motu July*), he surely could not have spoken as he did. Where was the understanding; where was the compassion; where the possibility of dialogue?

When a public figure issues a statement, he or she has to question its purpose. To whom is one speaking? What is one trying to achieve? How does one go forward from here?

So – thank you Colin Gibson, Anna and John Holmes and Jim Neilan for your thoughtful, considered comments. Sometimes one feels *Tui Motu* presents a lone sane voice in a rather mad world.

Jackie Wood, Dunedin

Sin a cosmic, universal problem

All hail to Mike Riddell for his in-depth commentary on our present-day attitude towards sin (*Tui Motu July*). Among Christians, Original Sin has long been a somewhat uncomfortable notion, especially in view of the modern world-view of creation history. Yet we must admit to "the realisation that all of us are deeply flawed in some way" and that "the genesis of much of our suffering lies within us".

The fault has lain with a Catholic obsession with guilt. Your author puts his finger on the heart of the problem when he points out that without some understanding "of the inextinguishable image of God, of the possibility of love, sin has no meaning".

God has always been within each of us by virtue of being part of God's creation. And the only sensible way to name that god is Love. Any failure to acknowledge that love within us has to be sin; Original Sin is our innate reluctance to serve Love. Mike Riddell says: "To use the word 'sin' is to acknowledge that we have been made for more than this".

We are an inseparable part of the Universe and what we do affects that mighty creation of our God. St Paul wrote that what the arm or the eye does affects the whole Body of Christ. We can't simply sin on our own. (***abridged***)

Desmond Smith, Auckland

letters

Inclusive language

Virtually all the time in the often excellent writing in *Tui Motu*, there is this anomaly. Sometimes writers try to minimise it and sometimes they seem not to notice what they are doing at all. The anomaly is that God is referred to as if God were a male person.

One does not have to agree with Mary Daly that if God is male then male is god (though one might). One can simply realize that if God is referred to as male all the time, then clearly this is idolatry. And whether we notice it or not, every time this pattern is repeated, it harms women. And it harms men. And it harms children.

Anna Woods, Wellington

Will Honoré still be there?

The arrival of the *August* issue gave me a sinking feeling... I hadn't got round to communicating... I should have been quicker to counter a criticism (Ray Thomas letter, *July TM*) with an affirmation.

How many pages? 24,26,28, Hallelujah! John Honoré is still there on page 30! Thank you for still being here this month, John. Please don't stop doing what you do so well. It makes my Methodist heartbeat dance each month.

I love all of *Tui Motu* and usually read it from cover to cover at one sitting, hugging to myself the knowledge that each issue ends not with a whimper but with a bang.

Beverley Osborn, Napier

In praise of the USA

Along with Ray Thomas (*July Tui Motu*) I am disappointed with many of your editorials and columnists at the constant slating of American policy in the Middle East. The time seems right to give a better balance.

You could include liberating 24 million people from a tyrant's rule, the Kurdish death toll, the aftermath of brutal oppression on poor people living in a country with unlimited natural resources.

America can feel proud of its huge contribution to AIDS sufferers in Africa and to countless other nations who have sought their help. Is not America still the largest donor of foreign aid per capita in the world?

Phil Hishon, Winton

Actions speak louder than words

In response to the article "Actions speak louder than words", by Jo Ayers, in the *June 2004* issue. As members of the Liturgy committee who took responsibility for the Holy Thursday Mass at St Benedict's Church, Auckland, we feel compelled to explain to your readers what actually happened.

This year we used Matzos which we had calculated would be sufficient for Holy Communion and in fact that was the case. Everyone received the Matzos. Therefore the ciborium was not taken from the Tabernacle during the Mass for distribution at Communion time.

In fact, no-one, priest or extraordinary minister, approached the Tabernacle until the time immediately before the procession to the Altar of Repose. At this time the Reserved Sacrament was removed from the Tabernacle.

It is unfortunate that a hastily written article was so economical with the truth, bearing in mind the need to be fair and accurate. We would therefore appreciate your setting the record straight by acknowledging what actually did happen.

Elizabeth Kelly, Margaret Scanlan. Auckland

Jo Ayers writes: *"In reply all I can say is that what I saw and I experienced is what I wrote about. I am trained to observe carefully the detail in liturgy and I have been researching this particular practice for some time.*

On this evening there was Reserved Sacrament added to the matzos. I watched it being done. It was precisely this experience that prompted me to go home and write the article. Obviously our recall of the event is different."

Last Hurrah

In what could be his last public speech,
David Lange spoke on issues of peace and religious faith
to a capacity audience at Otago University, 5 August 2004.

Lange roundly condemned the US invasion of Iraq.
How can one prevent war by waging war, he asks. And what
difference can people of goodwill make?

The Iraqi war: "I am not what could be called an 'out-and-out' pacifist. I think that, like individuals, societies and nations have the right to defend themselves from attack. I think for example that the government of Kuwait was entitled to call for military assistance when it was invaded by Iraq in 1990...

"I am just as sure that there must be limits on the use of force. The use of force can only be justified if it is in proportion to the threat which is offered. Tomorrow is the anniversary of an attack which in my mind cannot be justified, and that is the bombing of Hiroshima. Like the bombing of Nagasaki, it was done to make a point, and the harm done was out of all proportion to the threat.

"What the United States has done in response to the terrorist attacks is so remarkable and radical that it amounts to a revolution in international affairs. It is a revolution which has made the world a much more dangerous place.

"'From the outset, President George W Bush adopted an overbearing approach to America's role in the world, relying upon military might and righteousness, insensitive to the concerns of traditional friends and allies, and disdainful of the United Nations.

"Instead of building upon America's great economic and moral strength to lead other nations in a co-ordinated campaign to address the causes of terrorism and stifle its resources, the administration, motivated more by ideology than by reasoned analysis, struck out on its own. It led the United States into an ill-planned and costly war from which exit is uncertain.' Those are not my words. They are taken from a statement made less than two months ago by a group of retired American diplomats and military commanders.

"The United States used to be a nation distinguished by its idealism. It respected the rule of law. It helped build the international institutions which have been trampled over by the Bush administration. Among American critics of the Iraqi adventure, there is deep dismay that the foreign policy of the United States is now so widely seen as reckless and unprincipled."

Response to 9/11: "It was not surprising that the Bush administration should respond to the terrorist attacks by getting ready for war. Just after the attacks, public opinion in the United States might not have settled for less. The cruelty of the attacks called out for a decisive response.

"The problem, of course, is that the enemy is not obvious. The enemy is not a government which has declared war on the United States. The enemy is hidden. Its numbers can't be counted. Because its numbers can't be counted, its numbers are limitless.

"The invasion of Iraq was not an attempt to bring to justice the people responsible for the terrorist attacks... One American critic of the war compares the invasion of Iraq to the behaviour of the drunk who dropped his keys on one side of the street. He looked for them on the other side, because there was more light on that side. Iraq became a target, but not because the Iraqi regime had given comfort to the people who attacked the United States.

"The world continued to hear from the United States about the regime's weapons of mass destruction and the threat they posed to vital American interests... Real or imagined, the weapons were used to justify what the Bush administration calls ***preventive war***. It's a phrase which goes beyond rationality and well into absurdity. You cannot prevent a war by starting one...

"The new doctrine of preventive war has no standing in international law as it used to be understood. When it was put into practice in Iraq, there was no hiding what it was. It was, simply, unprovoked aggression."

Australian involvement: "It's hard to find a convincing reason why a country like Australia should take part in an adventure which can't be justified, legally or morally, and which serves no obvious Australian interest. The free trade deal with the United States, whatever it might actually be, worth – and it doesn't seem like much, is a very low return for the loss of reputation Australia has suffered.

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"To me as an observer, there seems to be an emotional element in Australian identification with the United States and American interests. It's the best explanation, or rather it's the only explanation I can find for Australian participation in the invasion of Iraq.

"The easy explanation (for the Iraqi invasion) is oil. The West's long standing interest in that part of the world is driven by concern about the control of oil resources. The redevelopment of the Iraqi oil industry, in a benign political environment, if this proves possible, would have obvious benefits for Western energy consumers."

US loss of reputation: "Much of what the world admires about America vanished in the fire and smoke of the war on terror. There was enormous sympathy for the United States after the attacks. It melted away in face of the arrogance and overbearing righteousness of the response.

"I can't help but use the word 'crusade' when I think about the American invasion of Iraq. I mean by that to say that the invasion was made possible by a popular belief in the justice of the American cause which goes beyond reason and cannot be understood by those who do not share it, let alone by those who have been the victims of it.

"The new crusaders carry, not a cross, but a ballot box. Democracy is the name they give to their faith, and their battle cry is freedom. Opponents of the invasion who questioned the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq were brushed off with the argument that the regime was evil and should be replaced by a democratic government.

"There is no doubt that the Iraqi regime was a brutal murderous dictatorship. The people of Iraq would have been justified in rising up in revolution against it. That is the point. The right of revolution belongs to the people of Iraq, and not to anyone else. No outsider has a right to impose a revolution on them. No outsider has the right to make a judgment about the risks they face and the costs they might have to carry. Those decisions belong to the people of Iraq and to nobody else.

"To make the point that international law protected the Iraqi regime from outside intervention is not to be an apologist for Saddam Hussein. The law protects governments we like as well as governments we don't like. If the law is broken, governments we like are as much at risk as governments we don't like.

"There is almost no chance of the American invasion of Iraq having a happy ending for anyone. Iraq today is unstable and close to ungovernable. What is revolutionary here is not that the world's most powerful country has broken the rules. It has changed the rules.

"What happens from now on is uncertain. In the short term, the American presidential election may make a difference... unlike the Prime Minister, I'm perfectly free to say that I hope George W Bush is sent back to his ranch as soon as possible.

On the US church and Iraq: "After the invasion the church was almost silent. Once, church leaders took the government on; now church leaders march with the government, and by their servile acquiescence they advance the aspirations of megalomaniacs."

On his sickness: "It's amazing how the diagnosis of an incurable condition can cause a magnificent surge in religious belief!"

On intervening in the affairs of another country: "Without a collective political will, there is nowhere to go in righting wrongs. South Africa was made to change without an invasion – it was not a legal process, nor an invasion."

On politics and God: "A problem of being in government – you don't like competition, and God provides a fair degree of competition."

"We have entered an age of instability. International institutions are discredited. Since the end of the cold war, the United Nations has stumbled from crisis to crisis. The authority of national governments is weakening as globalisation makes it harder for governments to meet the expectations of voters. The West, after the invasion of Iraq, is divided and demoralised."

The religious aspect: "As has happened at other times in history when secular authority weakens, religious authority may take its place. Terrorism and the response to terrorism have inevitably coloured our ideas of religious belief. Because of the religious affiliation of the terrorists, their religion itself is seen as a threat.

The response to terrorism in turn is seen as an affront to religious belief. Against the background of war and terror, religious belief becomes a marker for intolerance and prejudice. I do not see faith itself as the issue. My view is that society shapes the form of religious belief, and not the other way around.

How can people of good will make a difference? I think that we all as human beings have a duty to respect the beliefs of others. I think that we should also try to understand the faith of others, even though we have to acknowledge that there are limits to our understanding. We may understand the outward forms of faith, although it is not always easy to do that. We may understand the impulse which leads to belief. But in matters of faith there is always something which is beyond understanding. What matters is that we don't let our differences become a barrier between us.

One teaching is found in every religious faith. A great deal follows from it, in the secular as well as the religious world. It is the rule of behaviour which tells us that we must treat other people the way we would like to be treated ourselves. ■

The Lange lecture was organised by the Otago University chaplaincy, who gave Tui Motu *permission to reproduce this abridged version*

The South African Experience

Why has transition in South Africa from apartheid to democracy been relatively peaceful? Albert Nolan OP describes the breaking down of barriers but there is still a long way to go to aschieve real equality

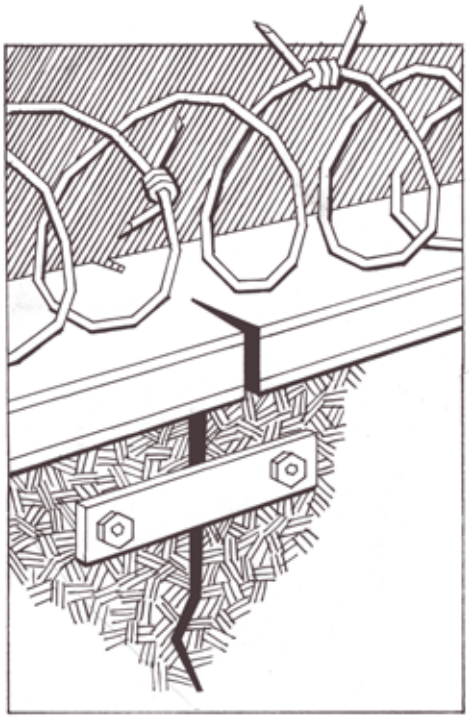
This year South Africa celebrates ten years of freedom. Readers will remember South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. The peacefulness of the transition and the spirit of reconciliation that has reigned in South Africa since then have been hailed as a miracle and a sign of hope. Miracle or not, the South African experience with all its limitations is surely one of the signs of our times.

The South African experience speaks to us of the possibility of peace and reconciliation in situations that appear to be irredeemably conflictual. None of us thought that democracy and peace would come as quickly and effectively as they did in South Africa. There are still problems – serious problems. Much depends on whether you see the incomplete reconciliation as a glass that is half full or half empty. The miracle is that there is any reconciliation at all.

The role of leadership

Around the world people have come to believe that the South African miracle was the work, almost exclusively, of Nelson Mandela. Most impressive was, and still is, his personal freedom. He speaks his mind and does whatever he believes to be right no matter what anyone in the world may think or say – including his own strongest supporters.

But Mandela was not alone as a great leader. Walter Sisulu, who died last year, was our extraordinarily humble, saintly and inspiring father figure. They were together in prison on Robben Island. Behind the two of them was Chief Albert Luthuli, the first South African to win the Nobel Peace Prize. And Oliver Tambo was the gentle but indefatigable



leader of the ANC in exile during the dark days when others like Mandela and Sisulu were in prison. He did not live to see the first democratic elections. Nor did Steve Biko, tortured and killed by the apartheid police in 1979.

Then there were the great church leaders of the time who contributed significantly to South Africa's peace and reconciliation: the well-known Anglican Archbishop, Desmond Tutu, the Afrikaans director of the Christian Institute, Dr Beyers Naude, and the Catholic Archbishop of Durban, Denis Hurley. And many others, men and women: thousands of unsung heroes who were imprisoned, tortured and killed so that the rest of us might one day enjoy freedom.

What the South African experience seems to be saying to us here is that justice, peace and reconciliation can be achieved only through good leadership: leadership that is humble, honest, fearless and unselfish, based upon a deep personal freedom.

The policy of non-racialism

The ANC or African National Congress advocated a policy of non-racialism. The enemy was not white people or the Nationalist Party or the apartheid president, P.W. Botha. It was the unjust system of apartheid that had to be destroyed, not people.

Unlike so many other conflicts in the world then or now, the South African conflict was not tribal or ethnic or religious. In fact, the white regime, by excluding all people of colour irrespective of their culture, religion or ethnic origins, even the people who were racially mixed, effectively united all tribes, religious faiths and shades of colour against them.

There can be no doubt that the policy of treating the system of apartheid itself as the enemy contributed substantially to the peacefulness of the transition and to the subsequent reconciliation – limited as it is. It also made it possible for Christians and people of other faiths to support the struggle with a theology of justice and peace. It became possible to hate the sin of racism without hating the sinner.

The role of civil society

Another element was the development of a strong civil society. Change was not just the work of politicians. Because only the mildest of opposition political parties were allowed to operate, the real opponents of apartheid, black and white, worked in and through the organs

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of civil society. They worked in trade unions, youth movements, women's movements, student movements as well as volunteer organisations or NGOs working for the poor, uneducated, illiterate, disabled and so forth. Churches and religious communities, especially movements working for justice and peace, were also seen as part of civil society. In 1983 almost all these organisations and movements came together to form the extremely powerful United Democratic Front (UDF).

Moreover, reconciliation in South Africa, has been due in no small measure to the faith communities. By supporting the struggle against apartheid and by rejecting the ideology behind it as 'heretical', the South African faith communities helped to dismantle apartheid and bring the politicians and revolutionaries to the negotiating table.

The path of negotiations

The National Party government had been struggling for years to contain the revolution. The ANC was engaged in urban guerrilla warfare, known as the armed struggle; the people, especially through the UDF, were making the country ungovernable; the churches were delegitimising the policy of apartheid and international sanctions were crippling the economy. The apartheid government tried every possible form of repression to maintain the status quo; but in the end they had to face the fact that either we had some kind of negotiated settlement or we would just destroy one another and the whole country in a bloodbath too horrible to contemplate.

The ANC, on the other hand, had always wanted a negotiated settlement. They knew perfectly well that a military victory or a coup d'état was impossible. A negotiated settlement offered the possibility of a 'win-win' solution. What the National Party and its allies had to learn was that there could be no reconciliation without *justice*. What the ANC and its allies had to learn was that there would be no peace without *compromise*.

Peace without justice

Over the years most whites had been pleading for peace and reconciliation, but they had not been willing to sacrifice their privileges and allow equal rights for the black majority in one undivided nation. They wanted peace without justice. On the other hand the black oppressed majority were very suspicious of any compromise that would leave them disadvantaged, or discriminated against, in one way or another. And yet, white fears had to be addressed.

An interim constitution allowed for a fully democratic election and, after that, the writing of a final constitution in which everyone would have a say. Today, we have one of the most progressive constitutions in the world as well as a very effective constitutional court. The result has been a growing human rights culture and a society based upon the rule of law.

Reconciliation in South Africa is based squarely upon a common belief in the value of negotiations. Negotiations were never brokered or facilitated or mediated by anyone from outside – even when the negotiations threatened to break down and once or twice did break down. The negotiators themselves were able to pick up the pieces again and again and get the process back on track.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

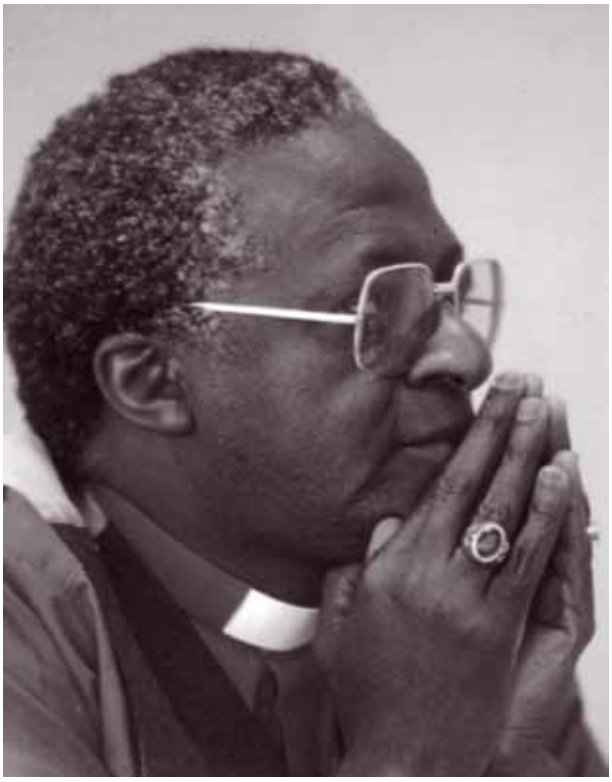
The negotiated settlement included an amnesty for the tens of thousands of people guilty of human rights violations. The last clause of the interim constitution obliged the newly elected government to set up mechanisms to deal with amnesty.

The principal mechanism was the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*. It had 17 members with the highly respected Archbishop Desmond Tutu in the chair. Its mandate was to investigate gross violations of human rights, to facilitate the granting of amnesty to those who made full disclosure of what they had done and who could prove that their motives were political. In addition, the Commission was to recommend ways in which the victims' dignity could be restored and reparations be made to them.

In the years that followed, 20,000 statements were received from victims, 2,000 of them were made in public hearings broadcast in full on the radio with highlights on television, and 8,000 applications for amnesty were heard, many of them also at public hearings. For more than two years South Africans were exposed almost daily to revelations about their traumatic past. It was an extremely emotional experience as perpetrators and victims faced one another. Some repentant, some not. Some willing to forgive, others not.

The South African experience highlights a number of human and Christian values:

- the value of dialogue and negotiation in place of violent conflict,
- the value of striving for a more just society rather than the victory of one group over another,
- the value of making carefully defined concessions or compromises,
- the value of a willingness to forgive or at least to grant amnesty when necessary,
- the value of dealing with the past rather than burying it,
- the value of avoiding complacency and apathy in the face of overwhelming problems,
- the value of a strong civil society including trade unions and religious communities; and, last but not least...
- the indispensable value of good leadership and personal freedom.



Bishop Desmond Tutu, one of the architects of modern South Africa. Photograph taken about the time when he received the Nobel Peace Prize, in 1984

The TRC was an extraordinarily important instrument for bringing about reconciliation in South Africa. It could not demand repentance from the perpetrators nor forgiveness from the victims – much less prove either of these. That kind of reconciliation belongs in the arena of religion (the sacrament of confession, for example) or the sphere of personal relations. It did happen, though. There have been some dramatic displays of remorse and powerful acts of forgiveness, both during the TRC hearings and since then.

On the other hand, watching the worst perpetrators of crimes against humanity 'get away with it' was not easy. It was, unfortunately, the price that had to be paid for peace. Perhaps more could have been done, though, for the victims. But there can be no doubt that without the TRC there would have been practically no reconciliation to speak of.

An ongoing challenge

South Africa's reconciliation remains incomplete in some very serious ways.

Racism is still rife. As an attitude of mind it did not, and cannot, disappear overnight. Some say that it has simply been swept under the carpet. One of the greatest of insults in South Africa now is to call someone a racist. And yet, how often one hears that give-away disclaimer: 'I don't want to be racist, but …'

Misunderstandings between black and white abound. Some are cultural, others arise from a lack of appreciation of how much black people actually suffered under apartheid. Whites on the whole are singularly lacking in gratitude for the miracle of reconciliation in South Africa.

On the other hand, as a nation we are learning to live together. The present leadership goes out of its way to celebrate reconciliation and to promote it. December 16, once a holiday celebrating a military victory, is now our *Day of Reconciliation*. The struggle for reconciliation continues because, as President Thabo Mbeki never ceases to remind us, we are still fundamentally a divided nation.

Another great evil that remains is ***poverty***. Much has been done. Millions of houses have been built, the supply of electricity and water has been widely extended, roads and schools have been improved, the economy is booming and yet large numbers of people are still jobless and destitute. Economic justice will be the great challenge of the future.

A social problem that seems to have increased substantially since the end of apartheid is ***crime***. It is not easy to say why. There are no doubt numerous factors that come together to account for the increase in muggings, burglaries, car hijackings, heists, bank robberies, drug-dealing, fraud, corruption, rape and child abuse. But we are not the kind of country that will allow such things to go unnoticed and unchanged.

Towering above all our other problems, though, is the ***HIV/AIDS pandemic.*** By far the majority of infected people in the world today live and die in the southern countries of Africa. South Africa has been particularly hard hit. Our democracy, our economy and our reconciliation will be seriously challenged by the deaths of millions of relatively young people, many of them economically active and well educated, and by the many millions who will be orphaned and by a struggling population that will be further traumatised by this new tragedy.

On the other hand, we are a dynamic country, full of energy and activism. We argue, debate, accuse and blame one another, but when we are faced with problems like racism, poverty, crime, corruption, rape, child abuse, and HIV/AIDS, we protest, organise, mobilise, demonstrate and run campaigns. In the political language of South Africa, we 'toyi-toyi'.

This is a sign of hope for the future, among other things because such forms of protest generally bring together people of different races, creeds and cultures. Examples of this would be the *Treatment Action Campaign* which campaigned successfully against the government's policy on AIDS, and the Basic Income Grant Campaign which is proposing a particular way of helping the poor.

From the point of view of Christian hope we still have much further to go. We can see how the Spirit of God has been working in our midst, but we can also see that our peace and reconciliation are limited, because as individuals most of us are not at peace with ourselves, not yet at peace with the earth and not at peace with God. Without a great degree of inner peace, human beings, in South Africa or elsewhere, will always find it difficult to live in peace and harmony with one another. ■

Albert Nolan, South African author and Dominican Vicar General, was recently awarded the Order of Luthuli in Silver for his lifelong dedication to the struggle for justice in his country.

A pakeha in search of tikanga (*values*) and taonga (*treasures*) Maori

Ron Sharp looks at the foreshore controversy through the eyes of a pakeha who has come to appreciate and reverence Maoritanga

I grew up believing that we lived in an essentially monocultural society where English culture dominated, while Maori, Celtic and other cultures were treated merely as quaint entertainments. All that changed when, in the early '70s, I was invited onto a marae by a friend was being baptised into his inherited culture after 25 years of trying to be pakeha. Curiosity had me hounding him for the significance of the amazing experience.

The birth of Maui – the child Maui is wrapped in his mother's hair

As a local person, I became part of the tangata whenua (*people of the area*) already seated on the marae or space in front of the whare tupuna (*house of our ancestors*). The manuhiri (*visitors*) waited beyond the entrance to be called onto the marae by our women. They entered stealthily through the gate aware of the invitation to immerse themselves into the history of our people. They paused half-way to sense the presence of the spirits of all those ancestors buried in our urupa (*cemetery*) nearby.

Our entire story became alive among us all. As the manuhiri took their place opposite us, we gazed at each other's eyes, faces, mannerisms so that we could make connections with relations and so become one with each other.

The speeches that followed also aimed to cement this bonding. Each group moved towards the other in single file and shared the hongi or pressing of noses pausing long enough to exchange each other's life spirit (breath) and so mingle together in communion.

On the paepae (*porch)* everyone removed their shoes and carefully entered the sacred (*tapu*) whare tupuna, as if the history of outside was now contained in a single person. Above is the painted centre beam running the whole length of the whare and the kowhaiwhai rafters depicting the backbone and ribs. We are now within the person of our people, past members carved into the walls and in photographs and us now living out our stage of the journey.

Is this what is meant by 'church' and 'the Church as Body of Christ'? Is this what Jim Baxter meant when he observed that our Western Christian missionaries presumed they were bringing the Holy Spirit to Maori and never thought to see if It was already there?

The stories of creation contain the trinity of Ranginui, Papatuanuku and the Children and other similarities with our Judeo/Christian Bible stories. Do we detect a stronger feminine side of God in Papa than in our more patriarchal divinity? The pair are locked in loving embrace indicating the inseperability of our origins.

Their Children are stifled, condemned to crawling and living in darkness, with no light to 'enlighten' them. Tane forces his parents apart so that humans can grow and stand tall (*kia kaha*). But with the appearance of light and colour come storms, earthquakes and volcanos. There is a bad as well as a good side to growing up.

The stories carry messages about being balanced and about sharing. The love between Rangi and Papa is a good thing, but it can be overprotective. The beginnings of everything are shrouded in the mystery of darkness.

The god-man, Maui, is the Maori Christ figure, a bridge between the gods and humankind. He, too, turns the rules of control upside down and makes a better world. His trapping of the sun speaks of the mystery of time. His fishing up of the North Island shows the age difference between Te Waipounamu and Te Ika o Te Maui with its battered mountainous and punctured lakes, rivers and valleys, speaking of the impatience and greed of humans rushing in before correct procedures, reflections and rituals. Maui is also crushed in his quest for immortality.

What are the values in which today's debate in the teen-times of Maori-Pakeha relationship are rooted? They are surely rangatiratanga (*trustee-ownership*) and mana (*mutual respect*).

James Belich believes that the Polynesian people who started landing on these shores from 800-odd years ago, lived in villages around the coasts as if they were still living on small islands from which they came. They grew up by the sea feeding off its abundance and understanding its complexities. Canoes were their only means of transport. Venturing into the heartland was at first hesitant and gradual.

The story of Paikea and the whale, of *Whale Rider* fame, comes from the people of Ngati Porou on the East Coast of the North Island. It speaks of their prowess on and in the sea. They are renowned for their fishing and diving skills. The legend portrays their loving relationship with Te Moana and her myriad children.

There were vast spaces around the early Polynesian settlers, and land, like the sea, was communally available for them. Imagine the shock when they realised what the new pakeha settlers meant by ownership, putting up fences, locking doors and staking out 'my' private area.

In the foreshore and seabed debate, Maori have not sought 'ownership' but simply recognition of their customary rights. They would be happy for ownership to be shared, but it is theirs to give, not the government's to take. The Crown has assumed ownership where title has not been extinguished. The local iwi in Marlborough recognised their Treaty partner's governing authority (*kawanatanga*) and approached them for their resource consent to establish mussel farms in their customary seabed among the other pakeha-owned farms.

Because they were refused consent they appealed and won the right to have their case heard by the Native Lands Court. We all know the reactionary backlash of misguided imaginings and the pressure on Government to pre-empt the legal process by yet again proposing to create laws that blocked iwi from being heard in the Courts.

Have you ever been raped or abused? All your self-esteem is sucked out of you, all certainty goes, and you are left a broken person. The greed of our settler fathers in the latter half of the 19th Century violated the prestige (*mana*) of the tangata whenua.

Maori not only seek to be able to fish commercially alongside pakeha companies; they also want to be part of authorities that legislate on quotas and environmental issues because they are seeing huge traditional fishing grounds (e.g. Lake Ellesmere) prohibited to fishing because of pollution. By whom, and since when?

Maori stood tall before domination destroyed their mana. Today they are discovering their self-esteem again: witness the power of the recent 43,000-strong hikoi. They don't want all their land back, or vast amounts of money. They do want their mana restored.

They want to be respected as true tangata whenua, a proud and intelligent people, who have hugely contributed to our country. They want a turangawaewae or place in each of their areas, where they can be seen to stand with their mana recognised, not as some quaint culture of the past but as true partners in the journey of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Rather than knee-jerk reactions from their Treaty partners and their every claim for justice seen as a threat, Maori want to share our breaths in communion together and grow into a marriage in which the values and understandings become a new whole. ■

Reorganising the Catholic Church

In Part 1 (August Tui Motu) American sociologist Andrew Greeley described how the Vatican is out of touch with many of the world's problems. Here he offers some solutions. How does one go about creating subsidiarity in the church?

The selection of bishops

The "great" popes of the early church – Leo the Great(440-461) and Gregory the Great(590-604) – both said a new bishop should be selected by the priests, accepted by the people, and consecrated by the bishops of the province. A new bishop should not be imposed on them from the outside.

In the American church, until the 1919 revision of Canon Law, the 'irremovable' pastors of the Archdiocese of Chicago had the right to submit a terna (a list of three candidates for bishop) to Rome. So did the bishops of Illinois and the archbishops of the country.

Hence, not so long ago, some form of popular nomination of bishops existed. I would propose that in the future the priests of Chicago (perhaps the priest council) should be able to submit a terna to the pastoral council (laity). The latter would either accept it or work out a compromise terna, which would then go on to Rome.

The pope would then choose the new archbishop or request another terna (and if he deemed it necessary, another and yet another indefinitely). It would be difficult to keep these discussions secret, and perhaps it would be better not to try. Secrecy is a dubious strategy in a church whose founder warned that what is whispered in the closets will be proclaimed from the housetops. It is also an impossible strategy in the contemporary world where whispers find their way instantly into the international media.

Such a change need not be as abrupt as at first it may seem, especially since it would be in part a return to a system that persisted until the early 20th Century. It would be necessary, though, to revise Canon Law. While the pope would still have the final say, even he would not be able to impose a bishop whom the priests and people did not want.

Would there be politics in such a system? Certainly. To be sure, the present system of covert cronyism has plenty of politics also. Could the Holy Spirit work through a more democratic process? Probably more effectively than in the present system.

Since most dioceses would select from among their own number, such a reform would help temper the ambition fostered in the present system wherein a man in one diocese seeks to be promoted to a more important diocese and even a possible red hat. The church might even consider limiting bishops to two five-year terms, as many religious orders do for their leaders. This policy could also apply to the bishop of Rome, but only if each pope voluntarily promised to abide by it.

Some people have suggested that a more democratic selection of bishops would produce churchmen who would (as they say the Anglicans do) ignore traditional teaching. Without wishing to involve myself in the discussion of the current Anglican problems, I would point out that the pope would still have the final say, and that the Catholic laity and clergy in America are generally sane, sensible people – more sane and sensible than many who have played the role of king makers in American Catholic history.

Strengthen bishops' conferences and synods

Subsidiarity requires that national hierarchies be given more authority and power – and thus be rehabilitated from Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's attacks on them. National bishops' conferences should be able to enforce decisions (made by some kind of supermajority) on all dioceses. They should have authority to make decisions in many matters without prior clearance from Rome, though the pope would have the right to review any decision he thought harmful to the faithful.

There is also need for supranational synods (European, North American, English-speaking world) with clearly delimited powers, as well as more local synods within a country. This process would force bishops to attend even more meetings, but perhaps not many more than they do now. Such synods ought not to be merely pilgrimages from preconceived ideas to foregone conclusions, as some American bishops are now recommending for a plenary council.

Furthermore, the church should rehabilitate the international synod of bishops in Rome, give it canonical and theological status, free it from domination by the

Curia, and permit it to establish its own offices in Rome and prepare its own agenda (subject to papal approval). Between meetings, a group of its members should be appointed interim representatives, and be available for consultation with the pope whenever he desires it – or, perhaps, whenever they request it.

The idea would work only if a pope were completely committed to consultation. The synod, like a general council, however, would have no authority over the pope and no right to reverse his decisions. The synod would be nothing more than a group under the inspiration of the Spirit which would be ready to discuss problems facing the church with the pope, and to whom the pope (presumably) would listen.

Note carefully that at no point in this vast structure is papal authority under challenge. The pope might have to listen to many more people, some of them doubtless with wild ideas. On the other hand, if he did not want to listen to them, he would not be forced to do so. Nor would there be any limitation on his right to micromanage any subsidiary institution in the church, right down to the local diocese or parish. My plan is not to put restraints on a pope but rather to make more information available to him and his advisers.

Central government of the church

It will not do to return the election of a pope to the actual (instead of titular) parish priests of Rome. Clearly, the historical process for the election of the bishop of Rome has evolved and is now quite broad, yet the priests of Rome ought to have and nominate their own vicar. Still, some way must be found for the clergy and laity of the world to be involved in the choice.

The Roman Curia is in need of reform. The problem with the Curia, as I see it, is not that it's too big but rather that its 2000 members are much too small a staff for advising the leader of a church of 1.2 billion people. The Curia must be larger, better trained, more professional, and more restrained in its propensity to interfere in problems that could be solved better at a local level.

Terms of service should be limited to two five-year periods (or maybe only one), so that membership on a Curial staff would not become a prerequisite for ecclesiastical advancement. Perhaps a rule could be made that would preclude immediate election to a bishopric from a curial position. Finally, there should be a division of labour based on representation from the regions of world. The Curia should rely on and consist of specialists whose training and function is to understand the church in all its distant manifestations.

Church leadership should make every effort to prevent the Curia's common practice of drawing up elaborate a priori plans for the entire church with little or no consultation from those who might be affected. A classic case is the recent *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. The experts at the *Congregation for Divine Worship* share with their fellow liturgists a propensity for spinning out of the air fussy rubrical reforms that they think address crucial problems – in this case lack of reverence at the Eucharist and a failure to distinguish between the priest and the laity.

all too often today
the episcopate appears as an isolated
oligarchy – a priestly caste

In fact, any serious empirical analysis (which is hard for liturgists because they know everything already) or high-quality information of any kind from the Catholic laity would have shown that the serious liturgical problem is not the occasional lack of reverence or the almost non-existent collapse of the distinction between clergy and laity. The sad truth is that the liturgy is often boring, especially when it is marked by poor music and bad preaching. If the *Congregation for Divine Worship* were truly interested in the quality of the liturgy, it would launch a world-wide campaign to improve sermons.

The structural change I have outlined may seem cumbersome, and it may even appear more cumbersome than the current arrangements. But given the size of the church and the goals of subsidiarity, more men and women must be brought into the decision-making process, always reserving final decisions to the pope as necessary. These changes cannot be implemented all at once. The church would have to see what works and what does not. While some of my suggestions would require revisions of Canon Law – or perhaps a whole new code – as well as some theological reconsiderations, none of them, as far as I am aware, violates Catholic doctrine.

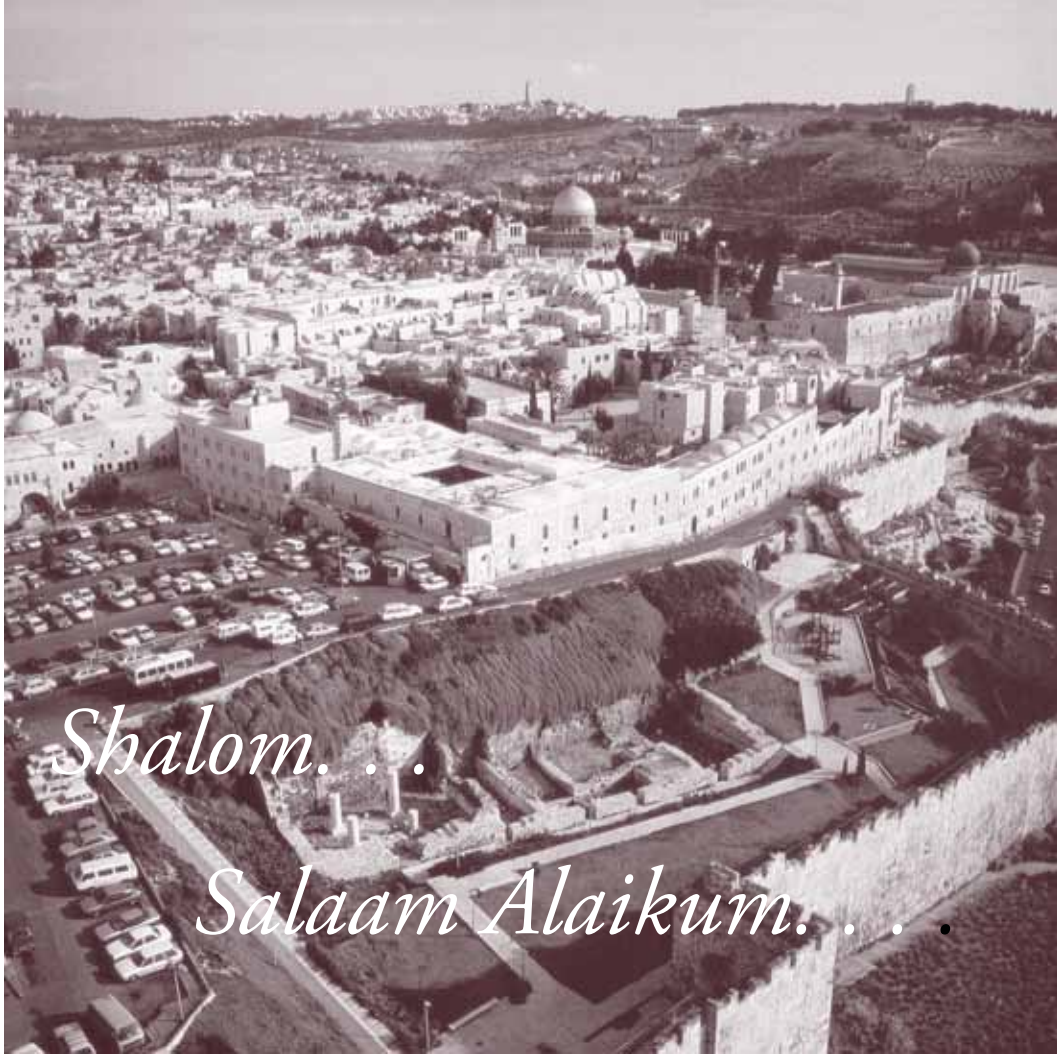
Is there any chance that the next pope would begin to move in these directions? One would be ill-advised to bet on it. Still, the most serious failures of the church since 1960 are due not to a resistance to change, but to the failure to adjust to the administrative and managerial demands of a world church in a world culture. All too often today, the world episcopate appears as an isolated oligarchy, a removed priestly caste claiming access to special knowledge of God's will. Only systematic reform of how the institution gathers information can change that appearance. ■

Published courtesy of Commonweal magazine. Andrew Greeley is a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago and is the author of numerous theology books and papers and sociological surveys

Peace. . .

In mid-August Dunedin Presbyterian minister Peter Frost and his wife Jocelyn joined a 600-strong group of Christians, Jews and Muslims comverging on Jerusalem to pray and march for peace.

We received this eyewitness acount as we went to press.



"Jerusalem rose gleaming from the hills in the afternoon sun."
The city wall (*bottom*); the Jewish quarter (*centre*) including the Temple platform and the Dome of the Rock Mosque sacred to all Muslkims. The Mount of Olives (*top right*)

At first we were just naive pilgrims – little more than tourists really. We were a bit awe-struck being actually in Jerusalem; we were itching to see everything. That we did see everything was a wonder – and what was to follow would change our lives.

The entry to Jordan via Amman began with an evening meeting with Muslim politicians and academics, whose passion and despair over the draining conflict voiced a quiet passion that left the Foreshore debate in New Zealand a pallid and mean thing by comparison.

Here they remember the friends who have died, not just in the four wars since World War 2 (1948 War of Independence; 1956 Sinai War; 1967 Six Day War; and 1973 Yom Kippur war), but also the excruciating nearness of the children who died in the first Intifada (2000) and the second (2002). Here already, pain was not bound by religious belief. Our education had begun.

We went on to Israel via Mount Nebo, where Moses first saw the land, "well watered and promised", and we were able to look down upon all the conflicted Holy Land. It was a moment in time – and I think the first of the tears began there.

We crossed the border a little later passing the first armed checkpoint; there the soldiers' lives of mostly utter boredom are occasionally punctuated with high but deadly excitement. We were later to get to know these men rather well, but we did not know that yet, so went on obliviously into the Land.

Jerusalem rose gleaming from the hills in the afternoon sun. Sitting on the edge of the rain shadow, it is a city that leaves the desert and gathers the first trees – olives, of course – for those approaching from the West Bank. The shift from Palestine to Israel was from hot dry to cool green, from empty desert to spired city; we became silent for the first time.

Generally Kiwis make a lot of noise I realised. That was good when we led the Peace March through the Old City singing "Peace, Shalom. Salaam Alaikum" – but it changed as soon as we entered the holy places of Allah, and Jehovah, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Any glimmering doubts of the truth of Christ's redeeming grace melted in the heat and shadow of the Via Dolorosa. Here we lifted and bowed our heads, seeing and feeling the stumbling walk to execution. It didn't seem to matter that the sites were perhaps not exact, or that they were no

longer the simple preserved places of good archaeology, but now the embellished and magnificent churches, chapels, mosques and plazas. It mattered simply that we were there.

No film could portray the moment of acute pain I felt when I looked at the simple hole in the ground where the upright Cross was seated suddenly into the ground with nailed figure jerked upright. Then I cried – as I do now even as I write.

We returned at night, having started our days at 5 am, to the vast, luxurious Hyatt Regency hotel. We noted the small hints of the 95 percent drop in tourism: lights not replaced and a faulty lift door. And there we remembered the Bedouin shacks beside the highway. Little donkeys had appeared, fat-tailed sheep and their shepherds walking the dry hills above the motorways. We saw them, but did not encounter them from our air-conditioned coach.

We meet the people of Islam ("way of peace"); we became sisters and brothers in an astonishing encounter. Joce has a 'sister' Doreen: a Christian required by Israel to be Jordanian, who lives above Station Number Six on the Via Dolorosa. Station Six is where Jesus stumbled again, and St Veronica, a nurse like Joce, wiped his face with a damp cloth retaining the image. That is another story – for another report.

And I have a 'brother', who happens to be the leading Christian Israeli peace activist – Fr Abou Hatoum, the RC priest responsible for the church at Nazareth. He has agreed to come and visit us in New Zealand.

We meet the people of Judaism (The Chosen Race). We hear devout Armenian Jews talk with a passion of Jesus the Christ. These moments are like gifts washed down, baptising us in grace and truth and wonder.

But that day four men died one kilometre away from us. Many more were injured as bombs and rockets slammed into their peace, and a tearing reality filled our lives. That too is a story for another day. ■

Pilgrims on the Via Dolorosa: the Fifth Station – Jesus meets his mother Mary

Iraqi Bombings Increase Christian Exodus

The bombing of six Christian churches in Iraq earlier this month is likely to increase further the number of Christians leaving Iraq. "This is a tragedy, since Christians have been in the country since the first century – long before modern Iraq and the United States ever came into being," said a Christian journalist based in Iraq.

The bombings, which killed at least 11 people and injured 52, were only a beginning and had already resulted in an increase of Iraqi Christians leaving the country. Although no group has yet claimed responsibility for the attacks, many Christians do not believe the attacks were the work of Iraqi Muslims.

"We have lived with Muslims for thousands of years," said Christian businessman Fadel Aziz, "yet nothing like this has ever happened before. They cannot be Iraqis. They come to make trouble in our country."

And Samir Benham, who was praying in the Assyrian Catholic Church when it was attacked, said that whoever did the bombing had no religion or principle. "No religion accepts such acts of sabotage and murder. They want civil strife between us and the Muslims," he said. "When will they learn that only peace and love can restore our country? I pray for their forgiveness."

(Bible Society)

Cenacle mini Sabbatical

4 March 2005 – 14 April 2005

In Mark 6:30 Jesus said:

"Come away to some quiet place all by 9 yourselves and rest for a while."

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 and 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,
267 Wellington Street, Ormiston, Q.4160, Australia
Tel (07) 3286-4011 Fax (07) 3821-3788

Earlier this year Daniel Eyre, a 20-y
months with Kerygma teams. His
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Carrying the G

Kerygma Teams run a DTS (*Discipleship Training School*) every year in Australia, and this year I was one of the members. Kerygma Teams is the Catholic version of YWAM (*Youth With A Mission*). It focusses on mobilising young Catholics and works primarily among Catholics. However, it is also ecumenical, and our base leader was in fact a Protestant. The rest of us were Catholics.

Kerygma Teams originated in Ireland about 12 years ago, and now it has spread to ten countries. The movement in Australia is sponsored by the *Servants of Jesus* community, who are a Covenant community and mostly Catholic. They are charismatic, and we met regularly with them while we were in Australia. We were 14 in our team, eight students and six leaders.

The Australian experience

We started off with eight weeks of lectures, then two weeks of ministry, in Sydney and in Canberra, roundabout Easter. I stayed in Sydney for the ministry exercise. We went one day to a juvenile prison, ministering to a group of inmates younger than ourselves. They responded well; they didn't seem to get many visitors like ourselves. We also worked with the University Catholic chaplaincy team. We had a Stations of the Cross through the campus. I found that quite difficult at the start: I was a bit embarrassed.

The second day on campus I roamed more freely, and I found a good 'starter' was to talk about Mel Gibson's film of the Passion, which was on at that time. It's a secular University, so the reception wasn't great. One day we attended a public lecture given by Cardinal Pell, and since it coincided with Gay Pride Week, he had a group asking very provocative questions. I thought the Cardinal handled them well and stayed calm. He let them have their say before giving the Catholic position.

Then we returned for another four weeks of lectures to prepare for the main mission, to Ghana in West Africa. Every two years Kerygma Teams hold a world-wide gathering, and in 2004 it was due to happen in Lithuania. So we were offered the choice, to go to both places or just one. After some discernment we chose to go to both, in spite of the extra cost. Eventually we set off as a party of ten, six students and four staff: five boys and five girls.

World Conference in Lithuania

We spent two weeks in Lithuania, attending the conference first and then we went to a GXP weekend – or 'God experience' – for 45 Lithuanian teenagers. We worked with some Lithuanian Catholic YWAM volunteers, who acted as

ear-old from Dunedin, spent six
trip took him to Australia (above
o Lithuania before reaching
ion in Ghana

ospel to Ghana

interpreters. We all prepared talks for the group. I saw a real change in those teenagers. They were 'cultural' Catholics, but they had never had an experience like this before. My talk was about the Cross and our response.

Many of the young people could understand my English if I spoke slowly. There was a Papua New Guinean in our small group, and they understood his English better than mine! You had to learn to be patient while they discussed in Lithuanian, and I had to wait for the translator to hear what they were saying in the small groups.

We attended Mass regularly, so I've experienced Mass in Lithuanian, Polish and two African languages. I was pleased to be able to follow in another language.

I found the weekend a bit disorganised, and I had to take responsibility to make it work. So it wasn't all easy. And I was in charge of the finance and had a budget of $AUS10,000 to manage. I enjoyed the Lithuanian people, and it was my first experience in a non-English speaking place. The food was 'interesting'.

The Lithuanians seem to be still recovering from the communist period: it had a weakening effect on the family unit, and some of the men had lost their sense of identity and forgotten how to be fathers any more. We then spent a couple of days in Warsaw, where there seemed to be a cathedral on every corner. But we had little time for sight-seeing, because we flew straight on to Ghana, to Accra.

Mission to Ghana

We were in Ghana for seven weeks, most of the time at Koforidua in the south which was a Christian area. Before we left Australia we received some briefing on what to do and what not to do in Ghana. For instance: don't walk in bare feet because of hookworm; don't buy meat from the roadside. Don't give your address to people, because they look on all white people as rich and they will pester you for cash.

But we spent a week also in northern Ghana at a smaller place called Tamale (see picture above left) in the Muslim area. On a couple of days we went out to visit prayer groups in the villages and talk to the people. Many were still animist as well as Muslim. We discovered it was culturally acceptable to be Muslim – but not to be Christian. Anyone who converted was almost an outcast. Some of our team looked for 'instant' conversions, but I believe that conversion is a process. You simply sow the seeds: it is the local community which has to nourish their growth.

➥

Mass time in Ghana (the churches are nearly always full)

Two choristers (above)

After Mass 'cuppa' (left)

I felt we had to be clear about what we were trying to give them. One I spoke to showed a lot of interest: he was a 'cultural' Muslim, but he spoke of the cost of conversion. I talked about the parable of the Pearl. I thought how in New Zealand there is no cost to being a Christian, whereas there it would cost everything. He seemed interested in the idea that he would be freed of his sins by Jesus on the Cross. And he was attracted by becoming close to God who is his Father and Jesus as his Saviour. This conversation might have taken half an hour.

We visited villages on two days. We were made welcome, but it may have been because we were white and they didn't see white people often. They were more than happy for us to pray for them, especially for healing. This mission experience was primarily for us to learn. However long I was there, I knew I would still have to leave them.

We spent most of the time in Koforidua with a young Ghanaian couple, Paul and Bernice Otoo, who together with an English missionary, Anthony, looked after us. They were the organisers of our programme. Each tribe has its own language, but English remains the official language. But we still needed interpreters.

We spent time in Catholic parishes, attended liturgies and worked both with adults and student groups. We danced and sang, prayed with them and performed mimes. We also visited schools and gave lessons. and worked with prayer groups. One place we visited was an orphanage, and I saw a little girl there suffering HIV. We also went to a street boys' home. We had learned some dramas we could use with them.

One good experience for me was giving a talk to an adult prayer group and knowing I was able to get the message across. The bishop told us that a majority would still be only first or second generation Christians; so it was necessary to work for conversion not only of the individual but also of the culture.

I had times when I was homesick, and had to give myself a break from the African music, even though I had liked it very much at first. Once I got over my initial excitement of being there, I think I experienced some culture shock. I then realised I had to choose to enjoy this experience – or not. One disadvantage was that often we were not with people long enough to create a real relationship. I learned to become flexible, and often had to accept that time was not always so important.

People are very spiritually aware, and Christianity is flourishing. The churches and the seminaries are full. However, it is also true that to be a priest is a good status to have. Some of the villages we visited were still pretty primitive. The people were subsistence farmers, especially in the north. HIV was there, but malaria is the big problem and we had to take precautions, like wearing a long-sleeved shirt and taking pills each day.

Kerygma team leading children in action songs at a Ghanaian school

Debriefing

After we returned to Australia we had a week's debriefing before we finally broke up. We also prepared ourselves for re-entry into normal life. Will my old friends be interested at all in what I have been doing? Will I have something concrete to do when I get home?

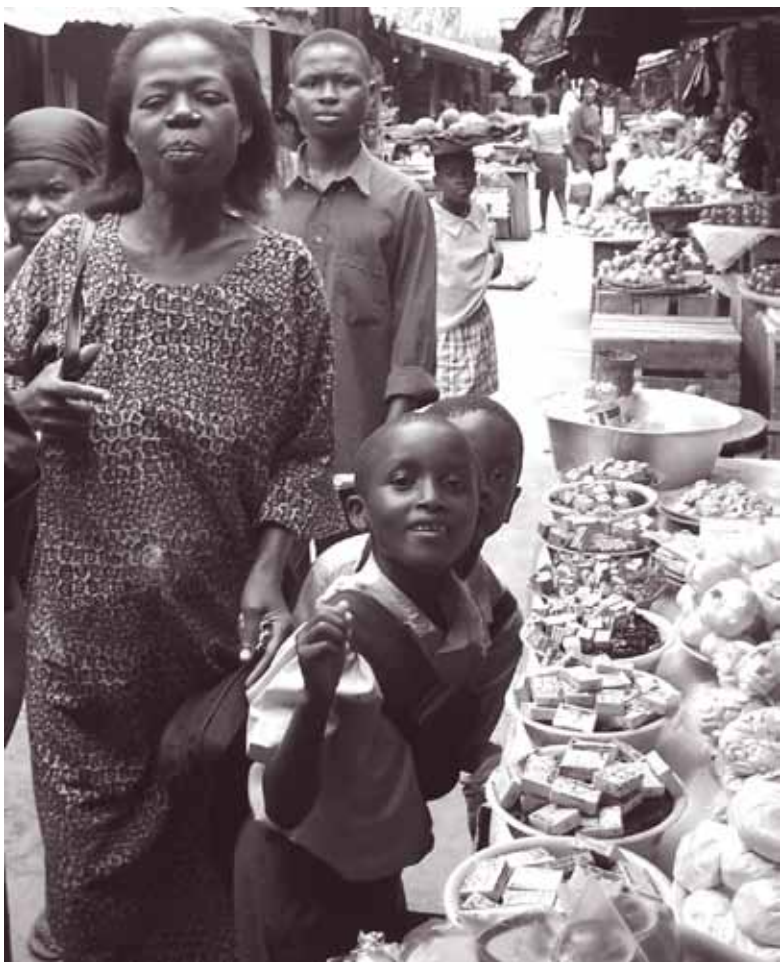
The whole experience has helped me look afresh at life. It has been a 'circuit-breaker' for me. I can say within myself: "God, you are Number One priority in my life, and I want to give more than just ten minutes a day to you". I have grown more in personal independence, learning how to live with people, and to resolve conflicts by talking things through.

I have read the Bible right through – but it took me six months, not 72 hours! I read the histories first finishing with *Luke* and *Acts*. Then I went back to the Psalms and prophets. I have enjoyed studying the Bible – and learning how to study it. I enjoyed *One hundred and one ways to read the Bible*, by Raymond Brown. I think it has also taught me to be more discerning.

But the programme was not just academic. You learned more how to relate to God and to each other. Some of those there were in need of healing – and received it. Some were still in the process of discovering their faith in a Catholic context. All in all it has been a tremendous experience for me and I am grateful for all those who helped it to happen. ■

Street scenes in Ghana

A bespoke tailor(right)
Chopping yams (below)



The New Russia

Cathedral of the Assumption at Sergiev Posed, headquarters of the Russian Orthodox Church. In front of the Cathedral is the little Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit

Peter Stupples had visited Russia many times.

But he was astonished by what he discovered this year

I first visited the Soviet Union in 1965 and returned to Russia fairly regularly over the next few years until 1992. I knew the dour years of Brezhnev, the hope of perestroika and the social and political dislocations accompanying the break up of the Soviet empire. After a long gap of twelve years I returned once more to Russia in June 2004.

I had read about the changes but was not prepared for the radical social reconstruction of the Russian cities and the evident speed of change. What is taking place now is nothing less than another revolution – this time a rapid and full-scale transition to capitalism. How does this strike the eye? Everyone in Moscow and St Petersburg has a cell phone and uses it as a regular part of daily life. Young people are dressed in the latest fashions. There are many fast food outlets – Russian chains, selling Russian food, as well as McDonalds. Cafes and restaurants are booming.

There has been a massive growth in the number of motor vehicles: in Moscow BMWs and Mercedes, less up-market in St Petersburg. Both cities are approaching gridlock. On the highway between them endless lines of container-shifting trucks travel at speed. The shops are full of goods of great variety, even country mini-markets. A supermarket we visited a number of times in St Petersburg had a better range of products than in many Western cities. The growing addiction to gambling was astounding – more casinos and pokey-machine outlets than anywhere I have seen in the West. New high-quality housing projects are mushrooming on every Moscow horizon, but distinctly less noticeable in the provinces. If people can't afford new apartments then they are frantically upgrading their old flats. There are makeshift markets selling materials to do up your home, or to repair your car, on every spare piece of ground.

There is a hum, a positive feel, an urgency, even a cheerfulness that sometimes takes the breath away. Especially if you knew the old Soviet Russia, with its shortages of consumer goods, their poor quality, and the rundown feeling, the all-pervasive gloom.

There was a great deal of discussion and correspondence this year in the *St Petersburg Times* (edited by New Zealander Robin Munro) of the harassment of tourists by gypsies and other predators. My recent experience of the city, and other parts of Russia, was that this grim picture has been overdone. Generally we met honest traders and streets as safe as in any other city where there are many tourists – as safe as New York, London or Paris. That is not to say much, it might be said, but Russia's reputation as a mugger's paradise is undeserved.

This capitalist revolution affects everyone. Alongside it is a religious revolution – the Orthodox church triumphant. This is epitomised in Moscow by the rebuilding of the massive Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (below). The original cathedral took decades to build, 1839-1883. It commemorated Russia's victory over Napoleon in 1813. It was blown up in the 1930s by Stalin, who intended to replace it with a Palace of the Soviets topped by a 100-metre statue of Lenin.

This never eventuated and the site was used for an open-air swimming pool. After the fall of Communism the church recovered the site and asked for donations from the public to restore the cathedral. Building began in 1995 and it was completed in 1997 at the cost of US$ 350 million. It now seems to commemorate the church's victory over Communism!

In every city and town churches, monasteries and convents are being given back to the church. They are being restored and repainted. For example we visited the Holy Lake Iversky Monastery on an island on Lake Valdai. It now houses a small group of monks, but many of these restored institutions are assisted by lay brothers and a host of mainly women volunteers. A massive road is being built from the charming village of Valdai to the monastery to take the hundreds of tourists expected in the next few years.

In addition to foreign tourists many churches and monasteries are visited by busloads of Orthodox pilgrims, many looking quite poor. In every church there are sellers of candles and religious trinkets, tables with pencils and paper to request commemorative prayers to be chanted in mass by the priest, there are christenings and confessions, the kissing of icons, weddings and funerals, religious education and charitable works – all centred on the church. This seems particularly the province of women, but I noticed some men and a larger number of young people taking part in the routines of church life.

Such a change from my first visit to St Petersburg in 1965 when there was barbed-wire around the church of the *Resurrection of Christ on Spilled Blood* (the title of the church refers to the fact that it was erected on the site of the assassination of the tsar Alexander II in 1881) and three old women had to clamber along the embankment of the Griboedov Canal at Easter to get close enough to kiss the locked and dilapidated doors.

Concert halls sell tickets on a two price basis – for tourists and for locals. Tourists pay almost double. We went to the Mariinsky Theatre to a performance of Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, conducted by Valery Gergiev, one of the most renowned conductors in the world today. It was the opera Stalin condemned, causing Shostakovich's disgrace and fear of arrest, a fear from which he never recovered. The seats were as expensive as good tickets for similar events in New Zealand. The orchestra was first class. The theatre was wonderful – a dark green arc of many-tiered boxes decorated with gold painted baroque arabesques. There were marble corridors through which to stroll between acts, with wine and snacks in cafeteria alcoves. It was made memorable by the music, the quality of the playing,..00 the performers, the setting – as I have always remembered the theatre in Russia. Most of the audience were tourists. The arts now depend upon visitors to pay the bills instead of the state.

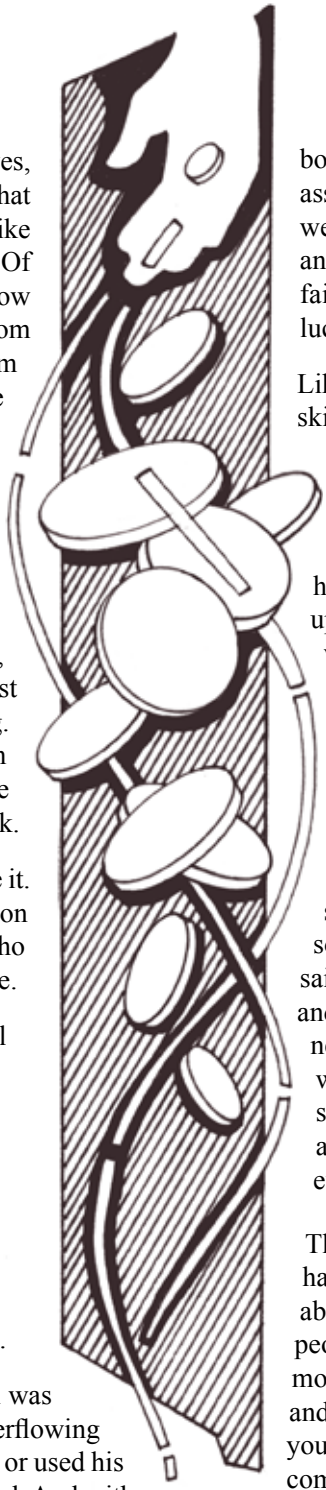
Is the new Russia only good news? I asked this question a number of times and always got the same reply. It is very good for some. the young and the enterprising, but terrible for the old and those without the means to take advantage of the new economic order. The new benefit system being introduced by Putin will give pensioners and invalids the equivalent of NZ$20 a week.

On the margins of both cities, and even towards the centres of provincial towns, I noticed hundreds of rundown flats, the slums that Khrushchev built. There is an urgent need to replace a vast amount of housing stock from the Soviet era. It is only the new rich who can afford the penthouses. Roads are quite incapable of taking the traffic. There are potholes that only Russians would be proud of. Behind many smart facades are garbage-filled, dilapidated yards. The old Russia was not far from the new.

But as I recalled my visits in the 1960s and 70s the new Russia seemed freer, less under siege, both from within and without. There are still the bookshops and concert halls, there is still the pride in heritage. Former palaces and art galleries are smarter and their contents better displayed. Russia has begun the long road to Western material prosperity. It may never catch up but it is certainly sprinting in the same economic direction, for good or ill! ■

and the greatest of these is … being rich?

Glynn Cardy



Most would, at least at some stage in our lives, like to be rich. To have the gold to do what we would like to do, to travel where we would like to travel, and to have the luxury of not worrying. Of course those who consider themselves rich know how untrue this is. Riches do not guarantee freedom of action, freedom of movement, and freedom from anxiety. Indeed, they can bring about the reverse. Not that, mind you, poverty is any better.

You can learn a lot from camping. Out there in the back of the paddock, with the macrocarpas and the mosquitoes, a long way from civilisation and shops, an item takes on a different value. As any Guide or Scout will tell you, the value of a dry sleeping bag, for example, is not to be underestimated. The cost of the last packet of marshmallows can be truly frightening. The wealthy are those on the second week in camp with the best goodies to trade. The poor are those who ate all their goodies in the first week.

Camping teaches us that wealth is what we make it. And, after decades of living in tents, my evaluation would be that the wealthiest campers are those who find contentment and happiness wherever they are.

Camping too can teach us that wealth is not all our own doing. The elements and accidents… all play a part. The weather is a significant factor in whether camping is enjoyable. That accident with the dinner toppling over into the fire, and the new recruit to the Guide patrol, thinking she was doing the best thing dousing it with seawater, affected the wealth of those girls' stomachs that evening. Chance, luck, and fate all play their part in the creation of wealth.

In the time of Jesus people believed that wealth was a gift from God. So the rich man with his overflowing barns (Luke 12) had not got lucky, worked hard, or used his superior skills. No, he was simply blessed by God. And with such blessing came responsibility. Wealth was given in order to make the community a better place to live, not to give an elite the means to build palaces or sunbathe at Club Sinai.

There is a sign adorning some of our Epsom bus shelters: "Wealth – I deserve it." It is part of the prevalent mythology of our culture that wealth is primarily a result of hard or clever work. We need to remind ourselves that being born healthy is a gift. Being born into a loving family is a gift. Being born into a family with the values of learning and associated skills is a gift. Sure it is up to us how we use them. But be mindful that many skilled and hard working people have through accident, failing health, unfortunate timing, or plain bad luck, suffered from a lack of monetary wealth.

Like me you might not believe in a God in the skies who dishes out a few dollars to one and a few million to another. Yet the opposite view that wealth is solely due to the work of the individual is flawed as well. The truth is somewhere in-between. The lesson is to learn how to be grateful. We need to learn how to wake up each day thankful that we're alive, can do what we can do, and can use what little or lot we have for the good of others and ourselves. The person who lives life like it's a gift, becomes himself or herself a gift to everyone they meet.

I remember a mate from my teenage years called Ian. If you were on a tramp, three days out, down on food, perpetual rain every day, sore, soaked, and tired… then Ian was the sort of guy you'd want with you. If you were sailing in a real blow, with the boat keeled over, and everything strained and taut, including your nerves… then Ian was the sort of guy you'd want on board. In short, Ian always had a smile and a cheery, can-do attitude. He was also one of the most severe asthmatics I've ever met. I think he'd realised life was a gift.

The phrase 'spiritual values' is in vogue. We all have spiritual values. Some people value money above all else, and that affects their spirit. Most people though value other things more than money – like love, family, health, community, and happiness. Despite what television might tell you, money can't guarantee love, family, health, community, and happiness. If you value love, that will affect your spirit. If you value family, that too will affect your spirit. We are shaped, moulded, by the things that we value. That's why I call them spiritual values.

Personally I think the most spiritual or holy thing is self-giving love. And self-giving love has an unbelievable power that even Harry Potter's hero Dumbledore can't match. Indeed I think J.K. Rowling's books are trying to say that. Magic might look cool, but the deeper magic is love. ■

On sex and the unsurrendered life

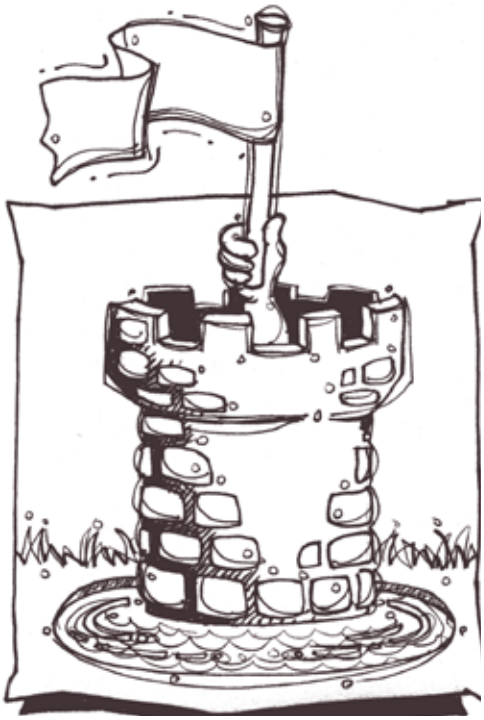
Ronald Rolheiser

The task of life is ultimately to 'surrender', as the gospels define this. If you were to take all of Jesus' teachings, all that's said about belief, morality, and piety in the gospel, and boil that down to a single precept, you could put it into one word: surrender. The gospel asks us to surrender. But to surrender what exactly? Our individualism, our fears, our security, and our need to stand out and be special. It asks us to surrender our agendas, ambition, anger, bitterness, and all those things that keep us standing alone, apart. In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were naked, vulnerable, surrendered. To get back into that garden we need again to be in that state – the importance of creed, morality, and piety notwithstanding.

Nothing within human life is as ideally structured to bring this about as is sexual intimacy. In its ideal, sexual intercourse effects this kind of surrender. Its very structure is geared to bring about a state where people are again naked and unashamed, free of fear, anger, private agenda, separateness, and loneliness. This is what scripture means when it says that it's not good for us to be alone.

So what about us then when we are alone? What about the single life and celibacy? Where does that leave those of us who don't have sex? Clearly in some danger of living too non-surrendered a life. The real danger in the single life and celibacy is not that someone might sometime break a vow or a commandment, though that is a danger. The bigger danger, that potentially inflicts a greater damage, is that a single person can too easily become self- absorbed, individualistic, non-surrendered, and be far from naked in anything, especially intimacy. Of course, married people and many others have sex and that doesn't always and easily translate into gospel-surrender (though the very structure of sexual intimacy is set up for it).

What's to be learned from this? That married or single, the inner dynamics



of sexuality are meant to bring about gospel-surrender. In marriage we are meant to surrender to the many through the one, just as in a healthy single state we are meant to surrender to the one through the many. Both married people and singles need to look at their lives and see if this is happening.

I see it happening in married couples where, in effect, they have become what lovers really are, namely, empathic confessors to each other. There is a point in intimacy – I saw this in my own mother and father – where people hide nothing from each other, where there is biblical nakedness. When this happens, a certain gospel-surrender has taken place. Sadly this isn't often seen in marriage nor in the lives of those of us who are single and celibate. Too often we have no confessor, in that sense, and no real intimacy either. We stand unsurrendered, resistant to the nakedness of intimacy in most anything.

Obviously this begs some hard questions. Obviously too it begs for more surrender. But where and to whom exactly? Whom do we trust enough to surrender ourselves to? Perhaps no one. But then we need to keep looking because our health and salvation are largely contingent upon actuating that kind of trust. As we age, the dynamics of sexual intimacy mature too and the function of sex changes.

From puberty until our mid-thirties, the need for sex, genital intimacy, dominates much of our sexuality. Then, without that imperative diminishing all that much, another need begins to take over, the need to have children. By nature and by God we are hard-wired to be parents, to get ourselves into the gene-pool. Not to have children is danger-ous, anthropologically and spiritually.

The need for intimacy still remains, blunted sometimes by tiredness and routine, but sex now has a different purpose. In a young person the big danger is loneliness, being left out, being marginalized with nobody to love. Sex is meant to get us beyond this. As we age though, the danger reverses. We begin to claim more and more private space for ourselves. The opposite concern then becomes important:

Are we becoming too comfortable being alone? Is it healthy to want your own bed for yourself at night, your own space for yourself during the day, and especially ➥

A new English text of the Mass

Some weeks ago the London Tablet leaked a Draft being proposed in Rome to replace the current English version of the Mass. It has been greeted with dismay. A Rosminian priest, Fr Tony Davies, examines the new text

On the Feast of Corpus Christi (10 June), the Holy Father proclaimed the *Year of the Eucharist* October 2004 – October 2005. It will begin with the International Eucharistic Congress, 10-17 October in Guadalajara, Mexico, and end with the next ordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops, to be held in the Vatican from 2-29 October, 2005. The theme will be The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church.

The Holy Father places this theme before us at the very time when the church is considering new English language texts for the celebration of the Eucharist. Following the publication by the London *Tablet* of the new ICEL Draft Order of the Mass, divergent views have been expressed. This reflects a healthy interest and concern for the texts, knowing that whatever changes are finally decided upon, they are likely to be with us for a very long time and will have a profound affect on our Eucharistic lives.

It is clear that the final text cannot be the preferred version for each one of us, but when it comes we will welcome it with open hearts. In the meantime, let us share our views and concerns openly, knowing that the Spirit is at work in the church. This is not an academic debate we are engaged in, but an attempt to promote the theme the holy Father has presented us.

Sadly, the previous ICEL Draft was turned down by the relevant Vatican office before it saw the light of day. Translators had little option but to resign. Had there been the opportunity for discussion at that time, such a sad situation might have been turned into a learning experience to benefit us all, including our sister churches. When discussion only follows on after the event, it is largely negative. When it is able to precede a decision, it can be positive and helpful, furthering the 'Life and Mission of the Church'.

In the Encyclical *Faith and Reason* Pope John Paul writes of the relationship of philosophy and faith. It applies equally to the philosophy of translation and faith. He writes: "This is why I make this strong and insistent appeal – not, I trust, untimely – that faith and philosophy recover the profound unity which allows them to stand in harmony with their nature without

your own privacy in ambition, agenda, work-schedule, projects, and dreams? Is it healthy to want so unshared a life?

It's a human tragedy when an adolescent is so lonely and desperate for someone to love and surrender to that he or she turns to self-destructive behaviour or even to suicide. It's a biblical tragedy when those of us in middle-life and beyond are so comfortable being alone that we want intimacy only as a satellite addendum to a carefully guarded private world.

Socrates warned that the un-examined life is not worth living. The gospel warns that the unsurrendered life is not biblical. ■

Printed with permission Fr Ronald Rolheiser

compromising their mutual autonomy. The *parrhesia* of faith must be matched by the boldness of reason." (4, 48)

How to translate well

Much of the discussion has concerned the philosophy of translation, but whatever may be regarded as valid and desirable by experts in linguistics and experts in the faith, much more is needed than scholars musing over manuscripts. It is essential that we look at the practical side: will it work?

The "boldness of reason" that the Holy Father recommends, would urge us, before coming to a favourable decision on any text to try out the new text of the Mass in a real life situation, with young and old, with those with special needs, and those for whom English is a second language. It would not be difficult to do this on a small scale without music and so make some attempt to discover whether an entirely new translation would be more effective than some slight adjustments to the one we have been using, to enable the English-speaking people of God to find in the Eucharist the 'Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church'.

If a trial version would not be considered suitable at the Eucharist we could at least use it in what we used to call a dry Mass. The only other option would be to have the humility to use versions that have already been tried and found effective in other Christian churches.

Ecumenism is one area that is especially dlear to our Holy Father. He has stressed this so often, both in word and action. Sharing common vocal prayers with our sister churches has been seen as a powerful way to bring about a greater sense of unity and harmony. It makes ecumenical services so much richer. The positive step in this direction by the previous ICEL translators has been utterly undermined by the present draft (fortunately only a draft).

Academic antiquity may delight scholars and many of us would admit to feeling a pull in that direction, but that is not what the Eucharist is all about. It is far too sacred to attempt to limit it to the elite. It has a far more relevant and important part to play in our own lives and in our reaching out to others. It is not a museum piece.

The Our Father

Of the common vocal prayers, the Lord's Prayer, the *Our Father*, is the most important in itself and the most significant for us to share with other Christians. There was no standard English version before the Reformation. Latin was still a spoken language and children learnt the Pater Noster and Credo in Latin for public recitation. For private use, no one version predominated. Indeed, in one of the best known medieval prayer books, *The Primer* (AD.1400), the Lord's Prayer occurs three times and each time it is different.

It was not till after the split with Rome that the English version became fixed. In the Introduction to the prayer book of Thomas Cromwell (1541), Henry VIII forbade any other translation than the one in that book. Catholics have continued to use that version over the centuries, with gradual minor updatings to avoid archaic spellings and grammar. It appeared in the first edition of the Roman missal in English following the Second Vatican Council, and without receiving a further minor grammatical update required by the context and by Catholic tradition. It was clearly a temporary situation.

ICEL, in 1975, gave us the ecumenical version which is commonly used in New Zealand today. It would be more appropriate to call it a pre-Reformation version. For, in those days we find the variants: *hallowed, holy, sanctified*, and: *sins, debts, trespasses*. One version was never adequate to express the full richness and nuances of the Latin prayer. They knew their Latin, before it became fossilized.

The Draft reinstates the traditional version of the Our Father, presumably for emotional rather than theological reasons: the old is better.

Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell will be laughing in heaven as they look down on the Roman dicastery authoritatively offering their prayer book version as the only approved text of the Lord's Prayer and rejecting the pre-Reformation ones, if the Draft is to be believed. ■

Imago Dei

There is a place within God's song
for voices high and true
yet softer notes and complex tone
are missing from the hue.

While up above deep voices ring
and instruments tone loud
in a cell below the orchestra
is a choir of light, sweet muffled sound.

Forced to tap out harmonies
in rhythms soft upon the walls
not wanted where the big boys play
yet honouring God's call.

Not welcomed up to stand and claim
the gift of which they're born
their truth is judged and shadowed by
an emphasis on form.

So their songs are danced in gowns of grace
of priestly form within
yet are stifled on their lips
as they're asked to celebrate behind.

This keeps their songs from taking flight
half-written on the page
because the cost to have them join
would tone an ending age.

So they have a voice beneath the stage
a conscience for the lie
and angels light upon these walls
and join God's anguished cry
"How come this plight for half my heart
my image... yet denied?"

Jacquie Lambert

Reflecting on Luke

The widow who slaps the judge (Luke18:1-5)

Susan Smith

In Luke's story of the widow who pesters the judge, the judge's complaint that the widow will "wear me out by continually coming," more correctly translates the widow will "finally come and slap me in the face." The judge merits this fate at the hand of the widow because he is neither God-fearing nor righteous nor concerned about other people. Usually we think of the woman as powerless but her capacity to persevere in insisting on her rights suggests that she is a somewhat feisty character. Eventually, her pleas do wear the judge out and he responds positively to her request for justice.

Traditionally, we have understood this parable as teaching us about perseverance in prayer. However, given that it occurs between two passages about the coming of the Son of Man as judge at the end of time (cf. Lk 17:30-37 and 18:6-8), we need to consider the possibility that there is another way of interpreting the parable. Of particular interest is the fact that the widow demands justice, and that God promises justice to those who cry to him day and night. We read that at the final judgement, the Son of Man will seek out those who have faith on earth, and who have practised justice.

Often Catholics are not too comfortable with talk of the final judgment, of the Son of Man coming in glory to separate the sheep from the goats so to speak. Such conversations are something that belongs to other churches but not to us. However if we concentrate on Luke's emphasis on justice, on the widow seeking justice and on God granting justice to God's chosen ones, then this text may assume a new significance for us Catholics called to engage in works of justice.

In his preaching, Jesus refers frequently to the coming of the Kingdom of God, manifested through his public ministry of teaching and healing. However, the kingdom will be fully realised in the future, and we know neither the day nor the hour of its fulfilment (cf. *Mark 13:32*). It will be realised when our present situation of injustice and oppression becomes one of justice and peace for all creation, when there will be a new heaven and a new earth. In the meantime the mission of Jesus' disciples, following the example of the widow, is to strive ceaselessly for justice.

I suspect that normally this text from *Luke* has led to homilies encouraging us to pray without ceasing, and I find myself asking why we do not hear nearly as often homilies that urge us to take seriously our call to be women and men who practice justice. ■

Exposure of the 'corporate' psychopath

The Corporation
Review: Paul Sorrell

We've all heard of latter-day crusaders against corporate capitalism like Michael Moore, Noam Chomsky and Naomi Klein (of *No Logo* fame), and no doubt the talented trio responsible for this powerful expose of Big Business will soon join their ranks. Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott and Joel Bakan have produced an in-depth, carefully-focussed look at corporates and how they threaten our world – environmentally, culturally, socially and economically. Moore, Chomsky and Klein feature in it, as do all the usual suspects on the other side of the equation: Nike, Shell, Pfizer, Monsanto, Goodyear, IBM.

Although clearly not a big-budget film – it mainly follows an interview format interspersed with stock footage – the production values are high and the film weaves together a bundle of stories, some shocking, others optimistic, with skill, passion and, in the end, a fine sense of balance between outrage and hope. Villains jostle for space with saints, and we are presented with the testimony (apparently sincere) of at least one born-again capitalist, the American CEO of the world's biggest carpet manufacturer.

Humanity and intelligence are hallmarks of this fine (if somewhat overloaded) film. It's certainly much more than a Leftist rant. *The Corporation* begins by taking up the metaphor of the corporation as a person – its actual status in law – and demonstrating point by point that this 'person' has all the marks of a psychopath: an obession with personal gain, complete disregard for the welfare of others, a mania for total control, and so on. A number of corporate horror stories are treated in depth, such as Monsanto's cow hormone, developed to 'improve' milk, and how the company conspired with Fox News to suppress the story when its additive was shown to be harmful to human health.

But threads of hope run through this film, too. While government agencies like the FDA are shown to be toothless in the face of corporate malfeasance, labour unions have campaigned – with some success – to halt the exploitation of child workers by firms such as Nike, and there is an inspirational story from Bolivia of the victory of people-power against a company that sought to privatise the nation's water supplies, including the rain that fell from the skies.

If you didn't catch this film while it was showing at the 2004 film festival, look out for it at your local arthouse cinema – it's unlikely to be playing at a multiplex near you. ■

Coming to terms

Twin Sisters
Review: Sandra Winton

The Dutch film, *Twin Sisters*, in the recent film festival, is visually beautiful, and full of heartrending emotion. It explores questions that are at the centre of attempts to come to terms with the atrocities of Nazi Germany and the sufferings experienced in that period.

Twin Sisters is based on a book by Tessa de Loo which has been read by millions in Germany and Holland. It tells the story of twin sisters, Anna and Lotte, who were cruelly separated when their parents died. Lotte, who has tuberculosis, is allowed to go to Holland where she is brought up tenderly in a middle class family; Anna has a harsh life on a German farm. Lotte loses her Jewish fiance in Auschwitz and Anna's Austrian husband is shot in the SS. In the present of the film they are two old women: Anna is pursuing her sister and Lotte cannot bear to see or hear her. The film culminates when Lotte can no longer escape her sister.

Sitting in the theatre in front of a Dutch-speaking couple, I was reminded of the particularity of this film to the struggles of Germany and Holland to come to terms with their histories. But this film speaks also to the world-wide challenge, national, international and personal, around injustice, suffering inflicted and experienced, the dead gone forever and the lives that might have been so different. It speaks to Northern Ireland and Rwanda, to Palestine and Israel, to Australia, to New Zealand... It explores the difficult alternative to retaliation and repetition.

Forgiveness is a work so central to the Christian tradition that it can become oversimplified, its strangeness and difficulty lost sight of. For these twin sisters it is hard won. German Anna learns to speak Dutch, as her sister can not bear to hear the German language. She has to face the truth of Nazi atrocities. Lotte has to hear the real pain of Anna's own suffering. This film reminds us that for reconciliation to be achieved each of us has to face not only our own hurts but the realisation that, given another upbringing or environment, we might have done the same. We have to come to terms with our own dark twin before we can come to terms with the other who has offended us.

Twin Sisters is beautifully characterised, with the sisters, so alike in their passionate, determined natures, subtly different in ways that are delineated from their childhoods to old age. The film is visually and historically natural. Poetic images, like Anna hurling her suitcase of baby clothes into a river in front of an uncomprehending GI or Lotte taking his hoarded rations from her stepfather, are poignant but never overstated. Key moments of dialogue, as when Anna asks, 'What if I had been the one with tuberculosis?' or Lotte's final, 'I understand, I understand' are full of meaning and unlaboured.

This is a film to see, joyous, full of vitality, moving to feeling and thought. I hope it returns to mainstream theatres. ■

Never a dull moment

Gellhorn: a twentieth-century life
Caroline Moorehead
Henry Holt and Company, 2003
(Available in pbk September 2004, price approx $43.00)
Review: Kathleen Doherty

Great guilt came over me when I started reading Caroline Moorehead's rich biography of Martha Gellhorn. I was very aware that if she hadn't been the third wife of Ernest Hemingway (long on my list of favourites) I probably wouldn't be reading it all – and this was the woman who so hated Hemingway after the bitter end to their marriage that she wouldn't allow his name to be spoken in her presence – anyone who did so was permanently dismissed from her company.

Ignoring the guilt was a good move: this is a fascinating story of an enormously accomplished woman, a journalist who covered the major conflicts of the 20th century from the Spanish Civil War to Vietnam, and had friendships with people as varied as Eleanor Roosevelt, H G Wells and Marlon Brando. It is also the story of a dissatisfied woman with no capacity for permanence – relationships, cities, houses were abandoned after the initial interest wore off. Inaction bored her, and she could not tolerate it. Three marriages ended in divorce, there were numerous affairs, and her relationship with her adopted son, an Italian war orphan, was largely fraught, although there was a reconciliation.

Martha Gellhorn, born in 1908 in St Louis, left college to move into journalism, and after a series of reports on poverty in rural America during the Depression, very quickly made a name for herself as a foreign correspondent. She thrived on danger and discomfort and uncertainty: "I'm off to Spain with the boys" she announced when the Spanish Civil War became the focus of world attention. "I don't know what will happen, but I'm going." A collection of her early journalistic pieces was praised by Grahame Greene for its "amazing unfeminine style" (a comment obviously intended as complimentary) but Gellhorn was not above using her blonde good looks to wheedle her way into inner circles where she knocked back whisky with "the boys" and found material for her stories.

She stowed away on a ship and landed on Omaha Beach shortly after D-Day, entered Dachau a few days after it was liberated, and covered the Nuremberg trials. The Dachau experience was pivotal in her life. She told a friend "a darkness entered my spirit". After Dachau her writing was angry, she never again believed in the supremeacy of goodness and justice.

Her marriage to Hemingway was fiery and unhappy. Even at the time, no-one could understand why they married, but in a way they were very alike – opiniated, seeking danger, with no capacity to tolerate boredom. When the thrills ran out, Hemingway, well into his fourth marriage, took his own life. He was in his sixties; it took his former wife a few more years.

Martha Gellhorn was happy only when she was in the middle of the action. When increasing age and infirmity made this impossible, she ended it all, taking an overdose of pills and dying alone in her London apartment. She was 90. Her ashes were scattered from a boat into the Thames, and, accompanied by red roses, carried to the sea on an out-going tide. It was a sad, yet somehow totally appropriate end for a restless woman who, after a life of adventure, never found contentment or peace. ■

A handy and attractive pocket breviary

Companion to the Breviary:
A Four-Week Psalter with Intercessions
Published 1999 by The Carmelites of Indianapolis
Review: Elisabeth Nicholson

This comparatively small and inexpensive book is a briefer version of the 'New Companion to the Breviary' (a weighty 2 volume publication). For those who already pray, or wish to begin to pray, the Office of the Church but find the patriarchal language of the psalms off-putting, this inclusive language version could be very useful.

The book includes psalms and intercessions for Morning, Daytime and Evening Prayer for the four week cycle. The RSV translation of the psalms is used. This is easy to read and retains the poetic rhythm though I personally do not find it as attractive as the Grail version. I did wonder why the compilers chose not to use the Grail Psalms in Inclusive Language, but probably because the Grail continue to use masculine nouns and pronouns to describe God. Certainly I find the RSV much better than the Jerusalem Bible version for praying aloud.

The Intercessions and Final Prayers are lovely, and more relevant to lay people than those in the old Breviary. A page of clear instructions on how to use the book is included. My only regret is the absence of the Scripture Readings, which is a real disadvantage since it means two books are always necessary, but no doubt this had to be weighed against the increase in size and price the inclusion would have necessitated. ■

Foundational beliefs – a student's handbook

The Creed
Luke Timothy Johnson
Doubleday
Price: $44.95
Review: Fr John Stone

This book will, by its nature, have a limited appeal. It is essentially for students of the Church's function of defining itself with regard to what it believed and taught over the early centuries in particular.

This collection of formulae which gradually became part of the Church's self-understanding has an importance for Catholics who need to be assured that the organisation they love and believe in, has all the precise data they will ever need.

The author is at pains to show that the Creeds, of which there are two main ones, are both a concise distillation of what the Church actually holds, and a reflection of a living faith, which has always been required in its members.

For Catholics, acceptance of the Church has always been a matter of faith. Most have come to faith as I did by being part of a Catholic family whose belief in the essential rightness of the Church was inherited, and which seldom came seriously under question. Having said that, it is a reassurance to know that what I have always believed has all the required foundations in fact.

Up till the time of the Reformation in the 16th Century the resolutions of the Creed had laid down the certainties of Christianity. That there was one God, of three Persons, each of them equally God, yet different from each other in function. Jesus Christ, the second person of this Trinity is both divine, as the Father and the Spirit are, and human, as you and I are.

It has always surprised me that it took so long for the Creed to be formulated. With all the advantages of knowing in hindsight how the story of the Church progressed, it is easy to forget that the Church is, so to speak half human, made up of human beings. So the progress of the Church's self-understanding, even with the inspiration of the Spirit, was by no means a simple development. But this is the very nature of the Church.

As I said at the beginning, I found this book a student's reference rather than one which could be taken up and read on easily to its conclusion. But for the student, it's all here. ■

Book Bytes

8 Spiritual Heroes: their Search for God
Brennan R. Hill
St Anthony Messenger Press
Price: $45

In this compelling and inspiring book, Brennan Hill uses biographical theology – a lived theology that comes out of experiences and events. With stories and historical and theological sources, Hill profiles eight modern religious heroes and their search for God. These heroes are diverse: an Indian Hindu, a German Jewish woman who converted to Christianity, an African American Baptist minister, an American woman who came to religion only after years of atheism, a Salvadoran archbishop, two Jesuit priests – one French, one American – and an Albanian nun. Yet they have much in common.

Hill writes:
"...for all of these people God was often close at hand, deeply felt in the events of their lives, glimpsed in the people they met, pursuing them in their minds and hearts. God came to them with many intriguing faces: as a God of truth (Mohandas Gandhi), of the homeless (Dorothy Day), of the mountain (Martin Luther King). God came in the cosmos (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin), as one beckoning to prophecy (Oscar Romero), and as a fellow sufferer sharing the cross (Edith Stein). Divinity appeared as the power of peace (Daniel Berrigan) and in the poverty of the abandoned (Mother Teresa). Each one of us might now ask: What face has my God shown to me?" ■

The Miller's Tale and Other Parables
Margaret Silf
Darton, Longman and Todd

Today, no less than in Jesus' day, everyday incidents can show us what the Kingdom of God is like. In *The Miller's Tale and Other Parables,* ordinary experience reveals shafts of God's mystery, tracing creation's story, from original blessing, through brokenness and restoration, to a vision of a new and never-ending Kingdom in which we are all called to be co-creators. ■

Wall of shame

Crosscurrents

John Honoré

Israel continues to be seen as the world's biggest threat to peace. Last month, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Israel's Separation Wall is in breach of international law and demanded that Israel remove the 'illegal' wall from occupied Palestinian territory. Raanan Gissen, senior advisor to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, replied that "the building of the fence will go on". Again, Israel is determined to contravene international law and to defy world public opinion. How long can Israel continue to ignore the rest of the world?

For New Zealanders, the scale and extent of the wall are beyond imagination. It is four times as long and twice as high as the infamous Berlin wall – it is 650 kilometres long and nearly four metres in height. This grey concrete battlement with watch towers, electronic surveillance and strobe lights, creates ghettos and enclaves for Palestinians who are trapped in their houses without direct access to their fields.

The Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be confined to just 12 per cent of historic Palestine. The extermination of the Palestinians and the appropriation of their land continue. Incredibly, Israel argues that the wall, built in many parts on Palestinian land and called by the Palestinians the 'Apartheid Wall', is to assure Israeli security. The Jews, having suffered appalling persecution themselves, now seem determined to inflict persecution on others.

The ICJ has given legal, political and moral support to the Palestinians. The overwhelming vote of 150 to six effectively condemns Israel as an international pariah. The six votes in opposition came from Israel, the US, Australia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau. If you count US as a friend, it seems that you can cock a snoot at the rest of the world.

Fahrenheit 9/11

Right on the heels of *Bowling for Columbine*, seen recently on TV, comes Michael Moore's new film *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Moore reminds the viewer, in devastating detail, of the lies, conspiracies and deceptions to do with the war in Iraq in general, and the presidency of George W. Bush in particular. It is Moore's version of the story and you find it hard not to believe him.

Fahrenheit 9/11 is a triumph of form over content, a montage of moments of frightening reality. Here is Bush's moment of truth when he sat reading 'My Pet Goat' to schoolchildren while the twin towers burned. There is Bush telling Americans "I'm a war president", as if that is what America wants and needs. If this is true, then God help us all.

The streams of statements from the Bush Administration about weapons of mass destruction were reported by TV and the press without question. The scenes in Iraq and the interviews with GIs chill the heart. Mainstream America was never informed nor enlightened by an investigative media. As Moore himself remarks, "my side, the side of millions of Americans, rarely gets told".

This is a movie about America and Americans, about the possible American future of people with limited economic prospects in a society led by unscrupulous men. The real purpose of the war is to keep power in the hands of America's economic elite. This is the democracy that the incumbent president wants to foist on Iraq. Michael Moore's understated narration leads the audience to conclusions. He warns us all of the human toll that the war on terrorism is exacting in the Middle East and he skewers the media for not reporting the truth.

NZ and Israel

Although New Zealand is as far away as possible from these two areas of concern in the Middle East, Prime Minister Helen Clark is still involved to a greater or lesser degree with both Israel and Iraq.

In a spate of incidents, the Prime Minister had to deal with two Israelis who attempted to obtain NZ passports fraudulently, purportedly on behalf of an Israeli intelligence agency. At issue was a grave breach of sovereignty for which the Israeli Foreign Minister said that "we are sorry about the matter". Helen Clark rightly imposed diplomatic sanctions and demanded an official apology (not forthcoming at time of writing).

Then, David Irving, who denies the Holocaust, was refused entry to NZ on a technicality. However repugnant the views of David Irving may be, the Government has created a dangerous precedent. It has denied him freedom of speech and probably increased his notoriety. The visit would have been controversial, particularly among the Jewish population, but the refusal does not justify the withdrawal of a basic freedom enjoyed in this country. Almost as a sad footnote to these incidents was the desecration of Jewish graves in Wellington. By whom and for what purpose is hard to imagine.

In view of the worsening situation in Iraq, there is a growing possibility that a NZ soldier will be taken hostage or wounded. Such a tragedy would spark a bitter debate and would polarise public opinion even more than the plethora of Maori issues currently being discussed. If one NZ soldier is killed while 'supporting' the coalition forces, the Prime Minister is in deep political trouble. ■

Restoring Christmas

Advent will be on us sooner than we expect. It is a season when the Church relives the time of waiting for the coming of the Saviour, a season when we glimpse the darkness, sinfulness and despair of a world that had not yet felt the impact of the birth of a Redeemer. We are not a moment too soon to be planning how to celebrate Advent properly.

Having Advent during the month of December worked well enough in times past in northern hemisphere lands where the days were getting progressively shorter and colder. But it does not work well today under the Southern Cross.

By the time Advent commences around the beginning of December, so many of us are focussed on Christmas already. Most work places celebrate Christmas parties from late November and throughout December. Supermarkets have had Christmas music dinning in our ears for weeks already. Buying presents and planning the Christmas dinner fill our minds. The Advent liturgical season, not getting under way until early December, was fine in the past. It still may be so in other lands. But it lags behind what we faithful in New Zealand are actually immersed in at that time.

Jesuit Father, Iain Radvan S.J., writing in the Australian journal, *The Swag*, earlier this year, raised the question, "I wonder if I could be courageous enough to tamper with the Liturgical Year! To start the Advent season in school liturgies well before December. To celebrate the Feasts of Christmas, with the traditional children's Christmas pageants, (in the days) leading up to the holiday break, and to Christmas Day itself. "

This would bring everything forward. We could have Advent liturgies on Sundays for much of November. We would celebrate feasts like the Holy Family and the Holy Innocents before December 25. This would be instead of in their official position in the week after Christmas, a time when so many are on holiday, very likely attending Mass in a strange parish. Christmas Day would of course remain on December 25 in all its splendour

If this is an idea worth considering, it has to be worked on immediately. We have only weeks to spare. Or planned for next year. In that case it is something that members of parish councils and liturgy committees, school administrators, teachers, could note as a suggestion to be raised in the second half of the coming year.

The parish priest of course must be involved and must back the scheme. His first reaction may be, "We couldn't do that." You could tell him that Canon 87, par 1, fully empowers a bishop, at the request of a parish priest, to authorise for a parish make such a switch in the dating of liturgical events. Tell him you have the authority of a canon lawyer for that advice. See my page in the May issue of *Tui Motu.*

Fr Radvan made the point that Easter and Christmas were both originally timed to coincide with 'pagan' feasts. We would only be doing the same again. It would be a shame if we did not use our antipodean culture to help, rather than hinder, the celebration of these holy times.

We will wait for years, most likely for ever, before the ponderous Roman liturgical bureaucracy recognises that the southern hemisphere follows a different seasonal pattern to that of the Mediterranean. Also that, for better or for worse, the supermarket and retail culture is part of everyone's life. There could well be priests, parishes and schools that, in the spirit of our culture, are prepared to 'give it a go', aware that they could obtain from the bishop full official sanction. ■

Humphrey O'Leary CSsR

Farewell David

An event of great historical and emotional significance took place at Otago University on August 5. Veteran politician David Lange came, under the auspices of the University chaplaincy, to deliver what probably was his final public address. His theme was whether greater respect and understanding between people of different faiths might lead to lasting peace on earth.

Because of physical frailty Lange now uses a stick for walking. However, his mind and his delivery seem unimpaired. He spoke standing for over an hour. He answered questions. His vitality appeared to be as of old. Indeed there was never a dull moment and he thoroughly deserved a double standing ovation from a capacity audience.

David Lange is a rare phenomenon among public figures. He is a free spirit. His eloquence and wit are astonishing. There is a strong element of the Court Jester in his personality. Even though his prepared script was a serious and thoughtful analysis of the present world situation – and in particular the war in Iraq – he was constantly departing from it with spontaneous, quips, often wise but frequently quite naughty.

Margaret Thatcher, for instance, was cited as an example of a political figure who succeeded, not so much because she was intelligent but because of the strength of her convictions. "She could never", he said, "be confused with an intellectual. She was in many ways barking mad".

It would be sad if Lange was only remembered because of his wicked wit. More than any other person he established and carried through New Zealand's nuclear free policy. And in this his final speech he showed himself quite unrepentant. "I don't see any advantage to us in trying to appease the United States," he said. "... it is better for a country like New Zealand to seek the company of the like-minded and make agreements which balance our interests with those of our chosen partners." Never for Lange the role he ascribes to Tony Blair, of playing "teacher's pet".

There was also an intensely serious vein in what he came to say. It was a plea for people of goodwill and religious conviction to put aside their differences and unite in demanding justice for the little people of the world. He himself had played a large part in doing just that for the non-white people of South Africa. And, he hastened to point out, without any armed intervention.

It was a sad moment when he finally stood down from the rostrum. Will we be blessed to see his like again?

M.H.