

A glass sphere sits on a sandy beach at sunset. The sun is a bright yellow orb in the sky, and its light reflects on the sphere and the wet sand. Numerous water droplets are suspended in the air around the sphere, some reflecting the sunset light. The sphere itself is partially submerged in a small pool of water on the sand, creating a clear reflection.

TUI MOTU

InterIslands

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Kinship with Water

HE WHANAUNGA TE WAI

MARY BETZ, TUI CADIGAN &
MAKARETA TAWAROA on water
and well-being

TOM O'LOUGHLIN on water as gift

MASSIMO FAGGIOLI &
CHRISTOPHER LAMB on
challenges to Church at this time

CONTENTS

FEATURES

People and River Are One 4
MAKARETA TAWAROA

Te Kaitiakitanga o te Wai Māori 6
TUI CADIGAN

Giving a Cup of Water 8
THOMAS O'LOUGHLIN

Water of Life 10
MARY BETZ

Invaluable Wetlands 12
KATHLEEN GALLAGHER

New Way of Sharing Power 14
CHRIS FINLAYSON

Ukraine, the Vatican and Vatican II 18
MASSIMO FAGGIOLI

Vatican II is Not Optional 20
CHRISTOPHER LAMB

SCRIPTURE

Re-membering Martha and Mary as Disciples ... 24
KATHLEEN RUSHTON

COMMENT

Editorial 2
ANN GILROY

Step to Constitutional Recognition 3
CLARE CURRAN

It's Time for Women's Ordination 22
TONY STARBUCK

Becoming Aware of Assumptions 26
SHANTI MATHIAS

Cross Currents 29
JANE HIGGINS

Looking Out and In 32
ANN HASSAN

REFLECTION

Soul Space 16
ANNE POWELL

REVIEWS

Book Reviews 21, 27

Television Review 28

LETTERS

Letters to the Editor 31



Cover Photo:
Water Reflection



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EDITORIAL

Waters of Life

We're learning from Māori and other indigenous people in the world that everything in Earth, all creation, is networked like an extended family. We are called to recognise kinship beyond the human species and to acknowledge that what we call "resources", such as fresh water or a mountain range, are not the "property" of a particular group. We call it "slavery" when humans treat other humans as property and we abhor it. Yet we've "enslaved" plants, animals, waterways and landscapes by using them without respect for their integrity.

Through the sciences we've glimpsed the intricacies of matter — snowflake crystals, atoms in a drop of water. This knowledge has encouraged in us a sense of awe of the rest of creation, and increased our understanding of the interconnectedness of all life.

We have plenty of signs that Earth's water cycle is affected by human behaviour — by our acting like slave owners. Excessive flooding, droughts and storms bear witness to it. So does the salination and pollution of fresh water. I remember Neil Darragh's comment that a sign that Christians are serious about care for Earth will be when we see more bikes than cars parked in the church yard. Personally, I could bike downhill to the church but getting back up again is beyond me. But Neil is emphasising that we can't continue living as we are — that from a Christian perspective we must come to conversion.

Whatever motivates us to transformation — the urgency to prevent irretrievable damage, responsibility to the next generations, a sense of kinship in creation, ecological justice, solidarity with an ecological group, gratitude for life, care of our common home — the fruits of conversion need to be widespread and effective.

So in contemplating our extended family relationship — extended to include all creation — we can allow water to wash away our old habits so that they are replaced with the wisdom and insight of the Spirit at the heart of all life.

We thank all the contributors to this issue who in their art, reflection, research, writing and craft share their experience of relatedness, gratitude and love of water.

A Freebie Offer

We want to increase our subscription list substantially. So from this month till June 2023 when you renew your subscription you can give someone else a freebie subscription. As usual we will let you know when your renewal is due. Simply renew your subscription and send us the name, postal address, email and phone contact for your freebie subscription. We'll even put a message from you in with the first magazine to your freebie friend. You might want to consider someone who is younger and a reader.

As is our custom, our last words are of encouragement and blessing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Ann Gilroy.



Step to Constitutional Recognition

I still consider myself part Australian, despite living back in my native Aotearoa New Zealand for nearly 20 years. My 14 years spent in both Sydney and Melbourne were at a time in my life when I was completely absorbed by systems of government and the institutional and political structures that shape our lives.

My first Australian job was for a progressive public relations company called Social Change Media. Through my work on social justice issues, wage campaigns and health and safety, I transitioned into a role at the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) during the tumultuous period at the end of the Keating Labor Government and the beginning of the John Howard regime when there was an all-out onslaught to break the Australian trade unions. I was in the thick of the waterfront dispute that saw private security operatives (thugs) backed by the army wearing black balaclavas on the docks to lock out the workforce. Tens of thousands of normally reticent middle-class Australians decided that enough lines had been crossed. They marched in the streets against these draconian government actions.

It was a heady and exhausting time. It was the beginning of my lifelong political journey to advocate and sometimes fight for fairness in pay and conditions, access to health services, housing and welfare. The Australian rough-and-tumble approach to political interaction was a grounding for my New Zealand role as a parliamentarian, though I never got used to the sheer nastiness of the bearpit of the parliamentary chamber, or the way your words can be twisted beyond recognition to suit someone else's agenda.

On returning to New Zealand in the early 2000s it was startling to see how much had changed in my absence. I was struck by the influence of Te Ao Māori in our language, our cultural rituals and the growing importance of the Māori voice at all levels of decision-making. Te Ao Māori is an acknowledgement of the interconnectedness and inter-relationship of all things. The rise of te reo (language),

the importance of Kaupapa Māori education, Whānau Ora (a different approach to health provision based on well-being) have all gradually taken hold and are influencing and deepening our relationship with the land, our history and with each other. It's not smooth sailing. There's much argument and debate, but the fact that the argument and debate even occurs in the public environment without fissures in our social fabric is a sign of the maturing relationship with tangata whenua and those who came later.

Over the years I have despaired about Australia's backward colonialism and embedded racism that characterises most interaction with the First Nations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Steps towards reconciliation, true acknowledgement and reparation for harms done have been small, slow and often tokenistic.

That was until Monday 23 May, when new Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese stood for his first media conference flanked by the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island and Australian flags. At his victory speech, late on the Saturday night before, his first commitment was to the Uluru Statement from the Heart which provides constitutional recognition of First Nations people, including a Voice to Parliament enshrined in that constitution.

Symbolic, yes. Powerful, yes. Of course the words and the actions are yet to be realised. But the hope is awakened and for the first time in a long time I felt proud of my Australian connection. 💧

Clare Curran, former journalist and MP, is a committed advocate and representative on social justice issues.





PEOPLE AND RIVER ARE ONE

MAKARETA TAWAROA shares her experience of living alongside the Whanganui River.

Our Whanganui River is sick, particularly the lower reaches. It is contaminated with faecal bacteria, nitrogen, phosphorus and fine sediment from extensive farming. This is because the river has been used as a dump for years by forestry, meatworks, factories, farms, sewerage and hydro-electricity plants. It will take a long time to clean up.

River Users

The Whanganui River and its tributaries is a highly complex

organism. It covers two national parks including the Whanganui River National Park, a national forest, farmlands, several large towns and smaller communities on its almost 300 km journey to Whanganui city, where, up until recently, stormwater, wastewater and sewage flowed into the river.

Because the users of the river — local and central government, commercial interests, recreational users, environmental groups and Iwi — don't talk to one another, they don't address the complex river

system as a whole. Several groups employ their own experts to produce scientific data on water quality, water temperature and fish life. Other groups ensure they operate within the law and keep abreast of what's going on around them but none have the whole river system at heart.

Failure of Resource Management Act

Our river is not the only contaminated waterway. All over the country there are waters in a similar state due to the implementation of the Resource

Management Act. Many ancestral bodies of water have been seriously degraded because of this Act. The Waitangi Tribunal highlighted the government's failure to recognise Māori rights and interests in water and recommended sweeping changes.

As a kid in the early 1960s, I remember talk about damming the river for hydroelectricity at Atene, but because the land was too pumiceous the idea was abandoned. That didn't stop the natural flows of the Whanganui River and five of its upper tributaries from being redirected through huge pipes and canals into the Tongariro Power project. It left only 25 per cent of water to flow back into the Whanganui River, changing the river beyond recognition and breaching the Treaty of Waitangi. The Tongariro Power Project generates only 5 per cent of electricity — it has created so much damage for so little gain.

As an adult I sat in the Wellington High Court listening to lawyers for Genesis Energy talking about the benefits of granting consent to take water from the Whanganui River for 35 years. The concerns of Whanganui iwi were completely ignored.

River Given Legal Personhood Based on Māori Values

Years ago a church women's group I belonged to identified that the quality of the water was *the* priority. Five years ago we packed the parliamentary gallery for the third reading of the Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act 2017. Three days later a legal framework, based on Māori spiritual beliefs, was passed into law. The Act granted the Whanganui River legal personhood, with all the rights and privileges of a person.

I offered a silent prayer for all those who had fought long and hard for the mana (authority) and mauri (life force) of the river. I remembered with deep gratitude, Ngā Pou o te Awa, three giants in our river struggle, Titi Tihu, Hikaia Amohia and Sir Archie Taiaroa, all of Hine Ngākau of the upper reaches.

This legislation had immediate repercussions all over the world,

thrusting Whanganui Iwi into the limelight, giving hope to many groups whose journey was similar to ours. Many were inspired by our Iwi's persistence and have come to hear our story first hand. It's too early to get excited because there are many unanswered questions such as: Will the new personhood status of the river make any difference to the way the river will be used in future? Will this legislation help to clean up the river and keep it clean?

Ongoing Damage

Challenges to the Act from forestry and dam developments are ongoing. The Act did not reverse the existing resource consents — Genesis Energy has resource consent to take water for another 20 years.

Fish & Game New Zealand also has an interest in the Whanganui River. Anglers like to fish in clean water so there are certain arrangements with partners to ensure that clean water is available in certain lakes at certain times.

Promoting the Act

Since Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement) Act 2017, Te Tangata Tiaki o Whanganui — the administrative Trust which was established to receive all assets and responsibilities — has been educating the river people about the responsibilities arising from the Act. I've attended several presentations and have been impressed by the young, motivated and skilled Māori who have embraced their duties with cautious optimism.

The Trust is undertaking a five-yearly review of their mandate, looking at the terms and operations of their Trust Deed to see how helpful it has been for our people. Sam Bishara has been appointed an independent facilitator to lead the review. As only 40 per cent of our people live in our whenua, trustees will travel throughout the country consulting with Whanganui whānau, hapu and iwi who live outside our tribal region.

He Awa Ora is a new exhibition on display at the Whanganui Regional Museum which tells Whanganui stories through the

voices of our river and taonga. It has photos and rare taonga from the Museum's Māori collection. It wasn't all that long ago when kaumātua Manu Metekingi threatened to clear the Māori court because the museum trustees of the time did not want iwi sitting around the table.

The Te Kopuka group is working on a collaborative plan called "Te Ripo" to promote the health and well-being of the river. Te Ripo, kare or ripples, refers to the river's physical and spiritual vitality and also to the changes heralded by the new legal status of the River as Te Awa Tupua.

Mutual Connection

Understanding the river in spiritual and philosophical terms is a natural part of our lives. Our tribal whakatauki/proverb expresses this idea so simply. Auntie Julie used to say: "The river is my mother and father, my sister and brother ... don't talk *about* the river, talk *to* the river." In law, the river is now recognised as an indivisible and living whole from the mountains to the sea, incorporating all its physical and metaphysical elements.

I remember as a child listening to Koro Titi talk about the river: "If the river is well, the people are well. If the river is sick the people are sick. The people and the river are one." Our identity comes from the river. My cousin Anatipa Morvin Simon would often remind us that the river was our first road, our first larder, our first playground, our first bathroom, our school and our holy water font.

As iwi we want to leave the river in a better state than it is now so that we can say: "Ka ora te awa. Ko ora te iwi. The river is healthy. The people are well." 💧

Painting: *Cargo on the Whanganui River* by Sally Barron © Used with permission www.sallybarron.co.nz

Makareta Tawaroa, Te Awa Tupua, is a Sister of St Joseph, Nanny and Community Worker for Nga Paerangi, Whanganui.



TE KAITIAKITANGA O TE WAI MĀORI

TUI CADIGAN explains that protection of fresh water is key to the health and well-being of land and people.

The relationship tangata whenua/people of the land have with water is grounded in whakapapa/genealogy. It is inherited through the generations. Every whānau/family, hapū/kinship group and iwi/tribe names a specific body of water as their ancestral whanaunga/kin, whether it be an awa/river, a moana/lake or te tai/the sea.

When a person stands to introduce herself it is usual for her to name the water source or sacred awa of her people. Before giving her own name, she names elements in her takiwā/district, her whānau, hapū, iwi, marae and rangatira. These aspects are considered enduring, and situate her as belonging to all the previous generations and to all those yet to be.

That is what marks out in the mind of tangata whenua their relationship, their rights to and responsibilities for each named connection.

The mana of the element water calls Māori to relate to water as with all those who share the same whakapapa. When this relationship fails, when water is used for greed rather than need, the result is pollution, abuse and misuse of this natural resource.

Land Use Affects Waterways

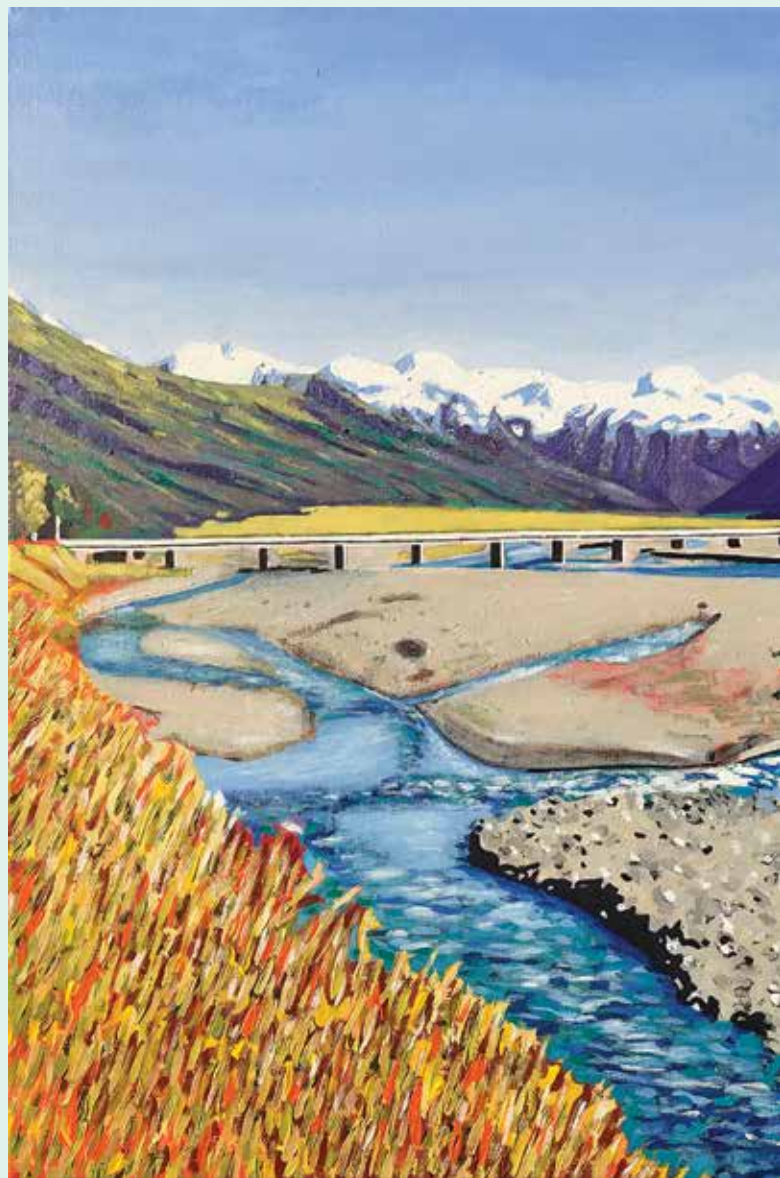
The areas surrounding our waterways have a vital connection to the wellbeing of our water, and therefore for the wellness of the people.

Mining is responsible for some of the devastation, but it is also true that some miners have worked hard to restore the environment. And these days environmental care is a written condition for a mining licence — although policing of mining activity is spasmodic at best.

Deforestation is another factor in the struggle to protect water and whenua from flooding and the damage of erosion.

The impact of farming, particularly dairy farming, has been under the microscope of researchers for years now but bringing about change is difficult while the Environment Court process and Federated Farmers have such loud voices in politicians' ears.

Māori are not immune from abuse of waterways and destructive land use. The greed that motivates such behaviour is not specific to any one race or ethnicity. But it is true that the Māori voice has rarely been heard in discussions about Aotearoa's waterways. Historically, Aotearoa has been hampered by an inherited colonial mindset of control and laws that favour individual ownership over tribal collective ownership and management.



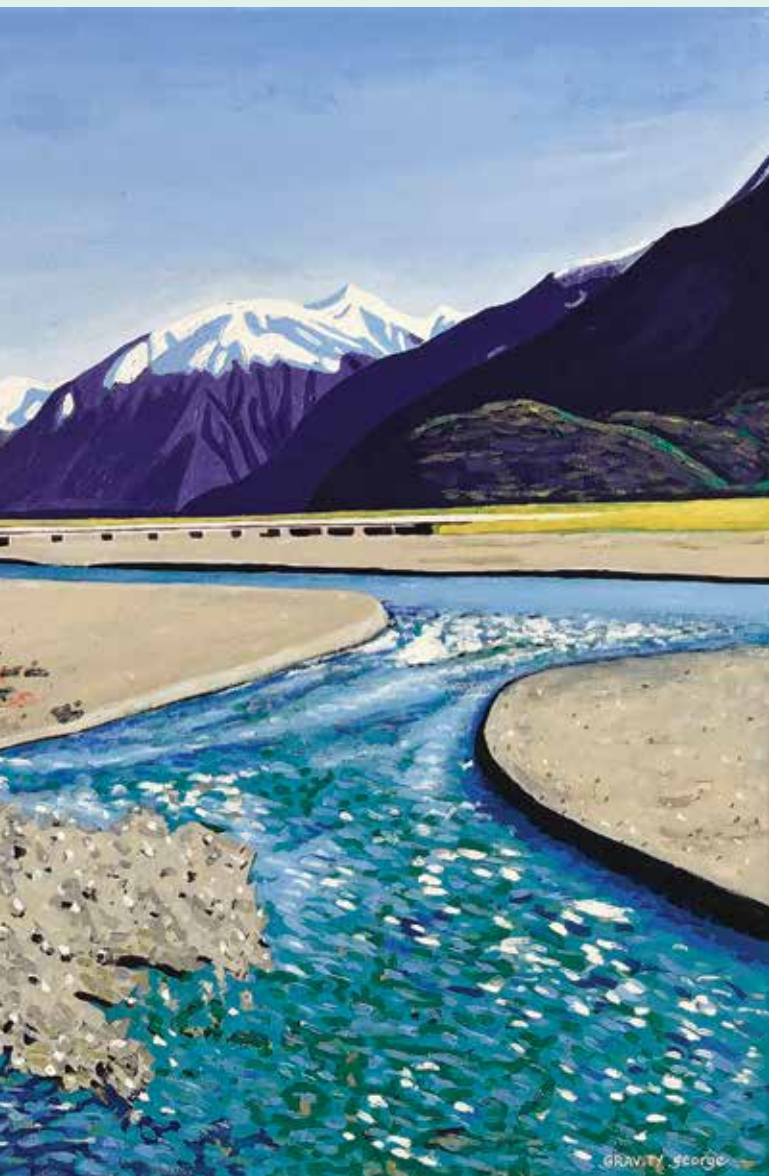
Contaminating and Protecting Water

For some years I went on an annual field trip around a number of sites in Canterbury with university students doing environmental studies as part of their degree. We visited a meatworks, the Waimakariri River and a North Canterbury dairy farm. The field trip concluded at Tuahiwi Primary School where I would speak about kaitiakitanga and the relationship between tangata whenua, their land and waterways, within the context of the concepts of Māori spirituality.

When we got to the river, students were told the meatworks' licence to discharge into the waterways was nearing its end. In the river bed under the Waimakariri River we witnessed the discharge of putrid yellow-green water entering directly into the river. This river is where people would gather to fish, swim, jet-boat and where licenced contractors were permitted to remove gravel for roads under local council and environment laws.

In contrast, the North Canterbury farm we visited was a compliant unit where best practice had been undertaken and the results were evident.

Old ways of discharging manure that would have gone into waterways had been exchanged for a new milking



The challenge for Māori armed with oral traditions and spiritual values is to argue against a secular colonial mindset ... because we know the health of our land and waterways is key to the health and wellness of our people.

yard and the direct recycling of cow's waste back on to the paddocks as fertiliser.

The owner spoke of the initial cost being offset against the clean waterway and environmental integrity of his farm. He was a Pākehā with a wonderful sense of humour and a keenness to show what could be done to protect the water supply and improve the pastures. I felt privileged to share my inherited knowledge of the link between the people and the land needed for well-being of both.

Deep Spiritual Connection

At the time of the proposal to develop a town at Pegasus Bay near Tuahiwi, I was approached by Environment Canterbury to give evidence before the Environment Court opposing the development.

My role was to provide a clear explanation of the relationship of Ngāi Tūāhuriri to the area under dispute, through my knowledge of key concepts within Māori spirituality. Ngāi Tūāhuriri gave their history and my evidence linked their experience with the depth of intrinsic spiritual knowledge that bound them to their environment — land, water and vegetation. I was honoured to give this evidence alongside the late Dame Aroha Hōhipera Reriti-Crofts, the late Reverend Maurice Manawaroa Gray and others. After intense questioning by the three judges I was thanked for the clarity and articulation of my evidence.

The case to halt the Pegasus development was unsuccessful. Outside the court, Maurice Gray asked me to karakia, pray for the group as Tuahiwi mana whenua stood in tears, their pain so apparent. They had fought with all their mana, courage, wisdom and ancestral heritage but in the end the court was not able to find on the basis of their deep spiritual relationship to their land and their lagoon.

Concluding her evidence, Dame Aroha Reiriti-Crofts said: "The whakatauki of Ngāi Tahu says: 'Mo tatou a, mo nga uri a muri ake nei. For us and for those of us who will come after we have gone'. They are our tamariki/children and our mokopuna/grandchildren. My involvement in this is thanks to my ancestors; I am one of the guardians of the gifts that they left us. As guardians/kaitiaki we are responsible for protecting those our ancestors left for us. That includes Papatūānuku — the land that we belong to. They have left us to protect and look after it for the next generation. When we are gone, our children will have the honour and privilege of protecting our Papatūānuku. The reference to the land in the persona of Papatūānuku is inclusive of the rivers, lakes and mahinga kai resources."

Sharing Our Knowledge

The challenge for Māori armed with oral traditions and spiritual values is to argue against a secular colonial mindset. It is an essential duty because we know the health of our land and waterways is key to the health and wellness of our people.

In my time as Kaiwhakahaere/Chair of Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio we were successful in excluding a number of waterways from marine reserves. Had they been included we would have been banned from gathering kai from them, a privilege we are guaranteed under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Everyone has the right and responsibility to protect and restore our common home. I will continue to exercise the mana of my tipuna whenever and wherever I am able.

Mo tatou a, mo nga uri a muri ake nei! 💧

Painting: *Crossing the Waimakariri* by Gravity George ©
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Tui Cadigan RSM affiliates to te Hāpu o Kati Mahaki ki Makaawhio and is of Poutini Kai Tahu descent.





Giving a Cup of Water

THOMAS O'LOUGHLIN discusses how gratitude for the gift of water motivates us to ensure that all people share in this gift of God.

Water is an ambiguous blessing. We know that we need it — it is essential for life. We use it for washing, sanitation, sport, fun, gardening ... and even transport and power. Reducing it to the “essentials” — drinking and washing — would make life without it far less

pleasant: even if we do not fish or own a boat. Just strolling near a lake in a park or seeing a “water feature” in a garden enhances our experience. Strangely, it is always these “additional” aspects of human needs that makes life worth living: we need water for life, but life without beauty, pleasure and fun

would not be worth living!

But we can easily have too much of this good thing. Not just an occasional flooding or a fatal accident, but the dreary darkness of wintry clouds and rain can depress us — and mould and damp call to mind squalor and decay. Water is always close to

us. It is little wonder that since we think and speak of the Great Mystery in terms of the creation, we find water is central in our imagining the interaction of God and us.

In Matthew's Gospel the image put into the mouth of Jesus as an expression of the generosity of the Father's love is that God sends rain on the just and the unjust — so unlike our loving which favours those of whom we approve ("the just"), or, at least, tends to disfavour those of whom we disapprove ("the unjust"). "But I say, love your enemies and pray for your persecutors. This will prove that you are children of God. For God makes the rain fall on good and bad alike; God's rain falls on the just and unjust" (Mt 5:45).

But the ambiguity of water is also seen in the story of the house built on sand. It was the rain, floods and wind that threw it down (Mt 7:27).

Likewise, it is the basic act of giving someone thirsty a cup of water that is the acid test of discipleship: "The truth is, whoever gives a cup of cold water to one of these lowly ones just for being a disciple, will not lack a reward" (Mt 10:42).

Water, that basic life need, is part of our understanding God's relationship to our existence. To the woman at the well in Samaria — who offers Jesus water — Jesus replies: "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again. But those who drink the water I give them will never be thirsty; no, the water I give will become fountains within them, springing up to provide eternal life" (Jn 4:13-4). Water is part of our Christian language.

Water and Imagining

To recognise ourselves as dependent creatures is core to Christian identity: my existence is not absolute but belongs within creation — and creation exists in its dependence on God. Put another way, creation is gift, pure gift, and to be valued as a gift, and the first religious act is thankfulness for that gift.

Water — that most common element — is a gift and as such is something for which I praise God. We can think of "faith" as tick-box questions about beliefs — and the

answers we provide allow us to be classified as a Christian, a theist, or an atheist. But it would be more useful to ask: "Can I imagine water as a gift?" and "If it is a gift, can I see it making sense to be thankful for it?" If we can answer "yes" to these questions, then we are well on the way towards a life of faith.

By contrast, if we were to answer "no" to imagining water as a gift and something for which to offer thanks, then even if we ticked a box marked "Yes" beside the Nicene Creed every morning, we would be lining up *de facto* in the atheist camp!

When we can hold a glass of water and looking at it imagine not only a new set of earthly relationships but a relationship that reaches beyond creation, then we are on a path towards real faith.

When I imagine water as a gift, I can view all the rest of life's good things as God's gifts — and then imagine still more that there are gifts beyond this life: the life of God in Christ Jesus, forgiveness, and the life that wells up to eternal life.

It is the basic faith that enables me to recognise, imagine or think of a glass of water as a fragment of God's generosity that is the work of the Spirit within me — and then it is the Spirit that gives me voice to utter thanks.

How appropriate that the Spirit has been so often imagined as being like rain and dew seeping into us and giving us life.

Water and Need

But if we can imagine water as God's gift and utter thanks for it — an act of basic faith — we recognise also that we live in communities, and discipleship cannot be separated from the communities that we live within and impinge upon. Today's "global economy" means commitment to the global community.

When we grasp that water is God's gift, we must reflect that it is a need of our community and that all the individuals who make up that community need it as much as we do. We are suddenly drawn from what could become just another pious reverie into the world of justice: to be thankful to God for a gift will

involve our commitment to see that others also have this gift. We cannot adequately imagine our relationship with God unless our relationships with others are also involved.

Matthew explains this link between imagination and action when he puts this statement on Jesus's lips: "It isn't those who cry out: 'My Saviour! My Saviour!' who will enter the kingdom of heaven; rather it is those who do the will of Abba God in heaven" (Mt 7:21).

Our recognition that our glass of water is a gift has some wide-

ranging implications. Can we be genuine in thanksgiving if we simply ignore the extent to which we can assist others to have the gift of water? Contributing aid towards the development of fresh water for all people throughout the world is, thereby, a basic demand of faith rather than an accidental consequence.

Once we begin to imagine the world in this way the significance of Christian faith is transformed and it becomes transforming. When we can hold a glass of water and looking at it imagine not only a new set of earthly relationships but a relationship that reaches beyond creation, then we are on a path towards real faith.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation,

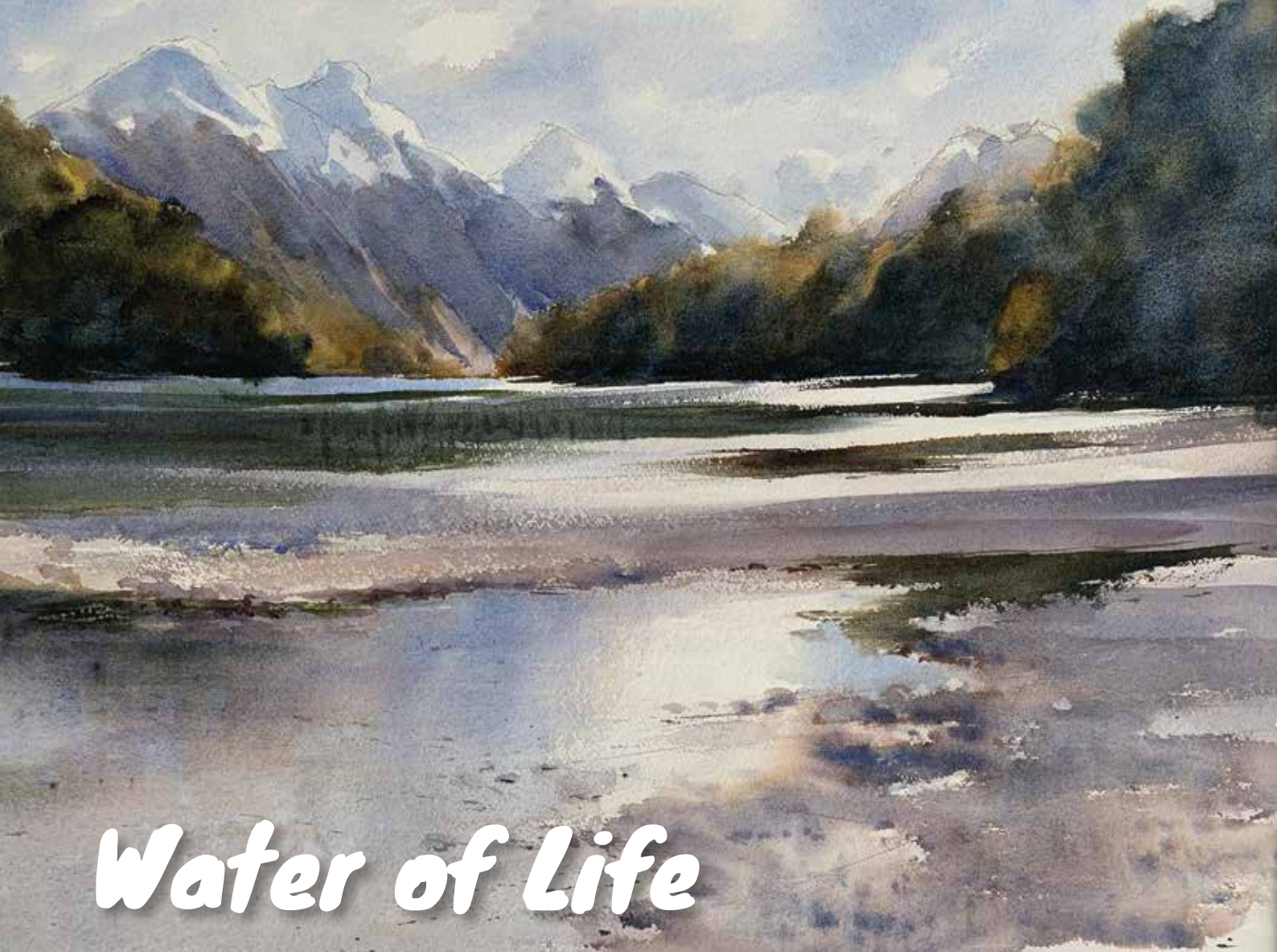
Through your goodness we have water which slakes our thirst and sustains our life,

And blessed are you for Christ who gives us the living water that becomes in us a spring of water welling up to eternal life. Amen. 💧

Painting: *Glass of Water* by Evelina Linn ©
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Thomas O'Loughlin is a priest and Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology. He is the author of *Becoming One* (Liturgical Press, 2019).





Water of Life

MARY BETZ discusses how developing an understanding of our kinship with water transforms our care of Earth.

E tū Waiti e
He wai whakaata
He wai Māori
He wai oranga e
Behold Waiti
Reflecting water
Freshwater

Water that brings life.

Ministry for the Environment, 14 April 2022

All creatures live by the grace of water. It is as essential for microbes as for highly complex plants and animals. For humans, water is not only necessary for washing and drinking (our bodies are about 65 per cent water) but is a significant part of our appreciation and awe of nature. Water quenches the thirst of souls as well as bodies.

Fresh water, a mere three per cent of the waters on Earth, exists in an amazing array of solid, liquid and gas forms like snow, hail,

glacial ice, rain, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, wetlands, rivers, streams, groundwater and clouds.

For something so vital to our survival, we spend little time thinking about water. Like air, like people we are close to, we take water for granted until it is in short supply or badly damaged.

Threats to Water in Aotearoa

Because of overdevelopment, polluted runoff and climate change, freshwater is under pressure in Aotearoa. We can no longer drink safely from streams or swim in the rivers of our childhoods, which now carry urban, industrial and agricultural pollutants. Too often piped drinking water can be contaminated by sewage leaks or fertiliser infiltration.

Climate change is altering precipitation patterns, drying already

dry areas like the Canterbury plains, and causing water needs for aquatic life, farming and urban populations to collide. Excessive pumping of groundwater — and eventually salt intrusion near the coast — could exacerbate conflicts.

Forest clear-cutting and urban paving prevent rainwater from being safely absorbed by soils, increasing erosion and flooding from the more intense storms of climate change. Only 10 per cent of our wetlands remain — vital for flood protection, cooling, and many native fish and birds. Glaciers are shrinking, threatening future drinking water supplies, irrigation, farming, and hydroelectric power.

Restoring Waiti

When waiti/fresh water is polluted, degraded, or becomes unavailable due to human alterations of landscape or

climate, its mauri (life force, vitality, bond with the spiritual) is damaged, making it less able to support life. The Ministry of Environment, in its study and management of water, is beginning to embrace a holistic understanding of ecosystems, combining mātaranga Māori with current science.

Pa Henare Tate (in *He Puna Iti i te Ao Mārama*) spoke from this way of knowing. He used the image of Papatūānuku to explain a wider understanding of kinship — whanaungatanga among all living beings and their environment. To pollute water is whakanoa — a violation of te tapu i te whenua, the inherent sacredness which water, land and all creation possess.

Defiling water also violates te tapu o te whenua, the presence of the Creator in creation, as well as te tāngata who rely on water. Anything that diminishes tapu also impairs mana, and limits water's ability to provide well-being for all.

To restore tapu and mana to awa/ rivers, roto/lakes and groundwater requires hohou rongo, the restoration of right relationships among waiti, tāngata and Atua/God. It requires tāngata to stop exploitation and pollution, and to implement wise management of waiti, restoring spiritual and physical well-being to all who have been affected by acts of whakanoa.

Learning from *Laudato Si'*

The understanding by Māori — and many Indigenous peoples — of the interconnectedness of God, people and all creation, is reflected in Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical on care for our common home. In *Laudato Si'*, Francis comes very close to Māori concepts of whakanoa and hohou rongo when he (using Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew's words) acknowledges the need to repent for the ways we have violated or sinned against creation.

"Patriarch Bartholomew has spoken ... of the need for each of us to repent of the ways we have harmed the planet: 'for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands;

for human beings to contaminate the earth's waters, its land, its air, and its life — these are sins'" (LS par 8).

Pope Francis similarly feels the sacredness of all creation: "The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his [sic] boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God (LS par 84). In the tradition of Hildegard, who said: "It is God whom human beings see in every creature", and others like St Francis, Bonaventure and Daniel O'Leary, Pope Francis recognises

To relate to water as sacred kin is easy to do out in nature, but can we also do that when we turn on our taps?

the inherent tapu in every created thing: "It is not enough ... to think of different species merely as potential 'resources' to be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves" (LS par 33).

Living Our Whanaungatanga with Water

Metanoia (repentance) calls Christians to change and turn toward God's ways — which we are slowly understanding as treating all creation as kin, as brothers and sisters.

This is the way of St Francis and the way charted long ago by Indigenous peoples all over the world, including ancestors of Māori — and the Celts and other ancestors of Pākehā. When we meet each created thing as a brother or sister and, like Hildegard, see God in every creature, we begin to respect the tapu and mana of water, air, land, flora and fauna.

Restoring our relationship with water means changing our attitudes and behaviours. The 2021 *Laudato Si'* Action Platform (www.laudatosiactionplatform.org) suggests ways to contemplate creation, simplify our lifestyles, invest ethically, learn about ecology and better respond to the cries of Earth and our poor.

To relate to water as sacred kin is easy to do out in nature, but can we also do that when we turn on our taps? In Aotearoa we use an average of 255 litres of water per person each

day, while in water-stressed countries like Niger (learnz.org.nz) individuals use only 10 litres.

We could audit home water use: Auckland Public Libraries have free audit kits and www.ecomatters.org.nz has online instructions.

We can install rainwater tanks for watering gardens and — with plumbing help — for flushing our toilets.

We can gift our vegetable washwater to the garden, and while we wait for taps to give us hot or cold water, we can collect the rest in a kettle or bucket for watering plants.

We can volunteer with regional parks, councils or A Rocha (www.arocha.org.nz) to help restore streams.

Large systemic water issues need our advocacy at government, council and corporate level, for example, managing infrastructure to ensure water quality and prevent leaks (to which we lose 20 per cent of our drinking water), finding solutions for water use in dry areas and, of course, greater action on climate change and biodiversity.

Perhaps more water should be given tupuna status in law, like the Whanganui River, and more funding allocated to trusts and volunteer groups who are re-establishing wetlands around the country.

When We Gather

Lastly, we can bring our kinship with water into liturgy. Baptism used to be in "living (moving) water" and we can reflect on how we can better signify that now. We can ask forgiveness for our whakanoa of water.

We can use the *asperges* rite — sprinkling with water — more frequently. And when we bless or pray about water, let those blessings be thanksgivings for all waters, as holy kin who give of themselves to bring us life. 💧

Painting: *Dart River and Humboldt Range* by Bernadette Parsons © Used with permission www.bernadetteparsons.com

Mary Betz is a writer and spiritual companion with a background in ecology, theology, justice and peace, and spirituality.





Invaluable Wetlands

KATHLEEN GALLAGHER reflects on the importance of repo/wetlands for Earth's water cycle.

"In the beginning ... the Spirit of God hovered over the waters" (Gen 1:2).

When we violate or block the flowing of the water cycle, our Earth Papatūānuku, speaks. Sunny days, earthquakes, floods, wildfires, tsunamis, volcanoes, sunsets, winds, rain, snow and ice are her signatures. We need to learn to read her signs the way tohunga/chosen experts do, to walk by the lakeside and be as open to the miraculous as Jesus was.

We need a paradigm shift, a radical rethinking so that where and how we build, farm, garden, do business and transport ourselves we always consider the needs of a healthy water cycle and the co-creation of deep spongy soil that

slows water and grows plants that transpire water.

Our Dependence on Water Cycle

Water transpiring through plant leaves keeps Earth cool. Big trees, urban and rural forests, wetlands and spongy nutrient-dense soils are sacred because they are intrinsic to the water cycle. They are the waka/vehicles through which water pulses between the sky rivers and Earth rivers — ngā wai rua tapu. This eternal water cycle brings life and sustenance to our blue-green planet.

Rongoa Healer Pa Ropata McGowan in the film *Rohe Kōreporepo – The Swamp, The Sacred Place*, says our mana/psychic influence, our mauri/life essence and our hauora/spirit of life, are

implicitly woven inside our repo/wetlands — our swampy, marshy, boggy places. If these places are unwell, filled-in and poisoned we can't safely gather rongoā/medicinal plants and kai and feed ourselves and our manuhiri/guests. We become unwell and are diminished. If we restore our repo to health, then we also recover our mana, our mauri and our hauora.

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* reminds us: "Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in her and in constant interaction with her."

Extreme weather and climate events are not distant abstract events over which we have no control. Extreme floods, droughts and wildfires are due to the collapse of the water cycle in the places where we live — a result of what we do in our own backyards. And that is precisely where we can restore the water cycle — in our own backyards.

Land Use Connected to Water

If Kahukura Cashmere Hills above Christchurch were covered in concrete and overstocked short grassland, if her gullies were reduced to bare soil, and there were no wetlands along the sides of the river below, there would be no membrane, no sponge to cause water to move slowly through the earth. Water, full of sediment, would rush down hillsides and flood the Ōpawaho Heathcote River. Droughts and wildfires would be interspersed with extreme flooding events. And as the landscape degraded further, their frequency would increase.

This is happening along the Eastern seaboard of Australia. Their wetlands have been drained, forests have disappeared and the land has been farmed in a way that degrades the soil. There are not enough large trees, wetlands and spongy water-holding soil left to modify the extreme temperatures, or to protect against the drought, fire, flood cycle.

The same is happening on the Western seaboard of North America, in the Amazon, the Fertile Crescent in the Middle East and in Siberia.

In her 1998 book *Symbiotic Planet: A New Look At Evolution* Lynn Margulis says the great expansion of land up and out of both the sea and fresh water was, and still is, grounded in the intimacy of plant and fungi. Holding water in the soil encourages the growth of fungi and plants, develops places to adapt to wild weather and drought and mitigates temperature extremes.

Liverwort and soil fungi helped Aotearoa West Coast beech forests move inland on rock faces. The symbiotic alliance between soil, fungi and plants underpins the health of our forests, grasslands and croplands. If we poison and kill this precious alliance we destroy the soil sponge on which our civilisation depends. We end up with a continuous round of drought, wildfire and flood which leads to ill-health and social unrest.

Value of Wetlands

Repo do many clever things that we in our rush to build roads, concrete

buildings and industrial farms, have forgotten.

Healthy wetlands nourish the skin of Papatūānuku into a soft sponge. They purify poisoned water. They store as much carbon as a tropical rainforest. They are our best defence against storm surges, tsunami and devastating floods. They take as little as a year to get running. Like regenerative agriculture, they enable a healthy water cycle. American farmer Gabe Brown in his 2018 book



Dirt to Soil wrote that when he began farming his soil absorbed half an inch of water an hour, but 15 years later his soil absorbs 30 inches an hour.

"What you do on the land,"

Māori rights campaigner Eva Rickard said, "you do to the water." In 1990 Raglan Harbour had the worst fish count in Aotearoa. Over a 10-year period, fishers, iwi, local farmers and gardeners planted their streams, gullies, river and ocean sides with large riparian strips, simultaneously destocking and dropping fertiliser use.

This improved the health of the cows, the quality and quantity of milk and the running water. Just 10 years later, Raglan Harbour had the highest fish count in Aotearoa. The community worked with taiao/nature, and everybody won: earth, water, fish, iwi, fishers, farmers, gardeners, swimmers and surfers.

Restoring Wetlands

The city of Ōtautahi Christchurch is built on drained repo. In Aotearoa New Zealand we have 10 per cent of our repo remaining. We need 50 per cent of repo to be recreated.

We can create a wetland anywhere — a tiny backyard puddle

or something as expansive and beautiful as Ōkarito on the West Coast. Wetlands cool a place with water transpiring slowly through the atmosphere. We find this with urban forests such as in the old inner city of Canberra, where the temperature in summer is 12 degrees lower than surrounding areas.

If we collapse the water cycle, we destroy our earthly paradise. There is no joy walking in bare feet on concrete or dried-out barren soil, no joy in fleeing wildfires or coping with endless torrential downpours and flooding. Canberra microbiologist Walter Jehne says that the carbon dioxide increase is a symptom of the collapse of the water cycle. American biologist Edward O Wilson proposes that we return 50 per cent of Earth to wilderness places. Nelson conservationist Andy Dennis recommends that 50 per cent of oceans become no fishing zones.

We can do little things such as growing our grass long and deep-rooted, have no bare soil and, if we're able, join in recreating old wetlands.

We can build in wood rather than in concrete and stop building on riversides or ocean fronts.

We can ask that a quarter of housing and commercial developments include wilderness places, as well as on farmland. In all our activity we can be aware of the soil and encourage it to develop a healthy, spongy, water-absorbing thickness.

The hope of restoring the water cycle to health hovers with the Spirit of God over our waters and calls us to action. 💧

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Painting this page: *Wetlands* by Dalene Meiring © Used with permission www.daleneimeiring.com

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New Way of Sharing Power

CHRIS FINLAYSON, Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations from 2008 to 2017, recommends co-governance and sharing power with Māori.

“Co-governance” has become a term that people don’t understand. They think it means co-government. People who are frightened by co-governance think they’ll be locked out of access to our natural resources, for example. What it really means is that involving iwi in a myriad of decisions can actually result in a better country.

The people I call “the KKK brigade” are out there. They dream of a world that never was, and never could be. They are the people — and these words are taken from a former British foreign secretary — that you can call the “sour right”. They don’t really understand tangata whenua. They don’t like change.

A decade of my life was spent on Treaty settlements. I think many people would be a lot more sympathetic toward the notion of co-governance if they learned the things that I was able to learn as a public official in that role.

Once you’ve read the factual concessions by the Crown, read the apologies, you begin to realise the wrongs that have been committed. You begin to get a good understanding of the facts.

The Crown promised to protect “the unqualified exercise of . . . [Māori] chieftainship over their lands, villages and . . . treasures”.

But it not only failed to perform that obligation — it went out of its way to breach it. We must acknowledge that failure and that breach, and remain committed to putting things right.

My perspective on how to put things right is fundamentally a centre-right one. It asks the question: Why does the government think it knows best? The government makes heaps of mistakes. I was in there for years. I saw; I know. So, I don’t think that government has all the answers, and I agree with Ronald Reagan that, so often, government is the problem.

If you apply this to the history of our land, the question becomes: Why should the state be the one to control everything? Why can’t there be principles of sharing power?

I think that “Treaty partnership” may, in fact, be a better term for the concept of co-governance. Because it reflects the reality that there are longstanding historical links that tangata whenua have with our natural resources.

Treaty Partnership of Whanganui River

Take the Whanganui River, for example. Iwi stood on the banks and watched their eel weirs be destroyed, watched hydroelectric developments harm the river, and watched farming practices pollute the water. They saw all of this, and because they have a fundamental belief that “I am the river and the river is me”, they had a duty to do something about it.

That’s where the whole idea of a Treaty partnership in relation to a particular natural resource comes in. I see absolutely nothing wrong with that.

For those who say that we’re going way beyond what was anticipated when Treaty settlements started, I’d say that’s quite wrong.

When the first of the big settlements was signed in the mid-1990s, which was Waikato-Tainui, it dealt with the issue of raupatu/confiscated land. But the Settlement Act very clearly signalled that rivers and harbours would have to be dealt with as well.

What did people think was going to happen? It had to be about power-sharing, and that’s what we got with the Waikato River Authority.

Te Urewera and Ngāi Tūhoe

Te Urewera is another obvious one. The links between Ngāi Tūhoe and that land are intense and profound. A national park was created there in 1964 without any consultation. It’s preposterous to think that was ever a national park, and not the rightful lands of Tūhoe.

As soon as Tūhoe assumed administrative responsibility for Te Urewera, there were people who looked for faults. They said that birdsong had decreased, or there were issues with trapping or with maintenance, or whatever. But there are problems there that predate Tūhoe’s administrative control by a long way. So, it will take time. There will be challenges.

The second point is that Tūhoe does have a different worldview and they are looking at the area in terms of their tikanga. So, we can’t immediately assume that 1080 (pesticide) will be dropped all around the place, as was the practice before. They may have different methods, and we need to have a generosity of spirit and the flexibility to recognise there may be other approaches.

This is part of a new way of doing things. The landscape has changed. They have to get on with it.

Power Sharing

The idea that power can be shared scares some people. Whereas, my attitude is, if central government has failed in so many areas, which it has, and if there are different ways of looking at issues that involve bringing iwi into decision-making, or handing over decision-making, then let’s give it a go.

Look at the reserve land around Lake Ōkātina, for example. It was transferred to the Crown around 1910 to be held as a scenic reserve. If we look at that transfer from first principles, we would question the reasons behind it. Why does the Crown need to hold that land? Why can’t iwi hold it? I just see no problem with that concept.

Anyone who thinks that Treaty settlements are

commercial deals which are done and dusted has it wrong. There are ongoing commitments and undertakings in our settlements that have to be honoured, otherwise they won’t be durable. My perspective is that our post-settlement commitments have to be a matter of law, so that the settlements create a relationship which continues into the future.

We all stand to benefit from relationships which share responsibility. I was the minister who authorised the inquiry into the Havelock North drinking water disaster, where four people died and thousands became sick.

There were some really fundamental things that didn’t happen when that event took place. Ngahiwi Tomoana from Ngāti Kahungunu told me that if someone had bothered to talk with the iwi, for example, they could have provided critical answers in a number of respects to that issue. They held a lot of local knowledge that could have been tapped into.

For a current global example, I look to North America and the Clean Water Act which treats eligible Indian tribes as equivalent to states. There’s just nothing to fear in that arrangement.

I’d like to see iwi more involved in a wide range of activities in the state, and for that to be accepted as good and natural by the population generally.

There’ll be some areas where central government must have predominance. I think national security and intelligence services are for the state, or the Crown, to exercise power. But there are many other areas where the principle should be adopted that the state need not be involved, or should have lesser involvement, or can share power.

I find these days in central government that there are many people who have learned a few mihi, can do a karakia, or can sing a waiata, but they still don’t truly get it. They’re obsessed with the form but not the substance. While those superficial things may help people feel good, they don’t capture what is required for our future.

I will continue to talk about co-governance as something to be embraced, not feared — and some people won’t like it. Bad luck.

We must be interested in, and talking about, the substance of power-sharing to make sure that we are continually breathing life into our Treaty and our agreements. 💧

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Painting: *Where We Meet* by Julie Whyman © Used with permission
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Chris Finlayson QC is a lawyer. He was Attorney General and Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations from 2008 to 2017. He left politics in 2019.



SOUL SPACE

Your soul is a space
for great flocks of kōtuku
to rise up

or a forest
of quiet rimu
attentive to wind

or water
transparent, quick
in a Tongariro stream.

birds
trees
water

Plant the wisdom tree close to water.
White birds will dance
wing to bright wing
transforming your ruin into joy.

— Anne Powell ©

From: *Tree of a Thousand Voices*
Steele Roberts Publishers 2010





Since the outset of Russia's brutal war against Ukraine, the Catholic Church seems to have had difficulty rising to the diplomatic challenges it presents. We are in the midst of one of the most serious and dangerous conflicts since 1945. But the Vatican — rather than drawing on, say, the courageous example of Pope John XXIII in skilfully aiding negotiations to defuse the Cuban missile crisis 50 years ago — seems to favour imagery. This was evident from the emphasis on visuals at the Way of the Cross on Good Friday in Rome.

In 1962, the few words that came out of the Vatican were measured and focused; its diplomacy did not yield to the demands of the media circus.

But Pope Francis's choice to have one woman from Ukraine and one from Russia pray together at Station XIII resulted in unnecessary, avoidable controversy. True, it may have been intended as a prophetic gesture. But it failed to consider how the language of reconciliation might be perceived as an imposition on Ukraine just when mass graves and evidence of potential war crimes were being discovered in Bucha and elsewhere.

The Vatican has to walk a diplomatic tightrope, but in doing so it increasingly risks drawing moral equivalence between Russia and Ukraine. Perhaps this is what happens when even diplomacy can be shaped by how it's perceived in social media, and when officials act more like influencers than diplomats.

Rethink Needed

Still, the Vatican's predicament can't be attributed simply to a problem with communication. Putin's war requires the Holy See to devise a new doctrine for international relations, one that does not adhere to the *Ostpolitik* of decades ago. The Cold War era never saw a European conflict like this one, in which the aggressor has expressed genocidal intent in denying the right of the Ukrainian peoples to exist.

Except for long-view notions like a more global and less European Church, and at the same time a smaller, more Gospel-like Church, Rome really hasn't had a strategy



Ukraine, the Vatican and Vatican II

MASSIMO FAGGIOLI explains the challenges the war in Ukraine presents to the Church.

regarding what happens in the Church and in relations among the churches internationally.

But even then, the crisis signals something more: the twilight of the political and theological paradigm of the Catholic Church.

Hopes Less Confident

If we think of Catholic progressivism as one of the world's "collective cultural families", we can see how the war is challenging the assumptions it embraced after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This progressivism has been characterised by a collection of benevolent impulses that reasonable people couldn't possibly disagree with: peace, the expansion of rights for individuals and communities, respect for the planet, universal brotherhood, and so forth. But the

war, one could now say, has brought history back to Europe.

Something similar can be said about the 60-year season of the post-Vatican II Church. We thought we had left the era of great conflicts behind. While some of the old political and religious regimes persisted, their influence and impact seemed to lessen: they were no longer going to determine the future. Indeed, it seemed a new world had arrived.

Now we have to wonder whether this hopefulness was misplaced. Perhaps the grip of the old-world order was stronger than we knew, or at least stronger than the dream of building a new Church in the world. In recent years the spaces of dialogue have been overwhelmed or have disappeared, both in politics and in the Church: decisions are made in places that are inaccessible or hard to locate.



Prospect of Synodality

Synodality could yet bring real change to the Church, in the long run. But it seems we've lost the patience (and the obedience) that characterised the generations of Chenu, Congar, de Lubac, Rahner, and of the scholars, priests, and monks who trained me.

Now it seems that romanticism or a managerial view are the only options for thinking about the past and present of the Church; walking alone (or walking out) appears to be more popular than "walking together," *pace* the synodal process.

Still, on a positive note, Rome has exhibited some wisdom during this crisis. Francis is trying to save the Catholic Church from the mortal danger to which Benedict XVI and the elite he appointed were blind: falling into the same civilisational trap the Russian Orthodox Church did in the 1990s.

Contrary to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow (and some Catholic cardinals), Francis refuses to see the Church downgraded into an ideological refuge, from the mass of collective identities that took shape during the Cold War.

Crisis in Role of Church

Andrea Graziosi, one of the great Italian historians and a specialist of Russia and Ukraine in the last century, wrote recently that "the crisis of our West, visible in the 70s and then hidden by the triumph of 1991, was in the first decade of our century visible to all, including Putin."

The crisis of the Church has also been visible to all since the beginning of this century. In this epochal shift, the Catholic Church, the Vatican, and the papacy are still trying to find a role.

We could think of Benedict as the last pope of the old era, and of Francis as the first pope of a new era. A political parallel might be the presidencies of George W. Bush and, in the new era, Barack Obama. But then we all know who followed Obama. Should we thus be on guard for what might happen in the Catholic Church?

It's an important question, given the confusion of the diplomatic and international-relations efforts regarding Ukraine. The war is having a bigger impact on the Church than, say, 9/11 did.

In 1991 the Vatican already understood how the first Iraq war would affect relations between Christianity and Islam globally, and what US wars in the Middle East might mean for the region. But now, the legacy of post-conciliar *Ostpolitik*, John Paul II's idea of the unity of the European continent "from the Atlantic to the Ural Mountains," Benedict XVI's lament over the "Christian roots of Europe" — all seems outdated.

Putin's regime, supported by the Patriarch of Moscow, forces us to consider whether the categories and approaches that once helped us interpret the 20th century still pertain.

Issues Ignored Too Long

The crisis of confidence of Catholic leaders in the Vatican's handling of the Russian war in Ukraine is the result of mounting nationalism in Europe, but it also re-ignites Eastern Catholic grievances kept under control for so long. And it presents a theological emergency on top of the institutional paralysis of Roman Catholicism: the abuse scandal, the impending collapse

of the clerical system, the ignoring or belittling of ecclesial issues (eg, women in the Church).

Key questions had been posed to the Church's hierarchy, and with more theological coherence than today, at least 50 years ago, before postmodernism made the very concept of reform so arduous. Now it may be too late.

Putin's regime, supported by the Patriarch of Moscow, forces us to consider whether the categories and approaches that once helped us interpret the 20th century still pertain.

The war also casts a light on the sinister theo-political pieties of anti-liberal converts. Even if Francis has worked to confront this, his pontificate will not last forever. It will be up to the supporters of Vatican II Catholicism to counter the efforts of the Catholic alt-right which seeks to link an emphasis on morality with ethnonationalism and political authoritarianism.

At the same time, the war in Ukraine forces self-examination among progressive Catholics, whose horizons may now be clouded. A naïve post-Vatican II progressivism unconsciously anticipated Fukuyama's thesis of "the end of history." But now it must reckon with those illusions, both in world affairs and in the Church. 💧

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Vatican II Is Not Optional

CHRISTOPHER LAMB writes that Pope Francis aims to keep implementing Vatican Council II during his pontificate.

The refusal to accept the reforms of the Second Vatican Council is the major problem facing the Church today, Pope Francis has said.

Francis, who was speaking during an interview with the editors of European Jesuit journals, when he also spoke about Ukraine, warned that those seeking to roll back Vatican II's reforms have gained a strong foothold in the United States.

"The current problem of the Church is precisely the non-acceptance of the Council," the 85-year-old Roman Pontiff said. "Restorationism has come to gag the Council. The number of groups of 'restorers' — for example, in the United States there are many — is significant."

Vatican II offered a blueprint for contemporary Catholicism by seeking to better connect the Church with the essentials of Christianity and update the methods it would

carry out its mission.

The Council's reforms saw the Church come to understand itself as the "People of God" rather than simply a hierarchically structured institution, and it led to changes in the liturgy, closer relations with fellow Christians, a "preferential option for the poor" and opened up a dialogue with other religions.

In Central and Latin America, the Pope's home continent, the council was welcomed and the post-conciliar model of the Church in that region is embodied by the figure of St Oscar Romero who gave his life for the marginalised in his county.

Opposition to Vatican II

While the Council was largely accepted across the Catholic world, the post-conciliar period was a turbulent one with some in the Church continuing to voice scepticism over how Vatican II's reforms were implemented. The post-conciliar liturgical reforms saw Mass celebrated in local languages, priests facing the people and a more visible role given to women during the liturgical celebration.

Traditionalists, however, argue

that the changes led to a loss of mystery and sense of transcendence in Catholic worship.

Vatican II Is for the Church

Francis has little time for opponents of Vatican II. He has repeatedly stressed that the aim of his pontificate is the implementation of the Council, and that those who reject it "do not stand with the Church."

He has also clamped down on celebrations of the pre-Vatican II liturgy, known as Tridentine Masses as they are based on the forms of worship which arose out of the Council of Trent in 1570. There is a strong current of support for the Old Rite Mass including in the United States, the UK and parts of France.

"It is very difficult to see spiritual renewal using old-fashioned criteria," the Pope told the editors in the Vatican's apostolic palace. "We need to renew our way of seeing reality, of evaluating it. In the European Church I see more renewal in the spontaneous things that are emerging: movements, groups, new bishops who remember that there is a Council behind them. Because the Council that some pastors remember best is that of Trent. What I'm saying is not nonsense."

He added: "An Argentine bishop told me that he had been asked to administer a diocese that had fallen into the hands of these 'restorers'.



Christopher Lamb is the Rome correspondent for *The Tablet* and commentator for the BBC on Vatican and religious affairs.

They had never accepted the Council. There are ideas, behaviours that arise from a restorationism that basically did not accept the Council. The problem is precisely this: in some contexts the Council has not yet been accepted. It is also true that it takes a century for a Council to take root. We still have 40 years to make it take root, then! Signs of renewal are also the groups that through social or pastoral assistance give a new face to the Church. The French are very creative in this regard."

Opposition to Pope Francis

Over the last nine years, the Jesuit Pope has faced strong opposition to his pontificate mainly from groups in the United States, Europe and Latin America. They dislike his loosening of his rules allowing for divorced and remarried to receive communion, his focus on issues such as the environment and the plight of refugees and his refusal to follow the "monarchical" model of the papacy. Liturgical traditionalists remain incensed by his restrictions on the Old Rite.

Example of Pedro Arrupe

During the interview, the Pope pointed to the resistance faced by the former superior general of the Jesuits, Fr Pedro Arrupe, during the 1970s.

Arrupe led the Society of Jesus from 1965-1983 and reshaped its mission in light of Vatican II. He sought to link spirituality with work for justice in places such as Latin America and he founded the Jesuit Refugee Service, which now operates in 50 countries.

Francis described Arrupe as a "prophetic voice" but faced being locked by a "conservative reaction" inside the society. The Pope said that a group of Spanish Jesuits, working with a group in the Roman Curia, sought to undermine Arrupe. Francis said he witnessed the opposition first hand as he attended a global meeting (the General Congregation) of the Jesuits in 1974. At one point one of those opposed to Arrupe said he wanted to see the superior general "hanging from the gallows in St Peter's Square". Although parts of the Curia were involved in making life difficult for

Arrupe, Francis said that the Jesuit leader always remained loyal to Paul VI.

"Why am I telling you this story?

To make you understand what the post-conciliar period was like. This is happening again, especially with the traditionalists. That is why it is important to save these figures who defended the Council and fidelity to the pope," Francis said.

Strategy of Resistance

It is significant that he emphasised Arrupe's loyalty to the Pope. Even though the Jesuit superior faced opposition and difficulties from within the Roman Curia, he remained steadfastly loyal to the papacy.

This is in contrast to some of the opponents of Francis who have often sought to undermine his authority and have adopted a strategy of resistance.

Working at Synodality

The Pope also commented on the German synodal process, which has come under heavy criticism for pushing ahead with reforms to Catholic sexual teaching, the use of power and including women in ministry.

Francis warned there was a danger the process was coming from "intellectual, theological elites", and is being "influenced by external pressures". He also said that some dioceses in Germany were following a synodal path "with the faithful, with the people, slowly" and that he told Bishop Georg Bätzing, the President of the German Bishops' Conference, that "in Germany there is a very good Evangelical Church. We don't need two."

The interview with Francis took place on 19 May 2022 and was released on 14 June by the Jesuit publication *La Civiltà Cattolica*. While bespoke to the group, the Pope made light of the fact he was in a wheelchair, saying to the editors: "You see? I am in my new gestatorial chair," a reference to the time when popes were carried around on the *sedia gestatoria*, a ceremonial throne. 💧

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REVIEW

Politics in a Pandemic Jacinda Ardern and New Zealand's 2020 Election

Edited by Stephen Levine

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Reviewed by Jim McAloon



Elections matter. In an age where demobilising cynicism about the political process is all too common, it is good to have this comprehensive account of the 2020 general election. Taking place during the COVID pandemic, the election delivered a majority for one party, a rarity in proportional representation.

The book includes 34 mostly brief chapters by politicians, journalists, pollsters and academics, and includes a good range of cartoons and billboards. The brevity facilitates dipping-in, and many of the contributions are a mix of memoir and analysis.

Some contributors offer welcome reflection — tinged with self-criticism — on their part of the process. These chapters also offer perspectives from the inside (*Stuff's* Henry Cooke is a good example on both counts, as are some party leaders). While much of the book is on the campaign, there's discussion of some major policy issues over Jacinda Ardern's first government (climate change is a surprising omission).

The political ground can change very rapidly. John Key's 2014 triumph was reversed three years later, and it would be a brave pundit who predicts the result of the election due next year. As a reference work on the 2020 election, this book should be of interest to journalists, commentators, students and others with a more than passing interest in the political process. 💧



IT'S TIME for WOMEN'S ORDINATION



TONY STARBUCK outlines why he thinks the Church needs to discuss ordaining women to ministry.

Mary has a special place in the doctrine and devotion of the Church. We can learn from her humility and obedience to God's will. But an excessive emphasis on these virtues can easily distort into an unwarranted acceptance of female submissiveness in general; subordination disguised as piety. For example, the traditional wedding vows in which a woman was expected to vow obedience to her husband were still quite normal in my own early adult life.

Those who oppose the ordination of women often bring Mary into their arguments against it. They argue that Mary, blessed among all women, was not a priest, nor was she called by Jesus to be one of the 12 apostles. But since there was no such thing as priestly ordination in Mary's time, the first of these arguments needs no further comment. The

second, however, may call for a more considered response.

Apostles Not All Called by Jesus

Originally, two requirements were thought necessary for membership of the apostolic team. First, each member had to have been called to be an apostle by the historical Jesus; and second, the number of members should be 12 — neither more nor less. As a matter of sheer logic, it is obvious that these two requirements were incompatible and unsustainable and soon had to be abandoned. We know that Matthias, Judas's replacement, had not been called by Jesus of Nazareth; nor, coming later to the scene, were apostles like Barnabas and Paul.

We can read in 1 Corinthians 9 about the controversy in the local community regarding who had the right to be called an "apostle". Obviously the question arose as the early Church developed.

If Mary was not one of the 12 (or 11 at the time she is mentioned) she certainly had a close involvement with them. After listing the names of the 11 (Acts 1:13), Luke tells us that they were constantly at prayer

along with the women — presumably Mary Magdalene, Joanna and others (Lk 24:10) — and also Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Jesus's brothers (Acts 1:14).

Those who take an oversimplified view of "apostolic succession" like to trace Holy Orders back to the 12 apostles and to a perceived commissioning and empowering for ministry by the outpouring of the Spirit upon them on the first (post-Resurrection) Day of Pentecost.

Luke begins the Pentecost story: "They were all together in one place." We can ask if the personal pronoun "they" includes the women. If so, are we to assume that they were there as mere by-standers and observers? That would not sit well with Peter's sermon immediately following in which quoting the prophet Joel he announces that the time had now come for God to pour out the Spirit "on men and women alike" (Acts 2:18).

Women in Leadership

While it makes no sense to talk about "priestly ordination" in the primitive Church, we can talk about leadership. There is ample evidence in the New Testament of women



Tony Starbuck, a former Anglican priest trained at Kelham College, England, became a Catholic 15 years ago and belongs to St Mary's, Papakura.

having some kind of leadership in the Church; women like Phoebe, a servant (deacon?) of the Church in Cenchrea, Priscilla and Aquila, Paul's co-workers, and also what we might now call "catechists and mentors" for the learned Apollos on the final stages of his journey to full Christian faith. In addition, there may have been others whose names we do not know, like the "lady and her children" to whom the whole of the second letter of John is addressed (2 Jn 1).

At their time, local Christian communities gathered for worship and fellowship in homes which needed to be large enough to accommodate them. So those opening their homes for this purpose — often women — might well have been socially upper class and perhaps experienced in hosting and local leadership. Is it stretching the imagination too far to wonder whether they might have been the obvious ones to preside at the table for the fellowship meal and also the Giving of Thanks and Breaking of Bread? Given the cultural norms of the time, members of the early Church seem to have accepted women in ministry without any fuss. Could this be because they knew that Mary and other women had been co-workers with the apostles from the start?



Ministry of Bitalia and Cerula

Over the last decades the Neapolitan catacombs of Rione Sanità have been extensively re-excavated and restored. Some frescoes suggest that women in the early Church had been functioning as priests. One depicts a woman named Bitalia and another a woman called Cerula (above). Both women

have their arms outstretched in prayer and blessing. Above each hand is a book of the Gospels — Mark and John above the right hand and Luke and Matthew above the left. Above Cerula's head is the Chi Rho symbol of Christ and the Alpha and Omega. Some see these symbols indicating ministerial priesthood, certainly an important ministerial office.

Ongoing Debate

Popes are always reluctant to change — or even qualify — anything that their predecessors have said officially. Pope John Paul II had claimed the ban on women's ordination to be definitive and irreversible. In 2016 Pope Francis said that this ban would go on, "possibly forever". While this is small comfort to those who support the ordination of women, Francis's choice of words does leave the door open for further discussion. "Possibly forever" at least implies "possibly not".

The debate will not go away. On the contrary, it seems to be gaining momentum, pushed along by a growing discontent with clericalism, the shortage of priests, public awareness of the scale of clerical sexual abuse and the opportunity for lay people to have their say in the current synodal processes.

Distortion of Incarnational Theology

Theological reasons for not admitting women to ordination are elusive and unconvincing. In my own view, it is easier to suggest theological reasons why women should be ordained.

A foundational Christian belief is that in Christ God took flesh from

Mary and became fully human. Jesus's masculinity — though arguably appropriate for his own time and culture — is theologically insignificant. Christ's priesthood is shared with all baptised people, male and female alike.

An all-male ordained priesthood diminishes the integrity of incarnational theology. It focuses only on Jesus's maleness rather than his full humanity. It also focuses on only male members of Christ's priestly body, the Church. I think that both women and men participating in ordained ministry in the Church enhances the Christian belief in the incarnation. 💧

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**"There is the Judaic awareness
that male and female walk
together in the image of God,
whereas the Catholic Church has
been hopping on one foot for a
long time." — Joy Cowley**

Re-membering Martha and Mary as Disciples

KATHLEEN RUSHTON explains how the Martha and Mary story in Luke 10:38-42 highlights the necessity of ministry and prayer for discipleship.

The sisters Martha and Mary, friends of Jesus in Bethany (Luke 10:38-42), have been viewed too often as rivals. A critical reading shows this is not correct. We need to “re-member” them as Mary Rose D’Angelo suggests by “bringing what has been hidden out of the shadows of history, of putting together what has been dismembered and of making someone a member of oneself, of a community or the tradition in a new way.” In this interpretation, I place Martha and Mary’s story in the context of Luke’s Gospel and look at information found in the text to re-member them in their community. This enables us to re-member people in the Christian community today.

Context of a Journey

When Luke was writing between 80-90 CE, he is looking *backward* to the Jesus traditions and also *forward* to the present and future concerns of his communities. So he is shaping the Jesus story to address particular situations arising in local communities.

The section, Luke 9:51-19:48, is set as a journey which evokes Israel’s long exodus journey which formed them into a people. Throughout his own journey Jesus focuses on the formation of disciples. The story about Martha and Mary happens early “on the way to Jerusalem.” Jerusalem is the place of divine destiny but also the place where there is growing hostility to Jesus. And we find that the disciples, too, can behave in ways opposed to Jesus’s message.

Received Jesus into Her Household

Luke writes that Martha received/welcome Jesus into her household (Lk 10:38). Jesus has been welcomed before by Simeon (Lk 2:28) and will be received again by Zacchaeus (Lk 19:6). This welcome is like receiving the Word as in the Parable of the Sower.

“Welcome” or “receive” suggests hospitality. It was a Christian ministry for local householders to give hospitality to the brothers and sisters travelling to spread the



Gospel (Lk 9:5, 48; 10:8, 10; Acts 17:7). These Christian communities that met in households were often led by women (Acts 16:15).

“To Be Troubled”

Martha is described as “distracted” in the story (Lk 10:41). The word translated as “distracted” means to “be troubled” or “worried” over a public matter. It is found 11 times in the New Testament in the context of a disturbance made by a crowd or a conflict that has the whole community in an uproar. We might wonder why this term is used about Martha in response to what is commonly translated as “tasks (*diakonia*)” – “my sister has left me to do all the work (*diakonēō*) by myself”.

The key is in the words. We can think of Jesus saying: “I came not to be ministered (*diakonēō*) to but to minister (*diakonēō*)” which is most often translated as: “I came not to be served but to serve” (Mark 10:45). Australian biblical scholar John Collins has delved into how *diakonia* (noun) and *diakonēō* (verb) were understood in the ancient world. He found they were associated with those who functioned as go-betweens with the gods and were not used in talk about so-called ordinary life. The Greek-speaking church adopted the *daikon*-words to describe ministry. The sense is of a person being delegated, sent on mission and being accountable to a community (e.g., 2 Cor. 8:4).

Both Prayer and Ministry

So, contrary to most interpretations, the Martha and Mary



Kathleen Rushton RSM is a Scripture scholar and author of *The Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor: Hearing Justice in John’s Gospel* (SCM Press 2020).

story is not about prayer versus action, nor about women's lifestyle choices. It is about participation in ministry and prayer. Martha is a disciple in ministry, not just busy in the kitchen. Mary portrays prayer.

It is possible that Luke's community was in an uproar because some members wanted to focus entirely on ministry while others only on prayer. By putting the sisters Martha and Mary story early in the journey Luke emphasises that for disciples "on the way" ministry and prayer are both essential.

Re-membering Today

The Church often has a limited understanding of *diakonia*. If the *daikon*-words are translated to convey only service — like Martha's tasks performed in service — then we reduce the rich understanding of these words and we distinguish, with no scriptural justification, Martha's "tasks" from the "ministry" of biblical men.

Re-membering empowers us today, to journey together "on the way" as we walk forwards towards a new future following in the footsteps of our sisters, the women of the early church who participated in ministry — Lydia (Acts 16:40), Nympha (Col 4:15), Phoebe, "a deacon (*diakonos*) of the church at Cenchrae" (Rom 16:1) and Prisca and her husband Aquila (Acts 18:24-28; I Cor 16:19).

Ministry of the Baptised

The synodal journey we are on now has returned us to Vatican II's recovery of the priesthood of the baptised and the hope of finding new ways to live and engage in the Church — and for women particularly. It is time to acknowledge and transform the gulf between the ministerial priesthood of bishops and clergy and the baptismal priesthood of the people of God.

It was only in the 1930s that bible translations of the *daikon*-ministry words changed to "serve" or "serving"

or "take care of." For example, the *Catholic Rheims New Testament* (1582) and the *King James Bible* (1611) tell us that the healed mother-in-law of Peter "ministered unto them" (Mark 1:31) whereas the much later *New Jerusalem Bible* and *New Revised Standard Version* translate the verse as "she began to serve them".

Ministry is not just the work of the ordained in the Church. In the Judgement of the Nations parable (Matthew 24:31-46), the two groups ask: "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister (*diakonēō*) to you?" Every Christian is called to minister, to engage in the works of mercy, participating in the mission of God. This ministry is essential so that all will share in the abundance of God's gifts and no one is left without the necessities for life.

Ministry is not to be co-opted by clericalism and hierarchical power. Ministry is about being delegated, sent on mission and being accountable to a community — ministering for common good of the world. Some have particular ministerial roles in the Church but they do not minister alone and they are to be accountable to the community. It is within the hospitality of the community that ministry and prayer are mutually supporting and nourishing.

Through engaging in prayer and ministry, we enter into re-membering, into community. It is how we engage in God's mission of bringing together those who have been separated, of acknowledging as sisters and brothers those who are left out, invisible or ignored, and of respecting all people as equals. 💧

Painting: *Two Sisters* by Henri Jean Guillaume Martin (1860-1943)

17 July Luke 10:38-42

RL: 16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

RCL: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost



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Becoming Aware of Assumptions

“I’m worried,” says my friend, “that my hair doesn’t look professional. Maybe I should get up earlier to straighten it.” We’re both in our early twenties, a few months or years into our first jobs. We’ve relinquished the identity we had as students, are rewriting the identities we hold as children of our parents, and are still figuring out what it means to be workers, professionals; paid to sit in front of a computer all day and feel busy.



Shanti Mathias, a twenty-something living in Tāmaki Makaurau, is working as a journalist. She loves dangly earrings, listening to podcasts and is always learning to pray.

“Surely an extra 10 minutes of sleep in the morning is more valuable to your employer than a sleek ponytail,” I say. We’re walking up a hill at the end of a long weekend. I can’t speak for my friend, but I know that I’m trying to stop myself arranging meetings in my head, writing “to do” lists — all that can wait until tomorrow. We reach the top of the hill, spin around, start walking down into the humid lilac twilight, discussing why or whether external appearance matters.

“The best argument I’ve heard to care about your physical appearance was at church,” says my friend. I love conversations like this, reminders of all the things I haven’t figured out, all

the ways to be and to understand. She continues: “Most people judge others on their appearance; you tend to like people who look like you. If you want to welcome people to church, you need to show that you look like them, that you’re asking the same questions they are.”

Of course, my friend is right. I wake up in the morning and pick my clothes carefully, try to decide how I want others to see me. I want to look unique but like, not too “out there”. I wear a skirt I like. I tuck my hair behind my ears. I worry that my (very practical) fluoro biking vest is uncool. And I judge others: I make assumptions about the kids walking to school with uniform jerseys tied low around their hips and the grimy overalls of the person driving a truck and, yes, the sleek ponytail of the woman grabbing a coffee then hopping in her SUV.

When I get to work, settling into an office chair, settling into being Shanti-in-the-workplace, somebody a little quieter and much more anxious than my full self, I read headlines about how Pasifika people are mocked for going to low decile high schools, how Chinese New Zealanders find it more difficult to access healthcare, how Indians with darker skin miss out on job opportunities. I think these things are connected: the cultural ideas about who and what are deemed to be “professional” are racist and classist and contribute to reproducing inequities in healthcare, education and the economy.

I know I’m good at making judgements about people and places based on how they look. I know that I take that with me into sacred spaces, too; it’s much easier to talk to young people at church than it is for me to approach a parent with toddlers, or somebody whose clothes signal that they have different patterns of living from mine. And knowing that I have this bias helps, is pushing me further into acting against the barriers that stop me interacting with others. It’s encouraging, I think, to be aware of the assumptions we make — awareness being the first step towards change. 💧

Photo by Taylor Smith on Unsplash



Cold Enough for Snow

by Jessica Au

Published by Giramondo Publishing, 2022. (AUD 24.95)

Reviewed by Meryn Gates

In *Cold Enough for Snow* Jessica Au explores the mother/daughter relationship. The daughter, the novel's unnamed protagonist, intricately plans a trip to Japan for herself and her mother. As the pair explore the daughter's carefully-chosen destinations, the

protagonist reflects on her own life and that of her sister and mother.

Mirroring the nature of their relationships, mother and daughter are often momentarily separated and reunited, missing each other by the smallest of margins. While the daughter nostalgises, yearning for a sense of belonging and meaning, her mother is happy to live in the moment, finding delight in selecting colourful gloves as gifts for her daughters and grandchildren.

Cold Enough for Snow is beautifully written. The mother's only expressed wish for the trip is to experience snow — but throughout the novel there is only every variety of rain. As readers, we share the aching desperation of both mother and daughter, the longing for connection.

I found the structure of the story unusual, falling somewhere between a short story and a novel. Reading it on my Kindle, with the measuring devices accidentally turned off, I had no idea of length and found myself also yearning for the relief a chapter break provides. And then the book, and the trip, ends, with so much unresolved. 💧

Kārearea

by Māmari Stephens

Published by Bridget Williams Books, 2022. (NZD 14.99)

Reviewed by Anton Spelman



In *Kārearea*, Māmari Stephens presents excerpts from her blog written between 2016-2020.

Māmari (Te Rarawa) tells a number of stories, important for our time, in a manner that emphasises a quality of hope that she attributes to her Christian commitment and nourishment within the Anglican Church.

Māmari writes about Māori identity in a very personal and practical way, preferring to emphasise the nature of culture as learnt behaviour rather than something that is somehow embedded in our DNA.

She engages complex issues with freshness, and her perspective is always through the eyes and life experience of people.

In "The Waiting Place", Stephens' memories and experiences of those who have died are captured in an evocative description of the hinterland between death and life. In "Teaching and Learning", Māmari discusses reconciliation via the famous story about the death, in 1836, of Tarore, a young Ngāti Hauā girl and the eventual forgiveness by her father Ngakuku of her killer Uita, from Ngāti Whakaue.

Arguably, while more could have been said about "Why is God and sexuality so bloody difficult", overall *Kārearea* is a fine leadership contribution to developing a better understanding of a Māori worldview today. 💧



Fragments from a Contested Past: Remembrance, Denial and New Zealand History

by Joanna Kidman, Vincent O'Malley, Liana MacDonald, Tom Roa, Keziah Wallis

Published by Bridget Williams Books, 2022. (NZD 14.99)

Reviewed by Jenny Collins

So much of our history is remembered from a "colonial" perspective. Yet if we fail to fully understand the defining conflicts in our nation's history it is easy to buy into myths that our country was

colonised peacefully and that we have the best race relations in the world.

Fragments from a Contested Past is a little book on a big topic. Seven chapters weave a tapestry of insights into key places and events; Māori responses to the arrival of the replica of the *Endeavour* in Turanganui-a-Kiwa (2019); Ōrākau (1863), the final battle in the Waikato wars — forgotten by Pākehā but deeply embedded in tribal memory; and the 2014 call by Otorohanga College students for history to be taught in schools.

The writers, many of them from communities invaded during the 1860s, reflect on connections between past and present and important gaps in our remembered past. How many of us know the history of Great South Road, built in the 1860s to enable the invasion and confiscation of lands belonging to Māori in the Waikato? This is an important book that challenges many "accepted" ways of thinking about our past. It also reminds us that we need to confront our history, even if we find it painful. 💧



VIGIL

Created by Tom Edge (BBC, 2021)
TVNZ+ 6 episodes

Reviewed by Paul Tankard

With TV mini-series, the point inevitably came (some time ago, with streaming), when it was no longer unforgettable things like *Breaking Bad* or *The West Wing* or *The Killing*, but a new series every week, to the point when you're not sure until a little way in whether you've actually watched the whole 12-part series before.

Vigil, released last year by the BBC and now available through TVNZ+ (formerly OnDemand), is at one level a "police procedural," a species of drama that seems to dominate the airwaves at present, and in which the emphasis is on the details of the investigation rather than thrills or mystery. But its main schtick is that it is set in the west of Scotland, and that most of it takes place far out at sea, within a British nuclear submarine, the *HMS Vigil*. And there are plenty of thrills and mystery.

There is an element of box-ticking to these things: interesting detective, institutional corruption, international intrigue, and romance; so there's psychological aspects, as well as political, environmental and gender issues.

The detective is DCI Amy Silva (Suranne Jones), sent by helicopter air-drop to *Vigil*, on mission in the

North Atlantic, to investigate an unexplained death on board. All the crew say it was a suicide. Silva is to stay only three days, but because *Vigil's* movements are secret she can have no radio contact with colleagues. A number of further crises arise, including the dramatic loss at sea of a Scottish fishing vessel, and power issues on board the *Vigil*, which mean the submarine cannot surface and Silva has to stay a number of weeks, which of course intensifies the feelings of confinement and isolation.

There are also Russian and American subs lurking in the oceanic background, and on land there are MI5 agents and the navy jostling with the police for control of aspects of the situation, and further complexities

due to the local politicians, and a group of anti-nuclear activists.

So, there is a lot going on, which necessitates a fast pace and a succession of climaxes. On board the *Vigil*, various personnel are at different times under suspicion. Silva has no one she can trust, and for viewers it's not always easy to keep track of who exactly's who. But there are strong performances from the lead actors, including Martin Compston (*Line of Duty*), Shaun Evans (*Endeavour*) and Adam James.

But in the end, it's the atmospheric submarine setting which makes the series memorable. So I feel somewhat perturbed to read that *Vigil* has been renewed for a second series: are the Scottish police going to have a submarine murder unit? 💧





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Cross Currents

by Jane Higgins



We live in the land of the great outdoors. Although we're a highly urbanised population (nearly 90 per cent of us live in urban areas), engaging with our "glorious outdoors" is a cherished part of Kiwi character.

Many of us have happy memories of long, hot summer days spent camping or on the beach where our love for the natural environment was nourished. And most of us grew up with a back yard for tearing around in, kicking a ball, playing with the hose in summer and generally letting off steam.

Times change. And big changes are afoot for urban dwellers across the motu. By mid-August this year, city councils in our largest cities will have notified plan changes that implement medium density intensification in line with the National Policy Statement on Urban Development.

What does this mean? It's now compulsory for Councils in Auckland, greater Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch to allow the building of up to three units and three storeys on most housing sites without the need for a land use resource consent. The policy can also require councils in many smaller urban centres to adopt these medium density standards in situations of acute housing need.

Our cities are transforming before our eyes. Those big back yards are disappearing. The question for us now is not: "Can we turn back the clock?" Clearly, we can't and shouldn't try. We have a housing crisis. And, for many reasons (from cutting emissions to preserving vital top soil for food production), we need to drastically

slow the sprawl of our cities.

The real question is: How can we create liveable cities? An important part of the answer lies in creating built environments where everyone has access to the nature. And that doesn't just mean the occasional park down the road. It means access to nature right outside our doors.

This raises questions about what developers should be required to do in terms of landscaping. The sheer acreage of concrete being laid down demands that serious attention be paid to offsetting the resulting damage to the natural environment and biodiversity.

What about councils? They must intensify, but they can also invest

in green streetscaping, pocket parks and gardens, the protection of mature trees and the creation of green corridors that enable people to walk or cycle through the built environment without losing touch with nature.

People are struggling right now with high rents and increasing mortgages, and with the escalating expense of running a car. The move to intensification offers an opportunity to create more affordable cities through increased housing supply and reduced need for car use.

But that doesn't mean we must sacrifice health and well-being, ours and that of the non-human inhabitants of our cities: our plant, insect, bird and animal life. On the contrary, we need to be creative about how our cities can adapt.

This means taking the long view. Investment in green streetscaping, safe cycleways, pedestrian-friendly roads and public transport isn't cheap and takes time. And right now loud voices can be heard condemning "gold-plated cycleways" and arguing for more roads to ease traffic congestion. That might make the lives of car users easier in the short term, but it won't enable care for our common home or create a liveable future for our children. 💧



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When Paul was working among the Gentiles he found that those who became Christians were expected by the new Jewish Christians to be circumcised as the Jews were. Paul was upset (Acts 13). He took the issue to Rome where Peter and the early Church were established, and the first Synod was held. Here they discerned, through the Holy Spirit, that the Christian Church no longer required circumcision.

We were listening to this story at Mass, at the same time as Marg Schrader wrote her beautiful and courageous letter (TM May 2022). She wrote of the pain she experienced as a Christian when she attends a Catholic Mass and cannot receive Communion. At the same time, Pope Francis challenges all Christians preparing for the Synod next year to speak out what is deep in their hearts so that we can discover where the Spirit can be recognised.

At L'Arche Kapiti, where I am living at present, I heard at a Synod preparation meeting of the pain and anger of Christian assistants who have come to Mass accompanying people with intellectual disabilities. At Communion time, the latter receive Communion, but the assistants refrain. "They are welcome to come but not accepted at the Table." At the Home of Compassion, where I have recently ministered, Christian people with dementia receive Communion if they ask for it. Holy Spirit, guide us through your Synod.

Roderick Milne, Wellington

I am referring to Marg Schrader's article (TM May 2022). I have recently joined the Catholic Church. For many years, my husband and I worshipped at Catholic Churches. We were always made to feel welcome before and after the Mass and during the passing of the peace. Whenever we mentioned receiving communion fellow worshippers would say "You are welcome, just don't ask" as the official response is that only those who are members of the Church can receive the bread and wine. So, we did what for us felt right. We received communion. I was never entirely happy about the situation. I felt like a gatecrasher. After all I would never turn up to a friend's place and just walk in and sit at the table. I would wait to be invited. Now that I am a member of the Catholic Church I can see a little of why this decree is in place. The Holy Meal is for those who are committed to being with Jesus on his journey and have attended the classes and are aware of what such a commitment means. But actually being committed does not come about through classes. It is a deep state of being which is private and is a bond with God. Now rarely a Mass goes by that something doesn't touch me deeply. I feel at home. My desire is that we can welcome to the table everyone who "loves the Lord" — words used in many Protestant churches. This two-year Synodal period might be the time to say that talking about love means nothing unless we are loving in our actions — like welcoming all in the name of Christ.

Marilyn Wilkinson, Paraparaumu

Tui Motu (May 2022) was the usual cornucopia of delights — it blasted out of the nondescript brown envelope and said: "Here I am in HD!" Kaaren Mathias, notwithstanding admitting to "messaging up" sometimes, is the solid platform of every edition: she provides my monthly fix of reminding me to be simply grateful for the here and now; and to be open to learning about the mystery of life, both from the people around us, and the world in which we find ourselves.

Mary Betz launched her campaign

to be elected the next Pope: standing tall on the platform that Church teaching now needs to include the reason and experience of lay members in theology of families. I relished the notion that "reason and the experience of people" — not to mention the inclusiveness of the full spectrum of the human family in all its manifestations was required for the Church to be, well, a Church. Mary Betz — you have my vote!

Brendan Daly heightened my expectation when he explained the changes Pope Francis has made to the central government of the Church — the Roman Curia. I acknowledge that Brendan Daly lost me at paragraph 5 when he revealed that the key element of Francis's reforms was the renaming of the Congregations as Dicasteries. Wow! As if that will make a difference? Those of us all too familiar with corporate reform and restructuring know well that changing names and titles is the standard mechanism used to provide absolutely nothing but the illusion of change.

And finally, Presbyterian minister Marg Schrader's account of her experiences with the Dicastery of Whatever responsible for denying her to be able to share in the breaking of bread in the Catholic Church brought tears to my eyes — and prompted a sense of outrage. I have every confidence that when Jesus exhorted us to "love one another as I have loved you" his expectation was that the bishop who would not dare to share communion with you, would have listened to the guidance of common sense. Pope Mary Betz could start by fixing that one!

Peter Slocum, Auckland.

SYNODALITY

There is so much worthy and fascinating input about synodality. We so need to connect with all our people. And certainly small faith groups are where we are seeing God's Spirit at work in our midst. Yet, for all our woes at the institutional Church, and our endeavours to change the dynamics, do we stop and think, and pray about what God wants?

Jill Heenan, Whangārei



Looking OUT and IN

The death of Mike Riddell has got me thinking about grief, and about celebrity.

We received scores of messages after Mike's death — some from people who had known him personally over the years, but most from people who knew him only through his writing. Mike's dying affected us, just as his absence affects us now.

"Celebrity" has become a much-diminished word, tainted by the sense of reality TV-like vacuity and the contemporary idea of being famous for being famous. But a celebrity is literally one who is celebrated by many. Like Mike.

Why do some people especially affect us? With Mike, it was his ability to write honestly — he articulated his own experience in a way that rang true, resonated with each of us. Mike writing about his life helped us to understand our own. There's a bravery in being as honest as Mike was.

Sometimes the bravery is in the face of death. Once Oscar Romero, a hitherto toe-the-line social conservative, had recognised the tyranny and oppression of the El Salvadorian elite, he could not be diverted from opposing them and standing in solidarity with the poor — until the moment he was assassinated. Saint Oscar Romero became a holy celebrity, canonised by Pope Francis in 2018.

The bravery can be in the face of ridicule. Dame Whina Cooper, marching the length of the North Island in a symbolic journey of justice for Māori and te Tiriti o Waitangi, attracted everything from mild amusement to outright scorn. When I was small, Dame Whina was presented as a funny old lady; by the time I



left school, the tune had changed: she was recognised as a prophetic rights activist and had become a national celebrity.

We celebrate these people because we recognise that they are just like us, but behaving better. We know they are sloughing off what normally holds us back — vanity, hubris, concern at losing dignity and status, of being mocked —

to speak and act as we would like to.

So while it's been a year of loss for *Tui Motu* so far — not just Mike but also longtime contributor John Meredith and stalwart promoter Margaret Shanly — I'm reminded of how we are served by a positive form of celebrity. Rightly, we celebrate courage in speech and action, the bravery to live out gospel values whatever the consequences.

We grieve the loss of people who inspired us to be better than we are — who hold us to account by showing what can be done, if we're honest enough and brave enough. We've been lucky to have so many examples. 💧

Ann Hassan is Assistant Editor and Administrator of *Tui Motu*. She has two young boys and loves reading and op shopping.



**Bless us with the imagination and delight
of children in puddles
and gratitude for
clouds
rain
frost
waterways
and oceans — the waters of life.**

From the *Tui Motu* Team

