

Tui Motu
InterIslands

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Christmas reflections with Piero della Francesca

Albert Moore

One of the most treasured painters of earlier Italian Renaissance art is Piero della Francesca (c 1415–1492). He drew not only on his Italian predecessors but also on the innovative Flemish artists, from whom he learned to love fine detail and lavish clothing. He is now admired for his mastery of perspective and spatial depth. His figures, too, have a convincing human warmth and solidity, all under the subtle light of his native Tuscany. His compositions radiate clarity, order and a beauty of stillness and poise.

The *Nativity* (above right) was painted in Piero's later years (1475) but displays the same freshness and imagination. It is set against a distant landscape and city buildings; but the immediate setting is the 'shacky' manger with its dilapidated brick wall and smelling of cattle. All this is transformed by the foreground where the infant Jesus is cradled on the grass. Mary is dressed (no doubt, unrealistically!) in her 'Sunday best' as she offers a mother's heartfelt devotion and adoration. Shepherds arrive behind her. Above all, the response is of pure joy, as the musician angels strum their instruments and give full voice. They are not just 'having fun', but celebrating a moment of deep, deep joy. Joy is one of the supreme gifts of the Spirit, a universal religious expression, an awareness of the divine in our midst. So, "joy to the world!"



The *Flagellation* (below) is from Piero's earlier works (1452). At first it looks like two paintings separated by a single pillar. On the left in more distanced perspective Christ is being scourged in preparation for the horrors of crucifixion. He is stripped and helpless, tied to a pillar. To the right we see three close-up, realistic figures in the fashionable finery of the day. Who are they? Maybe well-known citizens of Piero's day, but we don't know. Scholars now suggest they might be earnestly discussing the imminent threat of a Turkish attack on Constantinople and the need for reconciliation and support from the Christian churches of East and West.

In their well-to-do and highminded style they seem detached and far removed from the sufferings of Christ. Yet Piero painted this as one unified composition, and intended the viewers – ourselves included – to see both parts together from a central vantage point.

And what has this to tell us at Christmas? Surely that these people are real people like ourselves. We may experience riches and glamour in our celebration; but this is still happening in a world of poverty alongside affluence. In God's world the joy of the Christian life confronts the nitty-gritty sufferings of pain and evil. Christ stands before us, unclad and patient. Do we follow this Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life? Or do we seek an illusory safety in detachment? ■





This, the smallest of corners, contains the largest of thanks to all who have helped TM during 1999. The volunteer network covers the country from Cape Reinga to the Bluff but it is concentrated in Dunedin where a splendid nucleus of hands-on volunteers assist our two editorial staff to prepare and despatch each issue.

Volunteers are at the very heart of the Tui Motu venture. They are profoundly appreciated.

Staff and board members try to respond promptly to any offer of help. If work pressures have contrived to prevent this in your case, please accept our apologies, know that it was unintentional, and do approach us again. We truly need your help.

May Christmas and the year 2000 be kind to us all.

Tom Cloher, Chairman
on behalf of *Tui Motu* Board

**The Editorial team wish all our readers and
helpers a truly blessed Christmas and Peace
and prosperity for 2000**



The angel of the Nativity

Many years ago I read C.S.Lewis's science fiction trilogy where angelic beings were portrayed as having terrifying energy, yet with faces magisterial and benign. My romanticised angels had then to be exchanged for more awesome ones.

However, I was up against years of conditioning. Even today, films and the TV series *Touched by an Angel* perpetuate the more comforting, simpering version. And I, too, am guilty of portraying the tame and 'cutesy', paper doily syndrome (see illustrations on pages 4-5 in this issue).

Of all the interpretations in religious art the brittle medium of stained glass seems best suited for depicting shimmering, ephemeral beings. So, for the December cover I drew on this tradition – yet again 'compromising' by taking a stylised, traditional angel – feathers, harp and halo; but by fractionating the image I hoped to dispel predictable mediocrity and capture some facet of mystery: one of the angelic host as narrated by St Luke (himself the patron saint of artists!).

Gloria in excelsis Deo et in terra pax..
Glory in highest to God and in earth peace

Donald Moorhead

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...inside the front cover

Albert Moore gives a charming analysis, in the style of Sister Wendy Beckett, of two pictures by the famous Italian Renaissance painter, Piero della Francesca: the *Nativity* and the *Flagellation of Christ*

Brokering peace – not war

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, tidings of peace! So cried the prophet nearly 3,000 years ago. How beautiful the vision of the child-Saviour who is born to us! How joyous the chorus of angels and shepherds – and all the millions who will gather round the crib this Christmas. *Peace on earth to all people of good will.*

As we close another century, is our world a more peaceful place than at the beginning? In some respects we can answer *Yes*. The United Nations, much maligned as it is, is a forum where consistently can be heard the pleas of those who suffer oppression – and sometimes somebody heeds. The little peoples of Kosovo and East Timor this year have cried out against oppression and rescue missions have been sent. Even in Ulster, after months of agonising suspense, it seems that the Good Friday peace accord is going to be implemented, and that the voice of the terrorist will no longer be permitted to call the tune, on either side.

One diplomatic feature which needs to be adopted in other areas of dispute is the use of the 'honest broker'. Nations in conflict, internal or external, have to be prepared to waive their claims to exclusive sovereignty and allow a neutral adjudicator to steer them towards a just settlement. This has been the role of Senator Mitchell in the North of Ireland... and indeed of Don McKinnon on Bougainville. A classic example 37 years ago was the intervention of Pope John XXIII in the Cuban missile crisis. This story is retold on pages 16-18 – as well as an analysis of what may well be judged the greatest Papal document of the 20th Century, *Pacem in Terris*. The Encyclical was born out of John's experience of a world in crisis.

It would be facile however to imagine that it has all been good news this year on the peace front. On pages 19-20

Paul Oestreicher, the veteran peace campaigner, reports on the effects of bombing and sanctions on the Serb people. It would be possible to read this account and substitute Saddam Hussein for Milosevic. Sophisticated aerial bombing accompanied by draconian sanctions have simply cemented the dictators in place. The logic of the Pentagon seems to be to use overwhelming military superiority to crush opposition – but never risk the lives of combatants, since this would be unacceptable to the American voter.

The American Government must accept grave responsibility for its ambiguous stance regarding world peace. The Senate refused to ratify the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in spite of years of patient negotiation, sending the worst possible signals to China, India and Pakistan. The Americans are the world's largest exporters of arms, followed by Britain and France. These so-called peace-loving democracies seem to see no irony in making huge profits from commercial arms sales, thus fuelling the fires of war across Africa and the Third World.

Last year over 100,000 people were killed in these 'small' wars, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, where arms exports doubled during the year. In the 12 months up to August, 10 international wars and 25 civil wars were being fought. It is thought that over 80 percent of the casualties have been civilians (compared with 15 percent in the First World War). It is the modern equivalent of the *Massacre of the Innocents*. The only ones to gain are the arms dealers and manufacturers – and no doubt the shareholders as they sip their Budweisers and munch their apple pie on Thanksgiving Day.

The world has still a long way to go before it is either a just or a peaceful place for humankind to live. A solemn thought, as we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace. ■ *M.H.*



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Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed.

The name **Tui Motu** was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God.

Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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A Time for Peace

Ron Sharp

Over the past 15 years in Aotearoa-New Zealand we have allowed our leaders to systematically dismantle our world-renowned social egalitarianism built up over many years. While some voices challenged the concentration of power usurped by the New Right, New Zealanders generally began to believe their fraudulent and hypocritical high-handedness. Economic growth took precedence over care of our people.

Part of us said yes to all this – the unemployed should become socially responsible. We came to half believe Bill Birch that there was no problem with some people earning in a fortnight what others received in a year. Dependency was seen to be the fault of the victim, never of the powerful. Investors became the primary beneficiaries; profits grew exponentially. Crime spiralled and incarceration increased with it. The prison industry boomed in order to deal with superfluous minorities.

Eighty percent of the workforce was effectively battered into submission by the Employment Contracts Act; they were forced to work longer hours to maintain the income level of the days of collective bargaining. Workers were made to feel insecure in their jobs – and effectively enslaved. The elderly were made to feel burdensome. In order to prevent people feeling their lives were completely meaningless the corporates put before us the freedom to consume without limit and dangled seductive advertising before our eyes – which we pay for!

So – where is the hope of Israel? Where the woman who will proclaim that the arrogant will be put to rout, the oppressor dethroned and the rich sent empty away? Where the Prince of Peace who will lift the humble high and fill the hungry with good things? Where the prophets to inspire us – or be chopped down? The Greens? The *hikoi of hope*? How time has silenced them!

Into the doom and gloom are given the voices which cry in the wilderness: *Peace on earth; a Saviour is born to you!* "The kingdom is within you... the Spirit will lead you to the truth." For in this land of Aotearoa the Spirit lives in the lives of the faithful, those who are aware, be they religious or not. The light shines in the darkness; the darkness has never mastered it. The world does not recognise it. But all that comes to be is lit with its fire.

There is a time for peace, because birth continues and more people treasure life than despise it. There is a time for peace, because people find time to speak their values to one another, to love one another, to laugh with one another and tell one another that they have wept. There is a time for peace because people build better than they destroy. There is a time for peace, because people listen to the voice of conscience, hope for a better future and die with promises to keep. There is a time for peace, because we are happier when we heal one another than when we hurt one another. There is a time for peace because once long ago a human heart thrilled at the beat of angel's wings. ■

Blessed are the Pure in Heart: they shall see God

Joy Cowley

Blessed are the pure in heart, sing the angels.

The mother understands that the child has come from the Oneness that she doesn't want to name with mere words. She thinks she could describe the Oneness with love – if she had access to all the love that had ever existed. She rests in the mystery that engulfs her, understanding too, that *heart* in the angel song, means soul. Blessed are the pure of soul, she thinks as she kisses her baby's head. Blessed, blessed, oh so blessed.

But now the little one must learn to be human. The soul is here to grow through its humanity and the conditions for life in earth school must be established. The child needs to develop a healthy instinct for survival. She will develop a "me first" attitude to life. She becomes competitive. She will fight whatever gets in the way of her comfort. In other words, she joins the rest of the animal kingdom on this planet. This has to be.

The struggle for human existence begins to show in the child's eyes and the mother no longer sees the child's soul clearly. But from time to time, she will still hear the song of the angels, reminding her what she knows deep within herself.



*The soul is from God.
The soul is always pure.*

Listen! Can you hear it? The song of the angels? A child is born. In a village hut, a hospital, a field, a stable, somewhere, a mother hears the angels as she gazes into the eyes of her new little one. The little one looks directly back into her mother's eyes and holds them with an unblinking stare that is as deep as eternity.

God is with us, sing the angels. *God is with us. Another spiritual being has begun its human journey.*

In the weeks to come, the mother will hear again the song of the angels as she gathers her little one against her breast. There will be moments of holy awe that go beyond the usual prayers of the mother's day. She will want to spend hours sitting, holding, touching, feeling in the little one a knowledge that she herself once held but has now forgotten. Looking into those eternal eyes, she will teeter on the edge of remembering.

The mother encourages her child on her human journey, knowing that the child must make mistakes to learn. She gives the child love and support as the child enthusiastically rushes at life in a dance of falling down, getting up, falling down, getting up. The child does not understand that falling down is a valuable part of learning. She begins to resent it. Her instinct for survival tells her that what hurts is bad and she learns new words for comfort and discomfort, calling them good and evil. Soon her entire world is divided this way, into pain and pleasure, evil and good. Which is as it should be. Division

is part of the human condition, laid down by the laws of the planet, and a natural part of the early journey. The mother understands for she remembers the time when she too, lived in a world of clear opposites.



*The soul is untouched by division, sing the angels to her inner ear.
The soul is always pure.*

The child is now a young adult, healthy, confident, eager, opinionated, rich in experience, lacking in tact, noisy, exuberant, still rushing at life, but learning the gift of occasional silence, learning to listen to her own angel song.

The mother meanwhile, is in a different space of journey. Divisions have blurred. Some time ago she became aware that good and evil were not separate but strangely mixed and that one had the habit of turning into the other. She realises that the times of famine that threatened her very existence, have yielded the priceless gifts of wisdom and compassion. On the other hand, she can look back on times of plenty and see them as periods of non-growth. She has learned that

the great prizes of life are not the trophies of the natural world: success, power, money, popularity. The learnings she holds dear have come from pain, rejection, failure, her own mistakes.

The mother had discovered that at a certain stage of growth, the human journey changes direction. The soul, nurtured by life, outgrows the dictates of its incarnation. It loosens its grip on the survival instinct that is called ego. It moves beyond division and begins its journey back to the Holy Oneness that the mother cannot name. Now she begins to understand the happy shout of freedom in the angel song:

Take up your cross. Sell all you have and give it to the poor. The one who loves life shall lose it. Consider the lilies. Give and it shall be given to you.

The mother sees her grown daughter going through the same process, gaining wisdom from error, strength from weakness, compassion from pain, success from failure, in the mystery of paradox. Sometimes, in her daughter's eyes, the mother glimpses again that newborn look of the pure soul she once held cradled in her arms.

Except you become as little children, you cannot come to me, sing the angels. ■



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

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In Part II of his study of Priestless Sundays, Fr Guy Hartcher CM emphasises the liturgy of the Word as a life-giving act of worship in its own right



Celebrating the Word of God

Gradually we as Catholic communities are beginning to appreciate the Word. We are learning to listen to it, and rather more slowly, to reflect upon it. But we are inhibited in developing a fuller understanding of the Word by two factors – the lingering sense in the minds of some that the Bible is ‘Protestant’, and the contrasting sense that the Word is merely introductory.

The Catholic community is coming to grips with the Word as a part of our worship, and this communal dimension is important; in fact it is vital for us as the People of God to listen to God’s voice speaking to us, guiding our community and enriching our understanding. But the other (individual) dimension still has a long way to go. Probably more Catholics than ever before actually have a Bible in their home, but many would have to search for it when it was required. Individually we are only at the beginning of making the regular reading of Scripture a part of our prayer lives. Since each dimension, the individual and the communal, feed into each other, we will not manage to develop a fully rounded understanding of God’s Word in our

lives until we live with and love the Word in both our own individual and our collective lives.

The slowness of this sense of Scripture as a personal devotion to spread among Catholics is partially the difficulty of knowing where to start and how to find the time anyway! It is also partially that, having read some parts of the Bible, many people have found it alien and difficult to follow. The cultural differences are profound of course, as one would expect of any two or three thousand-year-old document, and this is discouraging for people approaching it alone. This sense of being out of our depth is a reinforcement of the sense that the Bible is an alien and Protestant book better left for Mass! Study groups and renewal programmes have begun to turn the tide, but a lot of water has still to reverse its flow!

In the growth of our worshipping use of the Word, we have become accustomed to the Scriptures as part of all of our liturgical actions (except possibly in *Rite One* Reconciliation where it often still seems artificial), and many have come to love it. But in every case, the Word appears in our liturgies early in

the proceedings, in what can be misinterpreted as an introductory place. For older Catholics, the classroom teaching of earlier days that to fulfil one’s Sunday obligation one had to be present for the Offertory, the Consecration and the Priest’s Communion, certainly gave the impression that the Word was peripheral. So it is easy to be left with the unconscious impression that the Scriptures are a lead-in to the *real* purpose of our gathering.

Of course the reality is the exact opposite. Whether we look at a Sunday Mass, or a wedding, or any other liturgical gathering, in every case God has **two** meetings with His People. In one meeting God speaks with them and they with God. That is the Liturgy of the Word. In the other meeting, in the case of Eucharist, God feeds the people. In the case of a wedding, God blesses and strengthens the mutual bonding commitment proclaimed by the couple. Thus in every liturgy God acts in the way specific to that rite, and God enlightens and enriches the people assembled through the Word.

The whole thrust of the revival of Scripture in worship (which is one of

the most crucial reforms of Vatican II) is that without the Word we are impoverished, no matter how actively we are involved in Eucharist and sacraments. The Word has always been there, but when it was in a foreign tongue it was truly introductory, and more in the nature of a hurdle to be jumped before the core of the worship began. The process of rediscovery of the wealth of what we have always had before us is just beginning to gather momentum.

What we have not yet come to grips with in most cases is that a Liturgy of the Word is a perfectly complete, valuable, and valid act of worship all by itself.

The Word as Worship

In the Liturgy of the Word we are engaged in a meeting with God. God's People are assembled at God's feet to listen to the wisdom of God poured out for us. This is not a new form of worship. In the Old Testament there are any number of cases where the People are called together and the Word of God is read to them. The most striking cases of this are those instances where the People have been in exile or alienated

the reading of God's Word is a direct encounter with God

from God, and on their return they are summoned to hear God's Word. They listen all day to the Law expounded to them and respond with awe, amazement and fear of the Lord.

In *Nehemiah* Chapter 8 the people are summoned; they worship God by standing as soon as Ezra opens the Book, responding to his *Praise the Lord, the Great God with Amen! Amen!* and then they kneel in worship with their faces to the ground. Then they stand and listen until noon while the Law is expounded to them and explained. They are so moved by what they hear that they begin to cry.

This episode is a great model for us. The People of Israel show us that they know they are in the presence of God, that the reading of God's Law is a direct encounter with God. The force of their concentration, of their need to discover what God requires of them, is patent in the text. And of course their reaction is obvious. They are moved by sorrow, fear and guilt to weep, and the priests and Levites have to calm them and redirect their emotions to enable them to share in rejoicing that God has returned to the people.

So a Liturgy of the Word for us too is (or should be) an act of worship. We assemble as God's People, waiting expectantly to hear what God has to tell us. We are aware that the people involved in presiding, reading and performing other ministries are mouth-pieces for God who speaks and acts through them. In the *Introductory Rite* we focus on God with sorrow for our sins and with hope in God's mercy. We approach the Word with awe, we listen with attention. Then we respond with silent reflection, to enable each of us to grasp internally what the Word is saying to us, individually. After that we all respond with psalm or song or spiritual canticle, all together praising God for the goodness granted to us.

When the Word has been expounded we respond with a *Profession of Faith*. It is as if we say to God: *Yes God, we have heard you, we will try to obey you, and we continue to believe in you, so here we proclaim our pride and our faith in you.* And being a needy people, we conclude our worshipping action by asking God for the needs of God's People by *Prayers of the Faithful*.

There is dialogue involved in this meeting with God. God speaks, we listen. We reply to God, who listens to us. We are moved to faith and to praise. This is a complete action of worship on our part and of grace-giving on God's part. While it is a rite of power when attached to Eucharist and to the other sacraments, it is also a rite of power on its own.

An unfortunate aspect of the terminology we are tending to use is that by speaking of a lay-led liturgy as a *Communion Service* we are once again (unconsciously) sidelining the Word and placing the emphasis on Communion. While Communion can and should be part of the lay-led liturgy (at least some of the time particularly as a link with the Eucharistic community), naming the rite *the Liturgy of the Word with Communion* is a much more satisfactory approach.

Conclusion:

When there is no priest available on a Sunday the People of God have many options. There is only one bad option, which is to stay at home and ignore the Sunday. Any option which sees God's People assembled for worship is a good option. So travelling to the nearest Mass is a good option. Assembling with one's own community for worship of the Word is also a good option, and in many circumstances it may be a better option. But to exercise that option with understanding, the People of God need to work at both a deeper understanding of what it means to be the People of God in this locality, and at a deeper understanding of God's Word and of our worship of God in the Word. ■



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The poet . . . and the seeker

Mike Riddell

A young man sits at the feet of New Zealand's foremost poet seeking radical inspiration – and instead hears the gospel summons

At the age of 18 I was a student radical at Canterbury University. These were the days of vigorous protest against both the Vietnam War and the continuing regime of apartheid in South Africa. In such distant times politics was carried in the air of University, and everyone inhaled. Study was a kind of optional extra to be considered when all other distractions failed. It was not that there were a greater number of causes than there are currently; more that young people had hope that their involvement could make a difference to history.

It was into that environment that a shaggy poet by the name of James K. Baxter wandered, one Friday afternoon. He spoke in the upstairs common room to the usual collection of cynical and self-assured students. I knew only a little of his poetry, but I was fascinated by what I had heard of his experimental community in Jerusalem. And of course he had gained something of a reputation for getting up the noses of respectable society; a trait guaranteed to attract the interest of would-be radicals.

He certainly looked the part. He wore old clothes and bare feet, and his long hair and beard were matted. I suppose I expected some sort of political analysis from him; some further encouragement for my suspicion that the current system was bankrupt, and that revolution was called for. Instead he spoke of a visit to the Varsity office of an old friend of his in Auckland in search of a loan. Baxter had been despatched with a lecture and no money.

In that magnificently captivating voice of his, he reflected on the process by which his friend had been turned from a generous and hospitable man to a respectable and disapproving professional. In short, he spoke of love and its enemies. He wondered aloud about the processes of

life which could so suffocate ordinary human compassion that good people would become remote, self-interested and uncaring.

Baxter's approach caught me on the blind side. It was a discourse I had no preparation for. This was not social analysis or left-wing radicalism; it was a gentle probing of the forces at work in the human heart. His rambling meditation was not something which I could keep at a distance or dispassionately dissect for Marxist orthodoxy. Instead it awakened some form of spiritual hunger within me which I had no name for. I had no words to name my response, but I knew that what he was speaking of was something very important.

The man was, of course, something of a social activist himself. He marched against the Vietnam War, and stood beside Nga Tamatoa in land protests many years before the issue had any credence in Pakeha circles. But the essence of Baxter's protest was not so much political as religious. Justice for him was always a spiritual issue, and unavoidably so. Perhaps it is best to hear this expressed in his own words:

I do not concern myself much with the endeavour to educate people in opposition to war. I am concerned about the peace. A dead peace breeds wars as a dead body breeds maggots. How can we avoid war while we continue to idolise material or mental possessions? A man without detachment sees enemies behind every bush. They are enemies because they might want to take away his possessions.

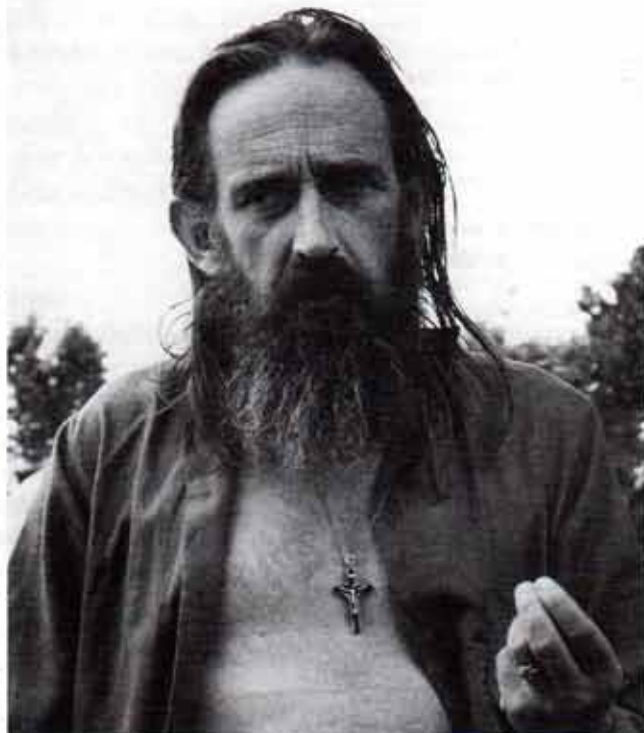
"My own answer to the war makers is - 'let me nail two boards together, with the help of a friend, and share kai with strangers, while you fight to keep the possessions you should have long since given away. Your quarrels seem to me illogical. If you wish to join me, though, you will be more than welcome'.

While in some circles this approach might run the risk of quietism, the public and prophetic life of Baxter during his latter years foreclosed any accusations of non-engagement. Rather his attention was on the inner source of more visible strategies for change. He sought the grace of divine love which would leave him free to relax his grasp on material security or self-fulfilment, and to embrace others and offer them genuine hospitality.

These are themes which come back to us at our Christmas feast of the Incarnation. The events celebrated there are simple, humble and hidden; and yet we dare to associate with them the hope for peace of the entire world. At first take the disjunction seems impossibly wide and irretrievably naïve. But if we take the time to reflect at all, we may concur with Baxter's intuition - that peace of any lasting sort requires some deep foundation in the corporate soul.

The Christ-child seeks a place of welcome, and struggles to find one. In our own lives and in the society we have

constructed, is it any less difficult for him to find hospitality? Over the past 20 years our land has become one in which selfishness and cruel disinterest in the fate of others is regarded as a virtue. No amount of structural change, I suspect, will repair the wounded souls of those dehumanised by such lack of compassion.



It is fortunate for Baxter that he did not live to see the very worst qualities of the national character come to fruition, nor the best withering in exile. But for those of us who remain carrying a memory of communal love, it may be worth revisiting the words of our most perceptive poet. Social change, peace, justice - all of these must grow out of a deeper vision of the purpose and hope of human existence. If love does not find a foothold in the heart, it is unlikely to transform the world.

I came away from listening to Baxter with a restlessness which I couldn't quite

identify. It was to be a long journey before I too sank to my knees at Mass to acknowledge my own need of love. It is when the Christ-child finds a small lodging that true and lasting change becomes possible. ■

To J.K.

Old friend, I never knew you.
Though at times it seems
That we have shared our private dreams,
And drunk a common cup.

I saw you once.
You came to share your soul
With fresh-faced youngsters full of goals
And arrogance to boot.

We never heard.
Yet something in the way you spoke
Cut deep, and dimly I awoke
To taste your hunger.

Memory's a whore.
We use her any way we please;
But looking back through time's rough seas
You seem a god.

Now that's a joke.
An old man stitched from rag
Like some misshapen loose-filled bag
With tangled hair.

Your voice rang true.
And who's to say divinity
Must be clothed in sweet sterility
Or pious awe?

I didn't know.
That love I roughly felt
Was love that at the altar knelt
To own its price.

What can I say?
The nail-pierced hands
(None but the torn heart understands)
Have gripped me too.

And still you speak.
As I read your hard-won lines
And see the bloody tracks and signs
I feel your pain.

Can you feel mine?
The church would have us think
That dead and living have no link
Before the end.

Perhaps they're right.
And yet within my heart
I know we're not so far apart
As some would think.

No, I never knew you.
And now the chance has gone.
The wrinkled world still staggers on.
Farewell, my friend, farewell.

Eileen *Child of potato and peat-bog*

breed,

*I was exiled – or freed –
Shipped to a broad land uplifted high
With a long white cloud of a sky
Over a long harbour.*

*Life was mostly a labour,
Girl and woman, one way and another,
Daughter and mother.
I buried my dead;
Hung on to God
For daily bread.*

*I am at an end now, sunken and shrunken, and lying
With mind dark, limbs useless, hardly an ember
Of life to remember.*

*Suddenly a plunge into terror, a lurch –
Holy Mother of God, Holy Church!
Am I dying?
Yes! I am flying!!
Tenderly carried into unspeakable light.
I am made beautiful, cherished,
Nothing has perished.
Shining with love and delight
I am eternity dawning.*

Why are you mourning?

Joan Firth

Fringe Benefits

*We are the untidy ends
Tangled and dishevelled
Dangling loose
Stitched down only at one end.*

We dance in the wind.

*We are the light-minded,
With ungrounded feet
Frivolity is our purpose
Our function to adorn.*

We dance in the wind.

*We are the discarded,
Trimmed off to straighten the edges,
Keep the line uncluttered,
Purposeful, intent.*

*And the wind is left
Without a dancing partner.*

Jan Em-

At Mount Cook

Could there be so much stone in all the world?
– Out of the liquid earth hurled,
Pressed undersea then shoved up, furlled
In these convoluted strata
Hanging with blood-red rata.

In these mountains and valleys of stones –
Moraine and shingle and scree –
In this arid valley of stones,
(Hallucinogenic sun pounding
Valley of dry bones)
There is nothing living to see.

Where are the chamois?
Where are the thar bounding?

Nothing moves but the sounding
Trickle of unseen gravel shifting
And my own boots crunching and lifting.

Why do I come again to this punishment track?
Tortured pilgrim feet dusty, eyes dusty,
Mouth dry, nose and lips cracked and crusty,
And all the clothes stuck to my back.

Well, it is for feeling and knowing
High places far off; for personal rebirth, a growing,
A rarefied path of the soul for mystical seeing,
Up from the commonplace world haughtily fleeing
To be whole.

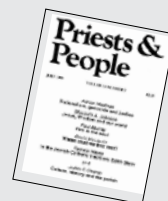
No. I am all false, proud in the head;
For Eileen, scrubbing, hands knobbed and red,
Wringing and chopping and scraping
In backyard and laundry and factory timelessly,
tirelessly giving,
She knows about birth and rebirth and living,
And death, far more clearly
Than I in my self-indulgent escaping.
And God loves her more dearly.

Joan Firth

Priests & People

Addresses the issues that matter

Priests & People is a monthly religious magazine, a valuable resource for anyone involved in pastoral work, containing material for sermons, meditation, study and personal growth. With a rich selection of writers, comprising clergy and laity, *Priests & People* offers deep insights into fundamental issues of the Church and the world, such as prayer, sexuality, healing and the sacraments.



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Waiting

Bring me stone
Seamed with solid expectation.
Scoured smooth by centuries
Of wild river flow.

You send wind
A scent, a ripple, a restlessness
Uncertain whispers under storm.

And I've seen
The power of Franz Joseph
Carve chunks off Alps – schist –
And smooth it.

Yet you eddy
Only round my rough edges
And I'm left to wait an answer.

Rob Allen

Not Now There's always time to start
to introduce a new way
a new, exciting dawn
of fresh and fearless thoughts
that will both encourage and provoke.

Doors made to open, despite our protest
to allow a host of new and fresh approaches
challenging, uncomfortable, inconvenient.
Too simple to stop, to reflect and not act.
So much we have to do that we cannot and
must not refuse.

Will we rob ourselves of this grace
and shout *No* to the hilltops,
Not now, there is so much to do!
Or will we throw caution to the winds
and ignore our greed, our plans and desires?

Our friends that we don't yet know
those who live under the bridge
others who try and can't break through.
Too many mistakes we are told have been made.

A nuisance, in fact, they are.
Must we give them another chance,
believe in them, help them and go with them.
Yes, says the inner voice despite your rush,
and despite the risk!

What is time, quality time,
that we want so much for ourselves?
Must we care for our own and then risk
caring and giving our new friends hope,
seeking them out to discover their worth?

Dolores Smith

BAD TASTE

It was decided, under the Roman sun
over fettuccine and red wine
just before siesta,
to have an inaugural banquet...
a kind of ecclesiastical welcoming
of the third millennium.
It was after all a new beginning
an opportunity to satisfy our primeval need
to start again
to wipe the slate clean.
Conversion is, after all, our business
and who would like to miss out
on this natural conversion opportunity.
It would be, they assured us,
...a show of strength
...a statement of survival
...a sign of hope.

As a speaker,
who would consider such an occasion complete
without a guest speaker,
John the evangelist was invited...
you know who I mean
...*in the beginning was the word* one.

I saw the tables before the guests arrived.
Resplendent!
White table cloths, whiter now under the TV lights.
Crystal, silver and gold.
Regal was the word that came to mind...
Oh surely the third millennium would feel welcome
In spite the bad press its predecessors had had.

Needless to say numbers, on the day,
had to be limited
and fair enough too
only the begrudgers would baulk at that.
Mind you, when I saw them seated,
those who oil the cogs of the institutional machinery
both church and state,
I did wonder at the selection process.
But who, on such an awesome occasion
would want to be a Jeremiah.

Apparently speeches were first.
With a ping of silver on crystal
an expectant hush fell on the assembly
and through the TV cameras on the whole world.

St John missed his cue.
It was the young waitress
with whom he was in deep conversation
drew his attention to his empty chair
and to the fact that all were waiting.
He moved to his chair and began to speak.
"*In the beginning was the word*"
(the entire assembly began to applaud)
"*the word became flesh*"
(by now everyone was on their feet)
St John was visibly touched.
He waited for the applause to die down.
He began again...

"*In the beginning was the word
and the word became flesh
vulnerable, perishable and edible.
But now the word has become
doctrine and dogma,
encrusted, imperishable and inedible,
you must all be fierce hungry
so let's eat up.*"

Eddie Condra

Mary: Our Assumptions and Preconceptions

An Advent reflection by theologian Draško Disdar explores the poetic sense of the great Marian dogmas, throwing light on how God relates to humanity, fallen and redeemed

It shouldn't – but it does – surprise me at how surprised many people are when I tell them that I heartily accept the Marian dogmas. It surprises me somewhat less when those who are not only not surprised but pleased that I readily accept these dogmas, are not only surprised but even a little shocked when I tell them why. (If you understood that sentence without reading it twice you're doing well!)

In a nutshell: everything we say about Mary is a statement about the true nature of our own *simple, basic* humanity as God would have it – just as all Christological statements are about the *full* nature and *ultimate* destiny of our humanity. “The Immaculate Conception”, “*Theotokos*: The Virgin Mother of God”, and “The Assumption of Mary Body and Soul into Heaven”, are *poetry* not biology; in fact, they are more like titles of poems in a trilogy on the true nature of the human person than “definitions” about one human being in isolation.

What these poems are about is *us*; and what they reveal is God the Poet (from *poesis*, to make), Creator of our humanity in the image and likeness of the Beloved; who – with the paradoxical flourish worthy of the Divine Poet – becomes incarnate in that very humanity, simple, free, and utterly loved by God, body and soul.

All Christological statements are, in the first place, about who *God* is. They tell us what God is like, since Jesus is the revelation of what God is like (and not the other way round). That is their theological import. But they are also a revelation of our own *deepest*

identity and *ultimate* destiny. Just as Christology is (not only a statement about who God is, but also) a revelation of our own *deepest* identity and *ultimate* destiny, a revelation of our own *full* nature (as the image and likeness of “the Beloved”); so Mariology is about our basic, simple, created humanity as God always intended it to be. Mariology is a Christian (theological) anthropology – a God statement about the human person, both in our uniqueness as persons and in our common humanity as members of one another in the Body of Christ, who is our humanity fully realised, and God's divinity fully incarnate, fully human.

Immaculately conceived

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception – and remember this about how Mary was conceived, not about how she conceived Jesus – is an affirmation, in the mytho-poetic language of faith, that God always intended (“conceived”, from the very beginning) that we be *free*. From what? From the grasping, the taking-of-what-can-only-be-given-and-so-received that is the “origin of sin”, as told in the story of Adam and Eve – our “first parents” (read “archetypes”), in the mytho-poetic language of the Bible.

The story of our *genesis*, our “conception” in the “pre-historic garden” (pre-consciousness), speaks of the “distortion of desire” (James Alison): to *want* what can only ever be *given*, and which we are not ready to receive; and to *take* what can only be *received* but never *possessed*. Adam and Eve – two children playing in the garden of delight – want what they cannot have. Why can't they have it? Because they are not yet ready

for it, because it only comes with time and experience – “the knowing of good and evil”. And so they *take* what they are not ready to receive, what can only be *given*, what of its very nature is gift and not possession.

And so they bring death upon themselves: they are barred from the other tree, the Tree of Life. Divine *eros* has been distorted and truncated into daemonic *libido*: the ecstatic desire of the “I” to move into deepest communion with “you” in a mutually self-giving, life-giving love, has become a self-centred craving to *take* and *have* the “other” for the pleasure of my (separate, divided, and therefore illusory) self, my *ego* – the “I” that I think I am in opposition and contradistinction to you, the “other”. The infinite desire of *eros* has become the puny desire of *libido*. It has become subject to the (false) self, the ego, to the lie that we are separate and divided “individuals”: to the lie that kills: subject to death.

It needs to be liberated. Our desire needs to be set free. *We* need to be set free – free as we were always intended to be.

From the perspective of faith in Jesus, the “liberator of desire” (Sebastian Moore), the story of our *genesis*, of how we were generated, reveals, as inscribed into our sexuality (generativity, creativity), our profound and universal experience of that which divides and separates us from God. And not only from God but from each other – and therefore from our own true self, the self that can only be realised in relationship to God and one another, and fulfilled in *loving* God and one another.

• *Mary: our Preconception.*

Virgin Mother of God

It is this humanity, as God always intended it to be, that was destined – *pre*-destined, i.e., from the beginning – to “bear God”. Humanity free and whole, undivided (“immaculate”), is *Theotokos*, “God-bearer” (in the sense of *giving birth*, and therefore as we in the West tend to translate it, “Mother of God”). This is an affirmation of the radical and essential goodness of the creature in itself as creature: “the glory of God: a human being fully alive in the kingdom of God” (*Irenaeus*); and of sexuality as the creative, self-giving, ecstatic desire, the power of *eros*, uniting us in the communion that realises – *incarnates* – our true nature; the Beloved.

Now this humanity, free from that which divides it from its own true nature (“free from original sin”), is meant to *remain* free. Only when it accepts and lives its own freedom is it able to incarnate God. Free not only “from sin” therefore, but

from the law, from that which keeps the world as it is: divided.

“A virgin will conceive and bear a son” – a *maiden*, a woman not subject to a husband, not under the law that makes her her husband’s property, part of his household possessions (Note: husband means “master of the house”, *hus bandi*). The virgin: humanity liberated by desire, fully free to give itself to the wholly Other and receive the Other wholly into itself. (Another paradox worthy of the Divine Poet!)

*this humanity was
predestined from
the beginning to bear
God*

In both the Matthean and the Lucan genealogies (the mytho-historic *genesis* of Jesus), a mighty male lineage is claimed. For whom? Jesus? Hardly! For he was born of Mary, not Joseph (*Mt*

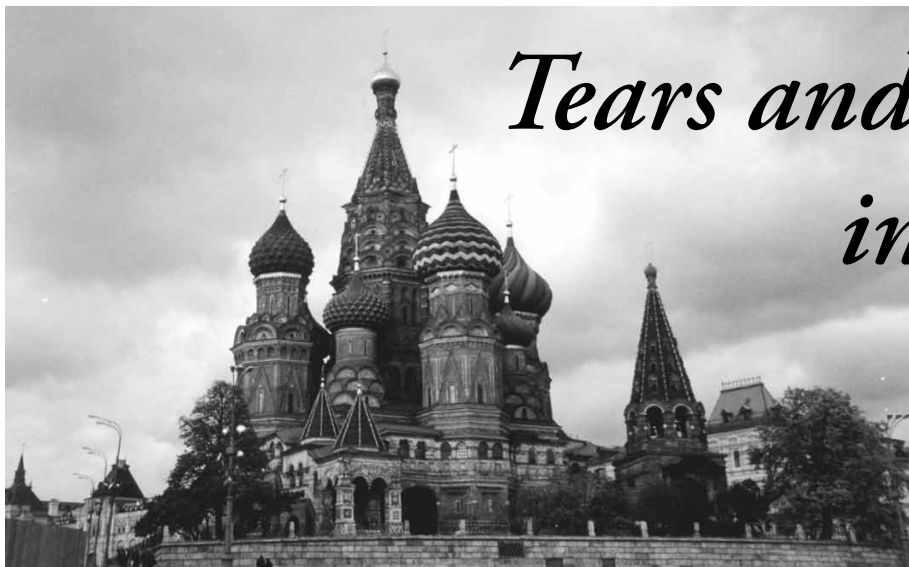
1:16, Lk 3:23). Matthew and Luke set us up by giving us an impeccable pedigree (actually, two quite different genealogies – but so what? that’s not the point they’re trying to make!) and then subvert our patriarchal pre-conceptions with a conception utterly unexpected, unbelievable, and illicit. Indeed – and more to the point: *illegitimate*.

The (illegitimate) Son of God is outside the law because *God* is outside (“not subject to”) the law, to the humanly constructed, patriarchal structure which subjects us to one another, which robs us of our freedom, our dignity and therefore our true identity. (And because “the law”, the structuring principle of the world, is patriarchal, the Son of God is born of a *woman*. How else are you going to subvert it!)

And the Catholic insistence that the Mother of God is the “ever-virgin” means that she *never* consummates her “marriage” to the impeccably pedigreed

(continued overleaf)▷▷





Tears and laughter in the USSR

St Basil's Cathedral,
Moscow, only 500
metres from Lenin's
tomb in Red Square

Tui Motu regular columnist Tom Cloher, after a recent trip to Moscow, reports on the wonderful humour of the long-suffering Russian people.

Have you noticed that particular countries and people prefer to laugh at others not themselves? “Have you heard the one about the ...?” is usually told by someone from another country. Not so in Russia where lecturers and guides seem to delight in telling stories about their own foibles, especially those of their leaders. One guide did say though that only in recent years had she felt safe to retail such jokes in public.

Typical enough is the story of a conversation between Roosevelt and Stalin:

“Premier Stalin, our citizens enjoy true freedom. They can speak out anywhere. An American citizen could stand outside the White House and criticise me. He would not be arrested”.

“But Mr. President we too welcome free speech. If your citizens were to criticise you outside the Kremlin we would not

arrest him either. He would be invited in for a drink.”

A strong sense of irony invests their humour, conveying an awareness of limitations and a propensity to laugh about it. Another story captures the frustration the country endured when, despite the advances pioneered by Russian cosmonauts, the North Americans were first to land on the moon.

▷▷ descendent of David, Abraham, and Adam. Her marriage is never made licit. and so her son is legitimised – “under the law”, within the patriarchal structure – the very structure which, under the law, executes him, the illegitimate son (of a woman with no pedigree), as an outlaw.

Theological message: try as hard as we might to the contrary, God is never subject to our laws. God is always illegitimate, and therefore *subversive* of “the law”, an “outlaw”. And anthropological implication: God is incarnate in the flesh of the marginal, peripheral, and illegal humanity: the foolish, the weak, the contemptible, the “non-person” (cf. 1 Cor 27-28).

- Mary: God’s preferential option for the poor.
- Mary: *our* Subversion.

Mary Assumed into heaven

It is this humanity – this all too starkly historical and political reality of an *oppressed* and *marginal* humanity – that, by responding to the grace (gift) of its own true nature (“Hail, Full-of-grace!”), incarnates God. And by its *Yes* of faith and hope in the midst of misery and oppression, a poor and suffering humanity reveals that God so utterly and exuberantly loves all humanity – that we are created to be “assumed into heaven, *body* and *soul*”. How? By “imitating” – learning from the example of – one who incarnates the true nature of our basic, simple, created humanity; by entering into our freedom as whole and utterly loved, *body* and *soul*.

Body and soul. Because matter matters. Because the concrete, historical, incarnate reality (body) of our being (soul) is utterly loved by God. Because God’s infinite and eternal longing – the Divine

eros – knows no separation of body and soul. Because God “knows” us; and in knowing us, liberates the power of *eros*, body-and-soul, from the “distortion of desire” (*libido*), body versus soul.

(pre)Destined from conception – from the beginning – to be united in deepest relationship (“heaven”) with God, our humanity – *free* (“immaculate”) and *liberated* (“virgin”) – is *taken* (“assumed”), in all its bodiliness and soul-fullness, into God. But “taken” with our consent: *received*. At the end of the Bible, the Tree of Life reappears. In the fullness of time we are ready to receive what was always intended to be given: the fullness of life.

• Mary: God’s glory, fully alive in the kingdom of God.

• Mary: *our* Assumption.

And what an assumption it is! The assumption of faith in hope: pure gift, full of grace, *from the beginning*. ■

"We will show the Americans. Their spacemen may have reached the moon. Ours will go to the sun". (Mr Brezhnev). "But, Sir, our spacemen will be incinerated if they try to land on the sun". (His advisors).

"We are not stupid. We will send them at night!"

Not all wisecracks were reserved for leaders. This one carries some cynicism but once again is relieved by irrepressible humour. It is a moral, question:

"Should a communist politician pay tax on the bribes he collects?"

"Yes, he should, if he is an honest communist!"

Most of these stories are attributable to the Russian academic who gave lectures as our ship, the Kirov, made its way from Moscow via the Volga, lakes, and rivers to St. Petersburg, stopping at historic towns such as Uglich, Kostroma, and Yaroslavl en route. He sought to describe the apprenticeship to hardship that Russians had endured: 300 years of the Tsarist Romanov dynasty, followed by a communist dynasty, as extreme to the left as the other was to the right. Mix in World War 2 with its appalling loss of life and devastation (the 900 day siege of St. Petersburg-Leningrad cost 750,000 lives alone) and you are left in admiration for the capacity of the human spirit to survive so much and still smile.

At one lecture the passengers debated the Kosovo crisis with Igor who showed a reluctance to accept any intervention not authorised by the United Nations. This same attitude seems reflected in the current crisis in Chechnya. Russian newspapers (English editions) we read in St. Petersburg were nonetheless extremely critical of Yeltsin's policy of full scale war. (That an alternative view exists in Russia is nowhere evident in our press.)

There is of course a story about Yeltsin. At a major conference he is reputed to have begun his address as follows:

"Fellow citizens, for a long time we have been standing on the edge of a huge precipice, but now we are going to take a great step forward!"

The most recent affliction suffered by Russians is the precipitous introduction of the free market, the capitalist solution to their economic ills. Central planning systems were abandoned. The consequences are catastrophic; since 1998 the Russian rouble has been devalued by 30 percent, 17 million are unemployed, one third of the people are living below subsistence level, and the average wage is forty American dollars a month.



St Basil's Cathedral, in Moscow: an extraordinary swirl of colour and form

This has led to the emergence of a new and unhappy phenomenon — the new Russian entrepreneurs who have made swift and large fortunes in dubious ways. They are sufficiently visible and despised to become the butt of jokes. Did you hear the one about the two new Russians who went to New York to spend up big and come back with some flashy clothes to flaunt back home? They both went to get ties and met two hours later. The first said: "Look at this little beauty: 180 American dollars from a shop just one block away from the hotel".

"You idiot", his companion retorts, "I got this one for 240 dollars in the shop next to the hotel".

In spite of all this a sense of the spiritual is tangible. During the communist era churches became museums, gymnasiums and even shooting galleries. Many were destroyed. In 1988, 7,000 churches were active; by 1999 there are 19,000. The five churches within the Kremlin itself were too monumentally splendid to be touched even by the professed atheists, but the Church of the Holy Saviour just outside the Kremlin walls which took 40 years to build was blown up by Stalin's orders to make way for what was to be the tallest building in the world, a communist headquarters dedicated to Lenin. It never came to pass, but by the year 2000 the Church of the Holy Saviour will have been completely rebuilt in four years, a splendid replica of the original, replete with a golden dome; this magnificent Church — at least four times the size of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Christchurch — will be opened by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church to welcome the new Millennium.

The foregoing observations do not claim to be other than that. Limits of time (three weeks) and space (we covered a mere fragment of Russia's vast territory), and information dependence (we had no way of checking statistics given us) would make any other interpretation ridiculous. Nonetheless it felt like a privilege to be there. The people we did meet were thoroughly authentic, honest, wanting to smile and have life smile back at them. Despite such immense suffering they have never lost hope. The fault has not been theirs. Leadership in the end is the critical factor.

Totalitarian regimes do not leave you with much choice. That's the virtue of democracy. Leadership is ultimately accountable. Citizens of a democracy do have a choice. They can dismiss their leadership. This option is an insurance we ought to be eternally grateful for.



Peace on earth to

*“The greatest Pope of the 20th Century
universally popular: John XXIII’s place in h*

The arms race

It is with deep sorrow that we note the enormous stocks of armaments that have been and still are being made in more economically developed countries, with a vast outlay of intellectual and economic resources... if one country increases its armaments, others feel the need to do the same; and if one country is equipped with nuclear weapons, other countries must produce their own, equally destructive.

Consequently, people live in fear lest the storm that every moment threatens should break upon them with dreadful violence... Even though it no longer makes sense that anyone would deliberately take the responsibility for the appalling destruction and sorrow that war would bring in its train, it cannot be denied that the conflagration may be set off by some uncontrollable and unexpected chance.

Peace through negotiation

People are becoming more and more convinced that disputes which arise between states should not be resolved by recourse to arms but rather by negotiation... Unfortunately the law of fear still reigns among peoples; and it forces them to spend fabulous sums for armaments: not for aggression they affirm – and there is no reason for not believing them – but to dissuade others from aggression...

There is reason to hope that... people may come to discover that one of the most profound requirements of their common human nature is this: between them and their respective peoples it is not fear which should reign but love, a love which tends to express itself in a collaboration that is loyal, manifold in form and productive of many benefits. (*Pacem in Terris*)

On a cold, bright morning in early spring a youngish couple made their way across the vast expanse of St Peter’s Square in Rome. The man, blond-haired with Slavic features, extinguished his cigarette and with a group of other news reporters, entered the Vatican Palace and made his way to the audience chamber. A priest from the Oriental College joined the young man and his wife in the second row of scarlet seats to act as their interpreter.

The aged Pope, his face already ravaged by mortal disease for he only had a few weeks to live, slowly entered and the official proceedings began. Pope John XXIII had been awarded and had accepted the Balzan peace prize. This was the official press conference to announce it. The Pope spoke briefly to each of the journalists; then, after the blessing he retired to a private library nearby, followed by the couple and the interpreter. Alexis Adzubei, 38-year-old editor of the Russian newspaper *Izvestia*, and his wife Rada, daughter of Nikita Krushchev, ruler of Communist Russia, were being accorded a private papal audience. It was against all the cautionary advice of the Curia, not to speak of the right

wing Italian press, who vilified the Pope for ‘supping with the devil’.

Through his son-in-law, Krushchev was asking for an opening up of regular diplomatic contacts between Russia and the Vatican. Gently, the old Pope took his visitors on an imaginary tour of the creation story in *Genesis*. “Today we are looking into each other’s eyes”, he said, “and we see light there. Today is the first day of creation, the day of light, the day of *fiat lux*. Let me say it again: the light is in my eyes and in your eyes. If the Lord so wills it, he will show us the way to go.”

The conversation moved from politics into homely, domestic chatter. To Rada the Pope said smilingly: “I know you have three children. I would like you to tell me their names, because when a mother speaks the names of her children something very special happens.”



So, what was so original a

Pope John shows a bold originality in asserting that in an age of atomic weapons war is no longer “a fit instrument to repair the violation of justice”(*Pacem in Terris* 127). For John, atomic war was simply unthinkable. Behind the statements regarding war and peace is an underlying optimism that the architect of the world and its peoples is a God of love. John offers this ideal as an alternative to the ‘balance of terror’ which had become the ‘realistic’ orthodox viewpoint of the Cold War period. In this sense *Pacem in Terris* is prophetic of all those movements of *detente*, the new groupings of nations, the negotiations towards disarmament and the ongoing work for peace of the United Nations, which have taken place over the last three decades.

people of goodwill

*” (says Hans Kung)’, certainly the most
history rests on his prophetic work for peace*

“Nikita, Alexei, Ivan”, came the reply. “Ivan”, said the Pope, “is simply John, the name of my grandfather, my father, the name I chose for my pontificate...”

When you get home, Madame, give all your children a hug, but give Ivan a very special one – the others won’t mind!”

The date was 7 March 1963. Krushchev had good reasons for seeking this favour from Pope John. Five months earlier had occurred the gravest political crisis of the Cold War. On 15 October American reconnaissance planes had identified Soviet missile launching sites in Cuba, well within range of American cities. President Kennedy issued an ultimatum and announced a blockade of all Russian ships going towards Cuba. The hawks in Washington talked of a pre-emptive nuclear strike.

But Kennedy had another agenda. Through Norman Cousins, a writer and expert in Soviet affairs, the President made a personal appeal to Pope John

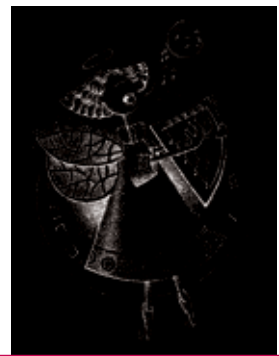
to mediate. There was no time for delay. The Pope worked late into the night with one of his aides on a broadcast to be made the following day.

The crucial words of the broadcast text read innocently enough: “The Pope always speaks well of those statesmen on whatever side who strive to come together to avoid war and bring peace to humanity”. A more direct personal message was sent via the Russian embassy in Rome: “I beg heads of state not to remain insensitive to the cry of humanity: PEACE! PEACE!... Let them continue to negotiate.”

The papal message received a banner headline in the official Soviet newspaper *Pravda*. Krushchev was able to respond with dignity as a “lover of peace”. The missile sites were disbanded and the weapons sent back to the Soviet Union. Later Krushchev was to say: “The Pope’s message was the only gleam of hope.”

The following Sunday (October 28, the Feast of Christ the King, the fourth anniversary of his pontificate), gave him the cue to speak to the Russians and to the whole listening world. “My spirit is led to serenity and calm”, he

(continued overleaf) ▷▷



Signs of the times

There are three things which characterise our present age. First of all, the working classes have gradually gained ground in economic and public affairs. .. Workers all over the world refuse to be treated as if they were irrational objects without freedom, to be used at the arbitrary disposition of others...

Secondly, women are now taking a part in public life – they demand rights befitting a human person both in domestic and public life.

Finally, since all nations have either achieved or are on the way to achieving political independence, there will soon no longer exist a world divided into nations that rule others and nations that are subject to others..

Disarmament

Justice, right reason and humanity urgently demand that the arms race should cease: that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control..

Those in error

One must never confuse error and the person who errs, not even when there is a question of error or inadequate knowledge of truth in the moral or religious field. The person who errs is always and above all a human being, and he retains in every case his dignity as a human person; and he must always be regarded and treated in accordance with this lofty dignity.

about Pacem in Terris?

The originality of *Pacem in Terris* is its absence of the traditional doctrinal denunciations. Peter Hebblethwaite notes that the three things which characterise the modern age – the progress of the workers, the emancipation of women and the end of colonialism – are seen as ‘signs of the times’, evidence of the Spirit working in the world. “It shows”, says Hebblethwaite, “one could respect tradition while being open to the action of the Holy Spirit in the now of history”.

The encyclical strongly emphasises human rights – freedom of conscience, the democratic process, self-determination by minority groups and nationalities, refugees; all this is a far cry from the ancient dictum of papal triumphalism, that ‘error has no rights’.

▷▷ said. “Dangers and suffering, human prudence and wisdom – all these should issue into a canticle of love and a renewed plea, addressed to all peoples, to seek and restore the Kingdom of Christ”.

The Pope’s secretary, Loris Capovilla, writes that this was the moment of genesis for the idea of the great encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, John’s supreme statement on peace. But there was another reason why this project suddenly loomed so large in the Pope’s mind. A few days after the audience with the Adzubeis, on November 16, Pope John was told by his doctors that he had inoperable cancer, with a year at most to live. At once it became evident that the Second Vatican Council which he had launched would not be his to complete. Pope John’s last will and testament was to be *Pacem in Terris*.

Just before Christmas Norman Cousins arrived in Rome with a personal message to the Pope from Krushchev – wishing him “good wishes for your health and energy to pursue efforts in favour of

peace, well-being and prosperity for all humanity”.

The Pope said to Cousins: “The Russian people are a wonderful people. We must not condemn them because we don’t like their political system. They have a deep spiritual inheritance which they have not lost. We can talk with them. We must always try to speak to the goodness which is in people. Nothing is lost in the attempt. Everything may be lost if we do not find a way to work together to save peace”.

He replied warmly to Krushchev with a personal message and a copy of his Christmas message. He quoted from the Psalms: *Peace be within your walls and security within your towers* (Ps 122,7). Cousins returned to New York and at his suggestion Pope John was made *Time* magazine’s ‘Man of the Year’.

Right through the Christmas season the sub-committee worked to bring out a first draft of the new Encyclical. It was delivered to the Pope on 7 January. Later that month

Metropolitan Slipyi was released from a Russian prison camp and brought to Italy where the first person to greet him was the Pope himself. The Pope said in a speech that day: “From Eastern Europe there came last night a moving and consoling grace”. John genuinely believed that Russian communism was changing under Krushchev, who had responded to the Pope’s personal appeal by a gesture of such goodwill.

The encyclical was completed during Lent and was released to the world on Maundy Thursday. To the Vatican diplomatic corps the Pope said: “I’m glad the encyclical has been published today, the day on which the lips of Christ pronounced the words: *Love one another*. For what I wanted to do above all was to issue an appeal to love for the people of this time. Let us recognise the common origin that makes us brothers and sisters, and come together”.

Good Pope John, as he was affectionately known throughout the world, died the day after Pentecost, 3 June 1963.

M.H.



REV. TONY CHURCH (1944 - 1999)

With the death of Rev. Tony Church in October, the Christian community in Canterbury lost one of its outstanding members. Tony, an Anglican priest of the Christchurch diocese, had been the chaplain to the court cells for many years, working from the City Mission. His work among the incarcerated and the poor was marked by a depth of compassion that saw him recognised wherever he went as a true man of faith.

He coupled that work with another great love - that of organic gardening. Ten years ago he started a project at the disused Governor’s Bay vicarage, where he worked side by side with the unemployed teaching gardening and management skills.

The property and surrounds have been transformed and hundreds of mainly young people have benefited from his tutoring. Tony chose to be buried on the hill overlooking this property, so he ‘could keep an eye on things’.

In the photograph Tony is holding a pounamu taonga presented him by the Mayor of Christchurch, Garry Moore

An ecumenist with a passion for justice, he was a driving force behind the *hikoi of hope*, sponsored by the Anglican Church in 1998. Tony was also a member of the Christchurch prison chaplain’s team for many years and a member of the national secretariat of the Restorative Justice Network. On his last trip away to England when he was clearly very ill but refusing to lie down, he took cartons of restorative justice books to distribute to anyone who would listen to his conviction that there was a better way of conducting criminal justice processes.

Tony fought his cancer with every ounce of his being, but in the end it beat him. His faith-filled spirit shone like a light during this time as he coped with his illness and grappled with the prospect of death. His wife Allanah and children, Tim and Anna, nursed him to the end, providing a warm and hospitable environment for him in his last months.

The more than one thousand people who honoured him at Te Whare Roimata, an inner city marae he helped start, and joined in the service at the Christchurch Cathedral for his final commendation, reflected the high esteem in which he was held. Most would say that few as transparently good and holy pass this way. Tony would smile at the thought. But it’s probably true. May his gentle spirit rest in peace.

JIM CONSEDINE

A Bridge-builder in Serbia



Canon Paul Oestreicher (pictured right) of Coventry, in England, spent much of July and August as a temporary pastor at the Anglican chaplaincy in Belgrade, the Serbian capital. After his return he wrote the following report (abridged for Tui Motu)

There are several reasons why a sensitive and able priest should be found to live in Belgrade. A chaplain here has significance far beyond the pastoral care of an English-speaking congregation. Spiritual and psychological bridges need to be carefully rebuilt. Priest (*pontifex*), after all, literally means ‘bridge-builder’. I went there with three distinct tasks:

- to be an ambassador on behalf of the Church of England to the Serbian Orthodox church;
- to reactivate links between Coventry and Belgrade which are twin cities;
- as former chairman of *Amnesty International* and as Vice-President of the *Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament*, to encourage peace and human rights groups.

The Serbian Orthodox Church

The national church no longer dominates Serbian life but remains rooted in the traditional consciousness of the people. These traditions are part of the nationalist revival. Since Tito the traditional ‘symphonia’ between church and state has gone. The Yugoslav civil war tended to revive an unhealthy alliance between church and army, but the abuse of power by the present regime has largely ended that alliance. Patriarch Pavle, in his eighties, is universally loved and respected. He is strongly anti-prelatical, rides like the people on trams and buses.

The endorsement, however cautious, of the bombing of Serbia by some Western church leaders, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, came as a terrible shock to the Orthodox Church. They

felt it was a kind of betrayal by their friends. They did not understand how deeply the outside world was shocked by Serb conduct in Kosovo. A self-critical phase is now beginning – but it is a slow and painful process.

My first contact was with Archdeacon Rakic. His warmth set the pattern for my meetings with all the Orthodox. My public opposition to the bombing, picked up in Belgrade over the internet, obviously helped. Would I be able to meet the Patriarch? It remained uncertain for a long time, mainly because he was in Kosovo, then in Montenegro. Then the answer was *yes* – but rather informally.

*if Milosevic is a pain to
the outside world, he is
a much greater pain to
the people of Serbia*

In the event ‘rather informally’ was turned into a very official reception, not through the side entrance. Protocol in Orthodoxy sends messages. The Archdeacon and another Secretary were present. The letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury had been much appreciated, and I felt there was no wish to go over old hurts. The Patriarch spoke much of the present pain of Serbia and of the church’s healing role but with no nationalist overtones. Rather the reverse: the people traumatised by sanctions and bombing, the economy in ruins and the country full of refugees.

I assured the Patriarch of our hopes for the return of Serbia (officially still called Yugoslavia, including Montenegro) to the international community. We would do what we could to end the time of isolation. Much was said of the need for penitence and forgiveness by all. I presented him with Coventry’s *Cross of Nails* (see next page), standing for these spiritual values. The humility and simplicity of the Patriarch made a deep impression on me. The fact that he is not a political Patriarch paradoxically now gives him real political significance and credibility.

As I left the Patriarchate an old peasant woman was sitting on the steps bitterly weeping. Her son had just been murdered in Kosovo. She was now a homeless, displaced Serbian peasant, as so many Albanians had been. A priest came, gently stroked her head, then took her in his arms and gently led her into the building. That will remain with me as my deepest impression.

Twin city with Coventry

I had come bringing a letter to the mayor of Belgrade from the mayor of Coventry – and also with greetings from the *Belgrade Theatre* in Coventry, built with help from Belgrade after the bombing of Coventry. That, I hope, might lead to a relationship with Belgrade’s courageous and imaginative *Centre for Cultural Decontamination*, a fringe theatre committed to the decontamination of Serb society and its destructive nationalism.

The mayor returned from holiday just before I left and agreed to see me. He did so with great kindness and no ▷▷

▷▷ bitterness towards a visitor from Britain. He spoke of the bombing with the grief you would expect. He is part of the official opposition to the present regime, but feels, like many others, that it was his city and its people who were hurt, not the President and his entourage. One quote: "If Milosevic is a pain to the outside world, he is a much greater pain to the people of Serbia".

French and British involvement in the war was felt to be a particular betrayal by friends. He spoke of the trauma of isolation. The people have been made to feel that the world hates them, despite the claim by Western leaders that this is not so. This social depression opens the door to demagogues of a Nazi type, the extremest form of nationalism. The meeting with the mayor convinced me that while diplomatic relations with Milosevic remain impossible, city to city relations with opposition administrations might be an important step in making people-to-people relations possible.

The Conscience of Serbia

In communist days, to be involved in an Non-Government Organisation (NGO) was, in a sense, to be an outlaw. In Belgrade all voluntary citizens' groups (there are many, just like in troubled Belfast) remain without legal status. All proclaim humanist, democratic and usually liberal values. Anti-nationalism is common to all. Many are led by highly motivated and educated women. Some also do social, refugee and counselling work. With varying degrees of vehemence they hate the corrupt power structures of their society. With one or two exceptions they feel that the NATO bombing has set back the cause of civil liberty, hurt the people, especially the poorest, and entrenched the corrupt regime. Thought of by many as traitors, they are, for me, the conscience of Serbia.

Conclusion

One month is only enough for tentative conclusion in a highly complex and often bewildering situation. I listened and listened and listened again. People

talked and talked and talked... for there are few to listen.

The country is deeply traumatised, yet this is not immediately obvious. The street scene in the capital is lively, and people, on the whole, are smarter and more attractive than their English counterparts. The tallest people in Europe, both men and women are lean and strong, with an outward air of confident pride. Again, both men and women, many of them, look like models for classical ikon painters. The shops are full. You can buy anything – if you can pay. Some can. Many can't.



Coventry's Cross of Nails, made from metal from the bombed Cathedral, symbol of suffering and forgiveness

After years of sanctions there is not the desperate appearance of, say, Cuba. Talk to most people and they say; "It's all living a lie. We are finished, down and out, victims of the world's hatred; sinners yes – but more sinned against than sinning." The young and intelligent start the conversation by asking: "Where should we try to go? Australia, Canada or New Zealand?" Many have already gone: an enormous long-term loss.

The state economy is in ruins. Pensioners are lucky to be paid months in arrears.

Civil servants, hardly at all... so they live by other means. The customs officer, going in from Hungary, said to all on the bus: "Either I go through all the suitcases, or each of you pay me 30 deutschmark." It's normal. Virtually everybody did.

The black economy is thriving, keeps the shops full and is run by the *nomenklatura*, the establishment. Economic sanctions have hit the poor and turned Milosovic and Co into multi-millionaires. Corruption is open and pervades every sphere of life.

I met it dramatically on my way out. A fellow passenger in the minibus, a Serb businessman living in Luxembourg, could not help bragging that he worked for an American engineering firm and had just concluded major deals with Milosovic personally, accompanied by two German colleagues. To prove it he showed round photographs of himself with Milosovic, only a few days old. One quote: "Of course, no building where Western companies that deal with Milosovic were housed got bombed". So much for the sham of sanctions. The state economy goes to the wall, and a small clique, with a large entourage, rakes in the profits in the country and outside. (Want to buy a Jaguar, a Merc or a Range Rover?)

I believe that the bombing was a terrible political and moral mistake. Kosovo could be lost and others blamed. No one thinks that Milosovic cares about Kosovo at all. Milosovic has gained more than was offered him at Rambouillet. He stopped the war when he chose. Yet sanctions and bombing have set back the hope of a civil, democratic society. A dispirited, broken people are a great danger to peace and stability. Sanctions are a blunt, immoral instrument: they have not removed Castro, Gaddafi or Sadam Hussein. They just hit the people. So too in Serbia. Instead of taking the OSCE observers out of Kosovo, ten times as many should have been sent in. That would have minimised the ethnic cleansing, averted a war and cost less in every sense. But it would not have been glorious! ■

Where are the young religious?

Young religious gathered in Palmerston North to look at their future – and they came away full of hope

Frequently one hears the question: “Where are the young religious?” Had you been in Palmerston North in September this question would have been answered: “They’re everywhere!” From 22-26 September 38 ‘younger’ religious (representing 16 congregations – female and male) came together from all parts of the country to attend the first national gathering of such a group.

With the support of CCLANZ (the Conference of Congregational Leaders of Aotearoa-New Zealand) a four day live-in

programme provided an opportunity for younger religious to explore the theme: “Sharing Our Stories – Visioning Our Journey”. Many of the participants had lacked opportunities during their religious life to meet with their peers who follow the same call. Participants representing the younger section of their congregations – vowed religious up to 50 years of age, the range reflecting in itself the ageing nature of religious life. An ecumenical flavour was added by the welcome presence of an Anglican religious.

Creative liturgies and workshops offering valuable opportunities for sharing and exploring issues central to our life were complemented by times set aside simply to enjoy one another’s company. Solidarity with each other and the importance of networking emerged as key features – particularly for those who felt isolated in either their communities or their ministry. A follow-up gathering in 2001 is planned. Below are some personal reflections from five of the participants.

Jacqui Ryan OP

An Oasis Time

*From North and South we came
The Bread of our lives we shared as eucharist,
Listening and honouring each other’s story.
Our journeys were of struggle, pain and joy.*

*Through each unique sharing colourful strands emerged
Creating our collective story of call and response.
Like the vibrant hues of colour adorning the paua shell
There emerged a multi-cultural, gifted and inclusive people.*

*Our questionings and issues were shared and explored
In friendship’s openness and trust.
Solidarity forged in knowledge of shared concerns.*

*The movement ahead fired by God’s creative Spirit
Compels us to be prophets of hope and possibility to
each other
In a world crying out for love and healing.*

*“The Spirit is breaking into the world differently now.
The gospel is being called for differently, now.
Clearly religious life must respond differently, now”*

Liz Hickey, a Sister of St Joseph of Nazareth



Koru symbol used as a centrepiece for liturgies

Our life is our story. We look at our past and marvel... we continue to tell our story as we live our life each day... We recognise that as we look to the future with hope, we have to take our story with us. Sharing our insights on Religious Life has made a significant contribution towards religious networking which hopefully will shape the way we journey together in the future... Although we have travelled different paths on our journeys, we share a similar story, we sing the familiar song and we respond to the same call – the call to the religious life, to proclaim Christ to all peoples. *Soifua ma ia manuia!*

Malia Samuelu

RSM(Auckland)

Each one who participated brought the love and passion of why we choose to join the particular Orders we belong to. I was encouraged that we share common issues and concerns... (which) helped us go deeper into the real meaning of why and how we entered religious life. I am still with my Order because I love the spirituality and charism of our Order. I believe our mission will continue to direct our passion for religious life in the future. *Malo Aupito.*

Heleni Petelo LSA

continued overleaf ▷▷

These four days were a journey of discovery of mutual trust, sharing, openness and friendship. I found it a valuable experience in affirming who I am as a religious. I enjoyed the diversity of cultural backgrounds, and this was particularly enriching for our liturgies, and gave me a greater understanding of inculturation and the importance of celebrating in ways that have deeper meaning.

Akenese Nun Toon RSM(Auckland)

▷▷ **W**hat appears random, unpredictable and destructive in the process of change can leave us with feelings of doubt, uncertainty, even of fear. Religious life today is no exception. The many changes seen and experienced in society, church and in the understanding of self feed a whirlpool of possibilities, uncertainties and confusion.

As a vowed celibate I live with questions concerning how I perceive myself as a younger religious within an Order which is eight centuries old. I struggle with the task of locating myself in the wider society in times of change and transition. At times I have a sense of living in the midst of chaos; yet is chaos something to be feared?

What appears chaotic in nature is in reality a process of organisms reorganising themselves in relationship with each other – out of which order eventually emerges. Natural systems are constantly renewing and revitalising themselves through the critical process

which appears to be chaotic. What a wonderful model that is for humanity – and a challenge and a source of hope for religious, indeed for any individual or group during a period of radical change.

I felt a real resonance with an observation made by one of the participants, who suggested that the question we need to grapple with is not *is there life after death?* (of religious life or the church as we have known it) – but whether there is life *before* death. I find this a far more exciting and life-giving challenge. I am a dreamer by nature, so my temptation is to escape the 'now' by looking beyond to

idealised greener pastures. The challenge for me is to make sense of the 'now' in all its messiness, learning patience in a time of waiting. It is like the slow, fragile and at times tortuous journey of the evolving chrysalis. The temptation is to be ever looking beyond the cocooned life into the paradise context of the emergent butterfly! Religious life is evolving into something that is both old and new. I hope other religious feel similarly energised by discovering what is life-giving in the 'now' of our journey.

Tim Gasson is a Franciscan, living in Auckland, due for final vows next year.



Ruth Mather (left) and Liz Beeler, both Mission Sisters, at the Palmerston North gathering for young religious



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Shackleton's great journey

Was it the 'journey of the Century'? Kathleen Doherty records the raw courage and the mysticism of Shackleton's epic Antarctic voyage. The photographs are from the originals taken by Frank Hurley

On a raw July night this year an audience nearing 1200 in Dunedin's Regent Theatre broke into applause at the end of the screening of a grainy, sometimes shaky black and white silent film. The film was *South*, the record of Ernest Shackleton's doomed expedition to the Antarctic in 1914; the applause was for one of the most remarkable stories of survival one could ever wish to hear, and for the inspirational leader – known affectionately as 'the Boss' – who is one of the giants of Antarctic exploration and whose numinous experience at one stage of the ordeal prompted T S Eliot to write one of the most haunting passages of *The Waste Land*.



The *Endurance* at night

It is just as well that the story of Shackleton's most famous expedition has been so well documented. Had it not been recorded in the diaries of so many of the participants – and for part of the time by Frank Hurley's photographs and movie film – it would have to be dismissed as a tall story. The sequence of events is just too unlikely, belonging more in the pages of the Boys' Own Annual than in the factual annals of Antarctic history.

Ernest Shackleton, at 39 a veteran of several expeditions to the ice, set out from England in August 1914 with the intention of pioneering a crossing of the Antarctic continent from sea to sea. He took with him a volume of Robert Browning, his favourite poet, and a bible inscribed on the flyleaf by Queen Alexandra. His ship, *Endurance*, was captained by Akaroa-born Frank Worsley, whose navigational skills were to prove vital in the months ahead.

The party never set foot on the continent. In January 1915, only six weeks after leaving South Georgia, the *Endurance* was stuck fast in the pack ice in the Weddell Sea. It drifted right through the darkness of the Antarctic winter, held in the unforgiving grip of the ice, subject to tremendous pressures as the ice ground and moved around it. The *Endurance* could not survive. Shackleton ordered everyone onto the ice where they set up camp, and in November 1915 the ship sank. "At 5pm she went down ...I cannot write about it" he noted in his journal.



The *Endurance* keeling over

Hauling the *James Caird*

To say that the situation was desperate is an understatement. Twenty-eight men were stranded on the ice in one of the harshest environments on earth. They had been out of touch with the outside world for almost a year. No-one knew of their plight, and they had no way of letting anyone know.

Shackleton limited every man to 2lb of personal possessions as they prepared to fight for their very survival. He himself threw away gold sovereigns and took with him the flyleaf of his bible, bearing Queen Alexandra's inscription, the page containing the 23rd psalm, and a page from Job, specifically for the passage:

Out of whose womb came the ice?
And the hoary frost of Heaven, who hath gendered it?
The waters are hid as with a stone
And the face of the deep is frozen.

(Job 38:29-30)

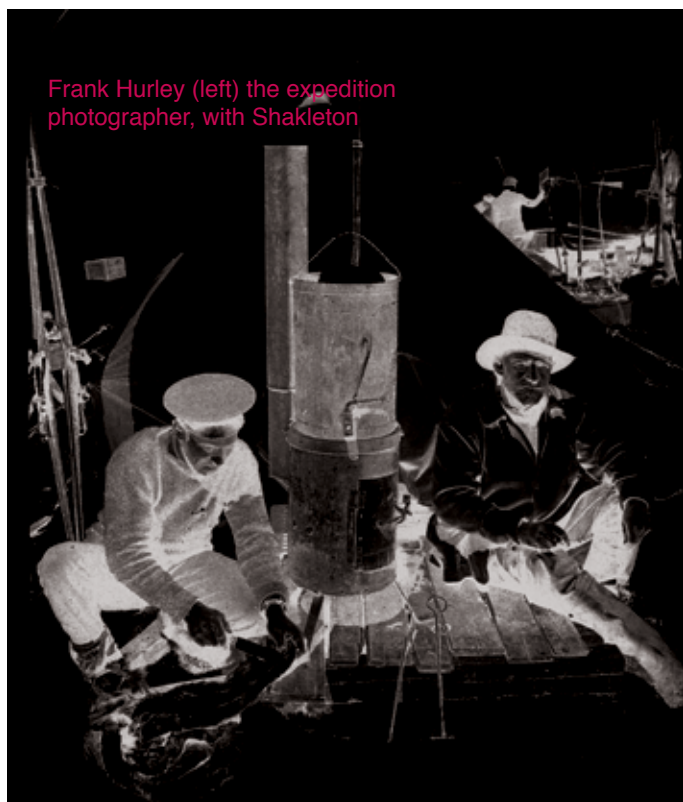
Although privately Shackleton admitted to his diary that he had never been in such a bad position, outwardly he was positive, encouraging, even cheerful. "I do hope that you are enjoying my little party" he said in his best drawing room voice during a particularly gruelling day when spirits were down. And Worsley marvelled in his journal that "the Boss" led an enthusiastic discussion about the next trip – perhaps to Alaska – at a stage when it appeared there was little likelihood of surviving the current one.

It never occurred to Shackleton to give up hope, and his strength was conveyed to his men: dragging three small boats with them they drifted on the unstable ice floe, which was breaking up under them, for five months until they reached the open sea. Then came the crossing of a hazardous stretch of ocean to the relative haven of Elephant Island, a barren stretch of rock and ice, twenty miles from end to end.

The safety was tenuous: while the men might be on land for the first time since December 1914 (it was now April 1916) they were still totally isolated. Many were in a precarious state, both mentally and physically. No matter the danger involved, Shackleton had to get help.

With five others he set off in the 23ft *James Caird* for South Georgia, 800 miles away. For 16 days, through seas described by Shackleton as the wildest he had ever encountered, and with Worsley being held upright by the others while he took readings to plot their course, the tiny open boat ploughed on until it made landfall – but on the wrong side of the island: the whaling station was 32 miles away. Between Shackleton's party and rescue were mountains and glaciers and terrain thought to be impassable. It took Shackleton, accompanied by Worsley and the giant Irishman Tom Crean, 36 hours to do the impossible – to reach Stromness and organise the safe recovery of every one of the party.

By the time rescue came, the men on Elephant Island had been there for four months, not knowing whether or not



Frank Hurley (left) the expedition photographer, with Shackleton



Shackleton had survived the fury of the sub-Antarctic ocean. Every morning they were raised from despairing stupor by Frank Wild, the expedition's second-in-command, with the shout "roll up your bags, boys, the Boss may come today." And eventually the Boss did come, and took them all back home to England, just as he had promised he would.

Shackleton was the ultimate man of action, but he had no doubt that he and his men were being looked after by some greater power when their situation was most

of our journeys would not be complete without reference to a subject very near to our hearts."

South was published in 1919, three years before Shackleton's death. At about the same time T S Eliot was working on *The Waste Land* and in his notes to the last section says that he was "stimulated by the account of one of the Antarctic expeditions (I forget which, but I think one of Shackleton's): it was related that the party of explorers, at the extremity of their strength, had the constant delusion that there was *one more member* than could actually be counted."

Eliot wrote:

*Who is the third who walks always beside you?
When I count there are only you and I together
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you
Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
I do not know whether a man or a woman
But who is that on the other side of you?*

"In religion, I am who I am", said Shackleton, dismissing further discussion on the subject. But he also wrote of the rigours of that expedition: *"We had pierced the veneer of outside things. we had seen God in His splendours, we had heard the text that Nature renders. we had reached the naked soul of man."*

The story is told that Shackleton once quoted some of his own poetry in the company of an army officer who did not know his identity, and announced that it was by Shackleton. "That explorer-man? I didn't know he was a poet." To which Shackleton replied "Then why the devil do you think he became an explorer?" ■

Launching the James Caird



desperate. "We didn't do it on our own" was his comment some time later.

His account of the expedition, *South*, contains an admission that he had experienced something mystical during the crossing of South Georgia: "When I look back at those days I have no doubt that Providence guided us ..I know that during that long and racking march of 36 hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia it seemed to me often that we were four, not three. I said nothing to my companions on the point, but afterwards Worsley said to me, 'Boss, I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another person with us.' Crean confessed to the same idea. One feels 'the dearth of human words, the roughness of mortal speech' in trying to describe things intangible, but a record



South Georgia Island

Seeking the causes of teenage unrest

Teenagers out of control, drinking to excess and causing mayhem in the inner city, are all deemed news items making headlines in the media. At present such news items help form society's attitude to our youth at the end of the century. The headlines are emotive, and the stories carried under them are bristling with reports of callous, self-centred and destructive behaviour. By focussing on the tiny percentage of youth who behave in this manner, the behaviour of the majority is ignored, and their success as human beings coping with the modern market economy is overlooked.

This fringe group of adolescents who for various reasons buck the system and rebel against society has become a kind of barometer indicating the state of society. These young people are the casualties of the market philosophy, of a state which places corporate success above the well-being and security of the individual, and in which everything is measured by the balance sheet.

Conditioning to the market philosophy begins at school with an emphasis on testing and assessment which has successfully eroded the joy in learning and discovery, once the hallmark of teaching at this level. Assessment at different levels against national norms so that progress can be measured on a nationwide basis, has dominated educational thinking in recent years. Enormous financial resources have been dedicated to this process.

The judgment of the classroom teacher and the school Principal is dismissed as invalid in this brave new world where we are suffering a new version of the dreadful *Progress and Achievement Tests*. These PATs were used years after their *use by* date because schools saw them as a handy statistic to add to personal records. As a performance indicator they were worthless, adding nothing to the classroom teacher's knowledge of the

Crosscurrents

by Caliban

child. At worst they were an unreliable and often misleading set of statistics to add to the mass of information cobbled together around each pupil. So, instead of striving to make the primary years a time of enriching experience and exciting discovery, the dead hand of the bureaucrat demands more and more analysis until true learning is almost analysed out of existence.

By the time the primary pupil reaches secondary school he or she will be only too aware of his or her place in the educational pecking order, and they will be launched into a system more suffocating and rigid than that of their early years. Under *Unit Standards* failure is underlined, and schools are turned into boring ticket factories. Those at the lower end simply switch off and drop out, often being rescued by the different social agencies whose task it is to pick up the pieces and attempt to recycle them into society.

Others students, in the middle and at the top end, enrich their lives through their interest in cultural and sporting pursuits, bringing a balance into an educational system which has seriously lost its direction. Nationally, we are suffering from a weak Ministry of Education responding only to Cabinet whims and ignoring the reality of what is happening in our schools, a profession influenced by outdated union attitudes and practices, and an administration dominated by the increasingly bureaucratic *School Trustees Association*. Teachers feel powerless in the face of the current onslaught, less able than ever they were to deal with the problems presented by dysfunctional families and their children.

The current headlines are not captured by the students at the lowest end of the spectrum, those most in need of help; the stories of drunken exhibitionism are coming from the more affluent, who are leading normal lives but who look for excitement outside the education system. They may be members of a school rugby XV who are being initiated into the *rugby and booze* culture which sets the tone for New Zealand's weekend behaviour.

Often the school has not challenged these students in any other way. They put minimal effort into their class work and a huge effort into their sport. The after-match function is the dominant social activity of the week disappearing into hang-over time which, for these young people, is the purpose of having Sunday as a day of rest. They have become a noisy and noticeable aspect of teenage behaviour.

stories of drunken exhibitionism are coming from the more affluent

In our country there is a reprehensible attitude to learning, to expressing an opinion in a clear and articulate manner, to showing an interest in the arts, which sees these activities as being unmanly. The 'cool' response for the sporting or social hero is the monosyllabic grunt, clinging to a bottle of Speights. This is our culture, this is how we see ourselves on television and commercial radio, the expectation of our mass media.

For any kind of sea-change to take place, ordinary New Zealanders must demand more of themselves, their media and their education system in an attempt to re-assess what they value in society. Only then can we expect an alteration in teenage values and attitudes when we accept our responsibility as a people: *'Men at some time are masters of their fates: The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings.'* ■

Best books of the year...? Century...?? Millennium!

Because everyone else is doing it, I toyed with the idea of producing my own list of *Books of the Century* or even *Books of the Millennium*. With the wealth of literature which has been produced I thought it would be a cakewalk. Ten, I decided, would be the extent of my list: it would be concentrated, well-honed. But after making a confident start (*The Wind in the Willows* remains the all-time favourite, the one I would go for if the house were burning down or a desert island beckoned) I ran into deep trouble.

How do you choose between the petit point of Henry James and the wild freedom of D.H. Lawrence, between the mannered Jane Austen and the equally mannered F Scott Fitzgerald? When a book like Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* can break your heart and teach more about compassion and civil rights than any academic treatise, how do you discard it in favour of *Cannery Row* (John Steinbeck) which manages to make you ache with laughter in the midst of melancholy, and gives you philosophy and poetry and a touch of marine biology and a group of eccentrics you get to know like friends? Or do you let them both in, and discard all of Dickens and all of Tolstoy and all of Hemingway and the Brontës? Do you choose Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's enchanting *The Little Prince* and leave out *Moby Dick* and the rambling *Remembrance of Things Past* which appears to have taken Proust half his life to write about the other half?

Quite simply, there are too many to choose from, too many which have delighted, inspired, saddened, expanded the mind and the imagination. Trying to draw up a list is a frustrating and ultimately useless exercise. Better to accept *The Wind in the Willows* as the only constant, and have dozens of Best Books to fit every mood and inclination. And it is heartening to know that there



is no definitive BEST: *Ulysses* by James Joyce topped both the Modern Library's list of the 100 Top Novels and the Independent of London's list of the 100 worst!

Two plums from 1999

The most moving book read this year was *Iris: a Memoir of Iris Murdoch* written by her husband John Bayley (Duckworth Press). It was written while Iris Murdoch was in the last stages of the Alzheimer's disease which led to her death in February this year, and is an account both of the couple's life together in the academic world of Oxford, and of the inexorable progress of a cruel illness.

John Bayley was a young English-literature scholar in Oxford in the 1950s when he met Iris Murdoch, already a fêted philosopher just starting to promulgate her ideas in the form of novels. Their marriage lasted for over 40 years and was the secure home in which each grew and flourished: John Bayley became a Professor of English at Oxford, Iris wrote 27 remarkable novels and was honoured as a Dame of the British Empire. "We were together because we were comforted and reassured by the solitariness each saw and was aware of in the other," Bayley wrote in simple explanation of their fulfilling relationship.

The Alzheimer's disease which overwhelmed their world was diagnosed in 1995 after Iris had suffered several episodes of forgetfulness and mental absences. She lost concentration, could not form coherent sentences, became agitated, forgot who she was or what

she had done, but (and this is the only kindness of Alzheimer's) was unaware of how truly awful the situation was. That unawareness meant for her husband an immense loneliness as he cared for her at their home until two months before her death. It is this loneliness of a man mourning his wife while she is yet living, mourning "the lover who has become a stranger" which provides the impact of this remarkable book.

Looking for a good New Zealand novel? Look no further than C.K. Stead's *Talking About O'Dwyer* (Penguin). It is a relatively short book, it could have been much longer to do justice to the themes – identity, reconciliation, nationhood – which are explored through the stories of O'Dwyer, the Oxford don who had been a pakeha officer of the Maori Battalion on Crete, and of Mike Newall, also a New Zealander in Oxford, whose life is strangely linked to that of the older man.

It may be that Stead has based his story on fact: a frontispiece poem adapted from Catullus commemorates a named Maori soldier killed in Crete, and it is well accepted that most of the stories of war are not officially recorded. No doubt that angle will be well debated; enough at this stage to comment that the story is gripping, painful and warming at the same time, and the descriptions of Crete and the battle ring true and are, according to a friend who was there, just the way it was. The ending appears a little too contrived, the numerous strands tied together a little too neatly, no doubt a result of the constraint of having to do it all in a single book of a certain length (publishers have a habit of reining in inspiration), but the easy conversational tone of the narrative is appealing as the story ranges over 60 years, and from New Zealand to England and Croatia. C.K. Stead has produced a significant work to end the century. ■

The spirituality of women

Faces of the Goddess: New Zealand Women talk about their Spirituality

by Céline Kearney

Tandem Press

Price: \$29.95

Review: Sandra Winton

“Out of sight, out of mind.” Time and again we are reminded of the many women who, with considerable pain have left the churches. Once gone, however, they drop out of sight and the churches appear to learn nothing from the defection. It becomes a reason for disapproval rather than self-examination.

One such Catholic woman, Céline Kearney, has taken the trouble to bring before us the voices of 13 New Zealand women speaking about their spirituality. She had chosen not to interview women active in mainstream religious institutions. She does not address negative experiences with religions of upbringing. She has chosen to focus on ritual and spirituality rather than theology. She has written in the belief that from traditions pre-Christian, Christian and other than Christian, “we have an opportunity to learn... and with respect use what we need or what we can to live compassionately and creatively.”

As each of the 13 women speaks of her spirituality, there emerge certain themes that can be both a wake up call to the church and a reminder of some fundamental spiritual truths. Such are – the sacramentality of things, the power of ritual to deepen and highlight the meaning and spiritual dimension of everyday life, the capacity of ritual to build and deepen community, the reality that religion can liberate, strengthen, celebrate and sustain through trial, the inalienable path and call of each individual and the primacy of the God within.

This book is thin on theology and for me important questions remain unanswered, but perhaps that is understandable when most theology has been experienced as male-controlled, cerebral and disconnected from the real experience of women. Perhaps it seems more possible for women to come together from different viewpoints when theology is left aside for a time. But I believe that women’s spirituality needs to run alongside women’s theology – and there is plenty of that.

This is not a book for the fearful or narrow-minded. One will want to pick and choose. It can, however, be a source of encouragement for women (and perhaps men) who seek to grow spiritually in a way that is truthful to their experience, either outside or alongside church participation. As many rituals are described, it is also a sourcebook for ways of celebrating and ritualising events of life. The variety of experiences presented leaves the reader free to find what strikes a chord.



It used to be believed that to step outside the Christian

Does male spirituality exist?

Journeymen – Essays on Male Spirituality

edited by Robin Barrett & John S Fisher

Giant Press, Christchurch, 1999

Review: Mike Crowl

Sam Fisher, one contributor to this book, begins his essay by asking, “Why would anyone want to write such a thing?” Unfortunately he fails to give us an answer.

And this is how I felt generally about the men in this book. They talk about actions, but seldom reflect on their actions, at least not in a way I wanted them to reflect. Perhaps the problem was me as the reader. My interpretation of its agenda, a book on men writing about their particular view of spirituality, is apparently not the agenda most of the writers took up. They focus on their life journeys, to the extent that a number of the pieces are straightforward autobiographies of the surface of their lives.

Or if not autobiographies, discussions of their philosophical points of view, rather than their spiritual ones. Again, perhaps, it’s my interpretation of spirituality. I wanted to hear about their inner lives, their conversations with God. But as John S Fisher writes, “to expose one’s being, that inner core of the essential *me*, to another is not something that comes naturally to most men. It is almost culturally taboo; embarrassing to both the exposor and his victim. We are not comfortable in telling you who we are unless we can disguise the telling in cold logic or pentecostal anonymity.” I’m not sure what he means by ‘pentecostal anonymity,’ but he’s right about the previous phrase – there’s a certain coldness, or distance, about these writings. (And why is the reader a ‘victim?’)

Passion, (passion for and about God at least), is kept in the background. Plain straight facts about behaviour and what they did in this or that year is to the fore. The book isn’t entirely devoid of emotions (men, in spite of some feminist bombast, are still human!) and anger about wounds given by Christian people in the past, or righteous anger about social situations, or, in the case of Peter Allen, real depth of feeling for the hurt his vicar wife suffered at the hands of a patriarchal system that was still coming to terms with female priests after nearly two decades, are all expressed. But emotion towards



churches was to leave behind faith, prayer, and relationship with God. In gathering these interviews Céline Kearney shows that this is not necessarily so. She has given us a rare opportunity to listen to women speaking freely and at some length about their spiritual practice and experience. In so doing, she points to the possibility that we might do that with one another and that the churches might listen and learn. ■

God? I can't say I saw much evidence of this – on the surface.

I began to think as I worked my way through this book that you had to read much of it between the lines, come to it as an actor might to a script and 'interpret it' in order to discover what these men really feel about God. Perhaps again, I'm putting God too much in the picture: some of these men have rejected Him completely, and some come at Him from odd angles, to the extent that He isn't very visible. Postmodern thinking of the disbelief-in-absolute-truth type is fairly strong here.

Is male spirituality really as logical as this, or is it that the particular writers decided to write about it this way? When we look back at males of the past writing about their relationship with God we find plenty of depth and emotional involvement. Even many contemporary Christian writers write with more feeling than this.

Can it be blamed on the New Zealand character? Perhaps, but given that writing about oneself compared to speaking about oneself adds a certain protective distance, I would have felt these men might have let their guards down rather more. Is it that these men's notions of spirituality so differ in many cases from mine that I expected them to give what they don't have? Expecting God/Christ-focused spirituality, I found that the word 'spirituality' had been much more widely interpreted. But even given that aspect, I asked again and again, what is specifically *male* about the spirituality in this book? As I said, only John S Fisher touches on the question, and he drops it within a couple of paragraphs.

If all this sounds as though I've rejected the book out of hand, that wouldn't be true. A recent book on males in NZ, *Masculinities*, (published by Dunmore Press) avoided the question of spirituality altogether. This one makes a valid start to the discussion, giving us something to work from. But there's still a way to go. ■

Encouraging the 'returning' Catholic

Welcoming Inactive Catholics Review: Fr James Lyons *Welcoming Inactive Catholics* is a practical and friendly booklet (32 pages) published by the Catholic Enquiry Centre. It faces the painful reality that large numbers of baptised Catholics have little or no regular contact with the Church. The motivation for this initiative is obviously the fact (as stated in the booklet) that most inactive Catholics "*have not lost their faith in God ...are still considered Catholics by others and still see themselves as Catholic*". (p6)

This leads to practical suggestions about establishing a parish-based Ministry to the Inactive. There are helpful indicators on team formation and raising awareness in the parish. Three positive programmes: (1) An Open House or Visitors' Sunday (2) A Come Home for Christmas invitation (3) A specific Outreach programme to assist Catholics to re-connect, are explained in detail and are potentially very exciting.

The publication contains good information, including statistics, and is written in an entertaining style. Fr Paul Shannahan has adapted the Canadian material with care and also with the benefit of much experience within the New Zealand Church. He presents a challenge which will not be easy to pick up.

As the title suggests, *Welcoming Inactive Catholics* emphasises welcoming. If a parish is not welcoming, if the atmosphere within the worshipping community is not inviting, if parish leaders are not approachable (or readily available) nothing will change.

"A vital post-Vatican II church with a variety of liturgical expressions and participatory leadership is most appealing to adult candidates for re-entry into parish life." (p17) How

many such parishes are there in New Zealand? It is often an experience of the opposite that has caused people to drop away, and from what I can see the dropping away is continuing.

If *Welcoming Inactive Catholics* were adopted at a Deanery, or better, Diocesan level, we might be able to address this crucial aspect of encouraging people back. This may be the best result of the publication. Can we see it as a timely gift to the church in New Zealand from a Centre that knows the problems at the coal face and is brave enough to propose a way forward? As I read the guidelines about setting up the ministry – *what are the unique talents that team members will bring?* and other questions for circulation ahead of the planning meeting, I had a question of my own: *who will do all this 'setting up' if not the Parish Priest?*

That's a further critical factor in getting the best out of *Welcoming Inactive Catholics*. Priests are already swamped with leadership expectations. Pastoral policy strategists need to plan for the provision of lay leaders in parishes who, with the priests, will be given the resources necessary to implement the kind of programme suggested here.

A production point: the booklet is designed to fit neatly, without folding, into a standard envelope. While that's great for posting, the reader isn't helped by the cramped, small type face and the, at times, confusing layout.

Even so, this is a worthwhile publication. The initiative is to be praised and welcomed. Inactive Catholics are not only missing out, they are being missed. ■

Wives love your husbands... husbands be subject to your wives – Ephesians reinterpreted

The Body in Question. Metaphor and Meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21-33

Biblical Interpretation Series; Volume 30; Leiden: Brill, 1988

by Gregory W. Dawes

Review: Paul Trebilco

This excellent book by Dr Dawes, who is lecturer in Religious Studies in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Otago University, provides a re-reading of *Ephesians 5:21-33*, a passage which concerns the injunction for wives to be subject to their husbands, and for husbands to love their wives. The book is characterized by careful and thorough scholarship, by incisive analysis and critique of the work of others, and by a clarity of structure and argumentation. In the book, Dr Dawes proposes that the most comprehensive interpretation of *Eph 5:21-33* is one which applies the injunctions about submission and love to both husband and wife.

After a discussion of the interpretive debate surrounding this passage, Dr Dawes surveys recent work on the nature and functioning of metaphor. This is important because of the need to understand the use of the “head” and

“body” metaphors in Ephesians. Topics such as the criteria for determining the presence of a metaphor and the ways in which metaphor is creative of meaning are discussed. Then follows a careful analysis of *Eph 5:21-33* which seeks to uncover the structure of the author’s argumentation, a discussion of the use of analogy in the passage, and an examination of the relationship between the “head” and “body” metaphors. In chapters that follow the two metaphors of “head” and “body”, the concepts of “oneness” or unity and the term “mystery” are looked at in detail in all of their occurrences in Ephesians. Finally, a new interpretation of *Eph 5:21-33* is offered.

Dr Dawes shows that the instructions given to married couples in *Eph 5:21-33* are supported by an argument from analogy. The text states that the relationship of wife and husband is analogous to the relationship of the Church and Christ. Dr Dawes notes that “married couples are called upon to imitate, in their behaviour towards one another, that relationship which exists between Christ and the Church” (p196); this is one version of the *imitatio Christi* which is asked of all believers. But one way this analogy is constructed is by the

use of the terms “head” and “body”. The problem for many believers today arises from the way the author uses the “head” and “body” metaphors in *Eph 5:22-24*. When the author uses these metaphors, it is only the wives who are told to “be subordinate” and only the husbands who are told to “love”.

However, Dr Dawes suggests that we can remove the assumption of male authority from our interpretation of the text. This can be done because the metaphorical language of the text, and the logic of the argumentation, can be seen to effectively undermine the patriarchal intention of the author and to authorize a reinterpretation of the passage. This reinterpretation of the text takes into account the complexities and ambiguities of the passage and its relationship to the rest of Ephesians.

How does Dr Dawes argue for this view? One key element of his reinterpretation focuses on the two different uses of the “body” metaphor in *Ephesians 5:21-33* – one in which the “body” metaphor underlines the unity of Christ and the Church or wife and husband (*v25-31*), and the other in which “body” and “head” are distinguished (*v22-24*). These two different uses of the metaphor of the body create a conflict. For example, in *v22-24* “head” and “body” are used to *distinguish* the roles of wife and husband, while in *v25-32* the term “body” is used to *identify* what wives and husbands have in common. But Dr Dawes points out that the later unifying use of the “body” metaphor (in *v28-31*) can be read back into *v25*: “If the husband should love his wife because she is ‘his own flesh’, the same may be said of wives. Wives are bound to love their partners on the very same grounds that husbands are bound to love their wives.” (p205) But overall, the use of

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the head and body metaphors masks what the author affirms about the underlying unity of wife and husband as members of the body of Christ.

In addition, Eph 5:21 with its command to mutual subordination, which Dr Dawes argues is clearly reciprocal and addressed to all believers regardless of gender, tends to undermine the patriarchal ethic of the following verses. For in Eph 5:22-24 the author applies the command addressed to all Christians in v21, to only one partner in a Christian marriage. This is done by using the terms “head” and “body” to *distinguish* the wife’s role from that of her husband and thus to conform the instructions to a traditional patriarchal ethic.

Yet this command in v22-24 is in tension with v21 with its command to mutual submission, and with the unifying use of the body metaphor in v28-31 (where husband and wife are said to be “one flesh” and joint members of the “body of Christ” and this unity is compared to the union of Christ and the Church).

These tensions in the passage mean that the author does not give an entirely consistent argument for the patriarchal ethic of the passage; the discovery of

these tensions “should prevent a simple ‘hierarchical’ reading” (p228) and in fact authorize a new reading of the passage.

Dr Dawes then goes on to address the question of how we interpret Eph 5:21-33 for today? He suggests that, in view of these tensions in the passage, the logic of the argumentation, the language itself, and the fact that elsewhere in the letter (eg. 5:1-2) these same commands to married couples are directed to all Christians, the injunctions to “be subordinate” and “to love” should be applied to both partners. “[A] close reading shows that what Ephesians asks is that both wives and husbands live lives of mutual subordination and self-sacrificing love, after the example of Christ.” (p233). Dr Dawes’ interpretation thus offers a more “symmetrical” and reciprocal ethic than Eph 5:21-33 seems to offer at first sight. He suggests this interpretation offers the best account of the text’s complexities, tensions and ambiguities.

The procedure employed is not to judge Scripture against what we believe to be correct, since should we not rather “be allowing our own commitments to be reshaped by the biblical message?” (p229). The approach is rather to

evaluate the argumentation of Eph 5:21-33 “from within the text itself, by asking whether the arguments the author employs are consistent.” (p229) When seen in this light, the distinctions made between wife and husband are seen to be “undermined by the unity ... of the partners in the ‘one body’ and by the demands of their common Christian vocation.” (p230)

In addition to the interpretation of Eph 5 offered here, there are also many invaluable insights into the theology of Ephesians, including themes such as the unity of the church, the letter’s use of the term “mystery”, and the relation-ship of Christ and the Church. Methodologically, the importance of context for determining the meaning of a word or a metaphor is underlined, as is the importance of reading a passage as part of a book in its entirety.

This is a highly significant contribution to our understanding of a difficult passage, and to Ephesians in general. Those serious about grappling with the meaning of Scripture today will benefit by reading not only the overall interpretation offered by the book, but also the exemplary argumentation and attention to detail which is evident throughout. ■

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Coupe de grâce

Bonjour! Who won? Who lost? Who cares? I must confess that being of French parentage, I was delighted when the French beat the All Blacks.

Bravo! or Bien Joué! I said and rang my son-in-law to gloat. Sacré Bleu!

The All Blacks were just a bunch of preprogrammed robots having another day at the office, the Tricolours were playing for La Patrie and au diable with the consequences. I can understand that. It was a great game which exposed the reality of professionalism. When leaving the field, the beaten All Blacks looked, naturally, dejected, but no matter, another day, another dollar. On with the dark glasses, the designer leather jackets and a front up to the news media for a few grunts of apology. The cheque is in the mail, business class air tickets back to NZ are confirmed

and sponsorships have still some time to run. Then the French lost the final in a brutish match against the Australians. Quel dommage! So, we know who won and who lost, but attendez, there is more. Rugby lost! Mais oui!

Everyone told us that the All Blacks were invincible, modest, intelligent, great eaters of Weet-Bix and slayers of frog eaters. What went wrong? Rugby is now controlled by big business, sponsorships come from big organisations and money, lots of it, is the name of the game. We are now just consumers who are bombarded with hype, excessive media exposure, and the massive egos of young men and their managers who are busy negotiating contracts for six figure sums. Who pays for all this? Zut! It is the filthy rich. You have to be loaded, mes amis, to afford Sky, which has sole rights to all future international fixtures and to get into the main city stadiums, if there are any tickets left after the corporations, the sponsors,

the national and local Football clubs and their friends have got their share. Corporate boxes, costing hundreds of thousands, take the best spots. There, clients are fêted on escargots and cheeky chardonnay whilst watching, in dark glasses, the Roman games below. The players, naturellement, come from all ranks, Mon Dieu! this is not an élite sport!

Players, spectators, administrators, tout le monde, have been fooled by the hype and the promise, both fueled by a changed ethos of money making and self aggrandisement. Rugby has lost its innocence and is now a passionless business run for profit. You cannot expect people to be fooled again, let alone care at all for new designer jackets, jerseys with no collars, six figure salaries, million dollar stadiums and big business.

Rugby? mais non, mes amis, profit. Au revoir. ■



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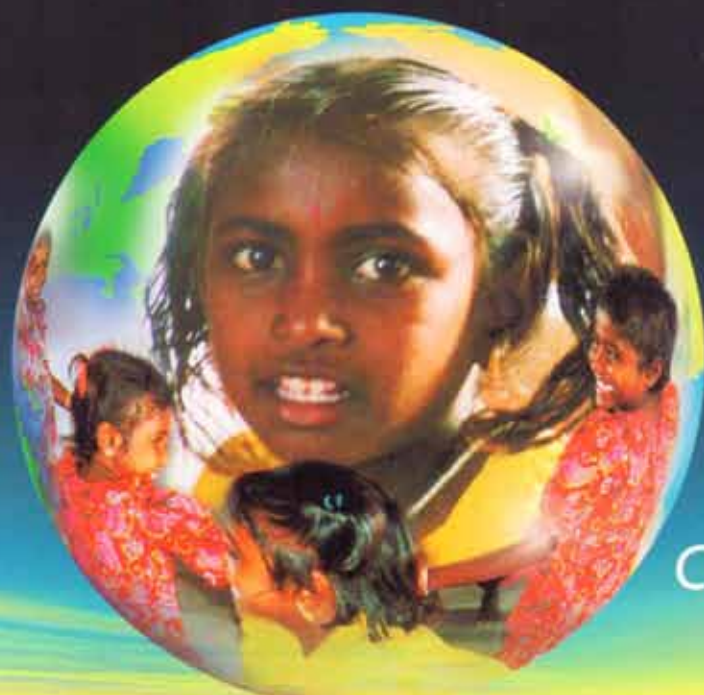
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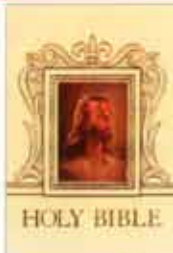


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