

Tui Motu

InterIslands

monthly independent Catholic magazine

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Aotearoa's Saint-in-the-making

saints, wise responses, and elections

What a cover! This icon-like painting of Mother Suzanne Aubert was recently unveiled at the Home of Compassion in Island Bay. It was here that this holy woman lived the last years of her life, and where she died.

We are told that the process for Suzanne Aubert's canonization has been speeding up recently. We can only hope that the 'speeding up' brings this to what seems like a foregone conclusion. In many New Zealanders' minds and hearts the *consensus fidelium* has already been given: this woman is a saint.

I was fully reminded of Mother Aubert when I read a telling section of Kim Workman's article on pp 6-7. Kim traverses a lot of important ground about a wider view of our undoubtedly punitive society — all of which is compulsory reading — but two sentences have stuck with me:

'Official theology is the theology created by our particular orthodoxy, while operative theology consists of the beliefs that inform our day-to-day lives. In other words, Christians may feel compassion toward the least, lost and lonely,

but publicly express views which are less aligned to the gospel and make them indistinguishable from non-Christians.'

This sums up trenchantly a sense that I have had about New Zealand Christianity for a generation. In our middle-class comfort, we have stopped living the nitty-gritty of the gospel. Yes, we are good people, but the pursuit of God's reign requires that we get out of that easy place and act more at the margins of society.

Presently and magnificently, the best model of this is Pope Francis. Despite the burdens of office, his ministry to the poor and the disenfranchised is never forgotten by him. We have the example of his recent trip to Calabria where he pointed to the 'excommunication' of the 'Ndrangheta for their criminal actions. While not saying these men are formally excommunicated, he owned that these men have by their own actions put themselves outside the 'common ground' that we understand to be God's truth and life. Francis' approach sounds so radical that many dismiss it as impossible of performance.

Not so fast: it is for this gospel

radicalism that we are meant to strive. Moreover, it is this feisty and direct approach to the Gospel that endears us to Francis. It should to Mother Aubert as well. She was a fine exponent of this hands-on approach which Michael Fitzsimons describes so well in his article on pp 24-25. She was never limited by Church or State in her desire to follow Jesus. It got her into trouble, and she revelled in that. We can hope the Churches in New Zealand will take up this clearer Kingdom-approach that Francis and Mother Aubert exemplify.

In our election focus we look at being a less punitive society. Along with Kim's article, Kevin Clements and Veronica Casey give this idea light and air. As well, Dugald McTavish points us to *Wise Response*, a 'cross-lines' move to get government out of lethargy when dealing with crucial world and NZ issues. Don't miss reading this.

Daniel O'Leary fans will welcome the lucid spirituality he preaches, while our back page commentators excel.

As elections draw closer, the debate is yet to begin! Have some spirit-filled conversations with your friends. **KT**

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Cover illustration: Mother Suzanne Aubert
(see story p24)

pray for syria

Here in Syria, where St Paul found his faith, many churches stand empty, targets for bombardment and desecration. Aleppo, where I have been bishop for 25 years, is devastated. We have become accustomed to the daily dose of death and destruction, but living in such uncertainty and fear exhausts the body and the mind.

We hear the thunder of bombs and the rattle of gunfire, but we don't always know what is happening. It's hard to describe how chaotic, terrifying and psychologically difficult it is when you have no idea what will happen next, or where the next rocket will fall. Many Christians cope with the tension by being fatalistic: that whatever happens is God's will.

Until the war began, Syria was one of the last remaining strongholds for Christianity in the Middle East. We have 45 churches in Aleppo. But now our faith is under mortal threat, in danger of being driven into extinction, the same pattern we have seen in neighbouring Iraq.

Most Christians who could afford to leave Aleppo have already fled for Lebanon, so as to find schools for their children. Those who remain are mostly from poor families. Many can no longer put food on the table. Last year, even amid intense fighting, you



Bishop Antoine Audo

could see people in the streets running around endlessly trying to find bread in one of the shops.

The health system has also fallen apart. In the hospitals, many doctors have been threatened and forced to flee, so people fear that if they do get injured there will be no one to treat them. I thank God for the few brave surgeons who have stayed.

Most people here are now unemployed, and — without work — daily life lacks a purpose. People have no way to wash and their clothes are ragged. We have almost no electricity, and depression reigns at night. But when the darkness comes, I take courage from the fact that it was not always like this.

Syrians lived together for many years as a country, as a civilisation and a culture without hate or violence. Most people are not interested in sectarian divisions. We just want to work and live as we did before the war, when people of all faiths co-existed peacefully.

Syrian Christians may face great

peril, but we have a crucial role to play in restoring peace. We have no interest in power, no stake in the spoils of this war, no objective but to rebuild our society.

As president of Caritas Syria, I co-ordinate emergency relief for tens of thousands of people of all faiths. It is dangerous work. I have to be careful walking around the city because of the risk of snipers and kidnapping. But I cannot work unless I am in the streets to understand the situation and the suffering of the people. I am sustained by the daily acts of solidarity from my brothers and sisters around the world with their prayers and donations.

And as I walk through the dust and the rubble, I am not afraid. But I have faith in God's protection, hope for our future, and my love of this country and all its peoples will outlast this war. I must believe that, and I pray that you will stand with us as long as our struggles endure. ■

Bishop Antoine Audo SJ is the Chaldean Catholic Bishop of Aleppo and president of Caritas Syria



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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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language and holiness

Given ICEL's drive for better language, more beautiful language and language faithful to original texts, why have we have been given a somewhat effete rehash of the pre-Vatican II *Sanctus*?

In both English and Latin, the words, holy and *sanctus* look like adjectives but fail to convey the immensity and power of the text taken from Isaiah 6.

Years ago my Hebrew professor suggested that Hebrew didn't do abstract concepts very well. Hebrew is a poetic language rooted in the concrete — it has many names for God.

'The Holy' is one of these. Not a mere description of God as some holy entity, as the adjective-noun construction in English or Latin suggests. The *Sanctus* text is not talking simply of some attribute of God but of a totally unique HOLINESS that is God's very self. God is Holiness itself.

For me the translation given in the Missal fails to convey the intention of the Biblical text. An inevitable consequence of translated language? Shouldn't commentaries try to deal with this? Commentaries

in the little red pew book sell us short. Focussing simply on the angelic hosts of Isaiah 6:3 while ignoring the Hebrew word *kadosh* is to undersell the *Sanctus* text. One could argue, perhaps, that strictly speaking, *Kadosh*, *Sanctus* and Holy are not synonyms.

The threefold repetition acknowledging God in a kind of crescendo, attempts to convey the absolute nature of this God, this Holiness. These words are about an awesome reality — holiness that is God the source of all that is holy.

By our Baptism we are called to holiness and the source of that is the God of Holiness. When we aspire to holiness we share in the nature of God.

Ray Stedman, Greytown

fundamentally about God

Maybe we should not allow ourselves to be mesmerized by canonizations, whether of Popes or whoever. As somebody has said: "A saint is a small character in a story that is always fundamentally about God."

Jim Howley, Auckland

letters to the editor

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

We do not publish anonymous letters otherwise than in exceptional circumstances. Response articles (up to a page) are welcome — but please, by negotiation.

If you really love reading your Tui Motu,

you might like to remember us in your will.

Tui Motu Interislands
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*The Buddha holds a lotus flower in his hand
to teach wisdom and enlightenment,
While Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity, stands on the lotus
to show that true wealth
is
neither money nor gold nor diamonds
But pure water, clean air, healthy soil
and nature in good heart,
Of which the lotus is a potent symbol.*

who cares if abbott and hockey are catholics?

A comment on Australia's recent budget.

Andrew Hamilton

Much has been made of the religious faith and schooling of government ministers and the relationship between these things and government policy. To my mind the topic is a trivial indulgence that diverts attention from more important questions.

Talk about politicians' faith focuses attention on the people who make decisions and not on the people affected by their decisions. To conclude that they are influenced by their faith or are unfaithful to it may give satisfaction to the person who makes the judgment, but it does nothing for those affected by unfair policies.

Nor is this kind of judgment one that Christians may make if they wish to be consistent. At the heart of Christian faith is the conviction that we are all sinners saved by Christ, and so are no better than anyone else. It follows that the proper business of Christians is to refrain from judging others. It is to try to win them. Like everyone else, they are called to judge policies by their effect on human beings, especially the most vulnerable.

By these standards the Budget was problematic. Certainly it attempted to address longer term challenges of matching revenue to proper expenditure. But it penalised the most vulnerable members of society while leaving untouched subsidies to the more affluent. It also weakened the regulatory bodies necessary to protect the longer term good of society, particularly those to do with the environment and fairness.

It will make Australian society harsher. It was rightly on the nose with Australians. The fault did not lie in the Government's failure to sell it but in the noisomeness of what was on offer.

The interesting question is why people would advocate and introduce such harmful, self-destructive policies. The framers of the Budget certainly did not lack courage. When people are surprised at the rejection of their ideas they have normally been guided by ideas so self-evident to them that they believe others will need only to hear them in order to be persuaded.

The assumption underlying the Budget, one shared by both major political parties, is that the primary responsibility of the government is to promote economic growth. This is understood implicitly to be identical with the good of society.

It is also axiomatic that economic growth is best achieved by individuals competing for economic advancement with as little regulation and taxation as possible. This implies that social goods, such as education and health care, should be largely left to the market. In this view of society, those who do not compete economically are failing in their responsibilities and should be treated with rigour. It is echoed in Arthur Hugh Clough's couplet:

*Thou shalt not kill but needst not strive
Officiously to keep alive.*

This is a rigorous world in which the only morality owned by government is that of the market. Most people want more of government than this and expect more of their leaders. And they are unconvinced that competition, which naturally produces a less equal society, will lead to a more harmonious one. So it is natural that a budget enshrining these ideas will be rejected.

Still, such ideas can be conscientiously held. They are certainly held by many people with different religious and philosophical beliefs, many

of whom will argue for the compatibility of their convictions with this view of society just as many Catholics argue that their faith is compatible with their conviction that same sex marriage should be legalised. It would be wrong to describe them as hypocrites and would also distract from what matters.

The central question at issue is about the value we place on human beings, and so of the claims they may rightly make on one another in society.

This is primarily a human question, and so secondarily a religious question. The ideology underpinning the Budget and the understanding of the role of government is that human beings have value measured to the contribution they make to economic growth, and that successful competitors should be rewarded while the unproductive are to be disciplined or disregarded. It enshrines the sense of entitlement of the affluent.

Others argue that human beings have a value independent of their economic productivity, and that this is expressed in their relationships, of which economic relationships are only one set. The role of government then is to strengthen the relationships that bind people together, and to ensure that the economy is ordered to the common good.

The challenge the Budget presents to its critics is to commend a richer view of economic growth and to keep before public attention the faces of those demeaned by it. ■

Andrew Hamilton is an Australian Jesuit who is the consulting editor of Eureka Street.

are we a punitive society?

Part of A GOSPEL MANIFESTO 2014 – ‘Towards a Less Punitive Society’

Is it time to recover a more holistic and collective idea of what our society is about, much in the way that the Old Testament prophets saw the nation as the heart of their mission? Are we too tied to the current cultural paradigm arising from the market reforms of the 1980s?



Kim Workman

Prisons are but one measure of punitiveness; but the frequency with which we place people in them, and the way we treat prisoners, tell us a great deal about the nation's attitude to power, authority, legitimacy, normalcy, morality, personhood, and social relations. As Nelson Mandela put it: “No one truly knows a nation until he has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens but how it treats its lowest ones.”

New Zealand mostly presents as a just and peaceful nation. The OECD Social Justice rankings which measure poverty, access to health, and other indicators place New Zealand well above the average. In the *Global Peace Index*, New Zealand ranks third in the world. In recent years there has been a steady drop in the crime rate and modest decreases in the reoffending and re-imprisonment rates. These are all the hallmarks of a socially just, peaceful, cohesive nation which cares for its citizens.

another indicator

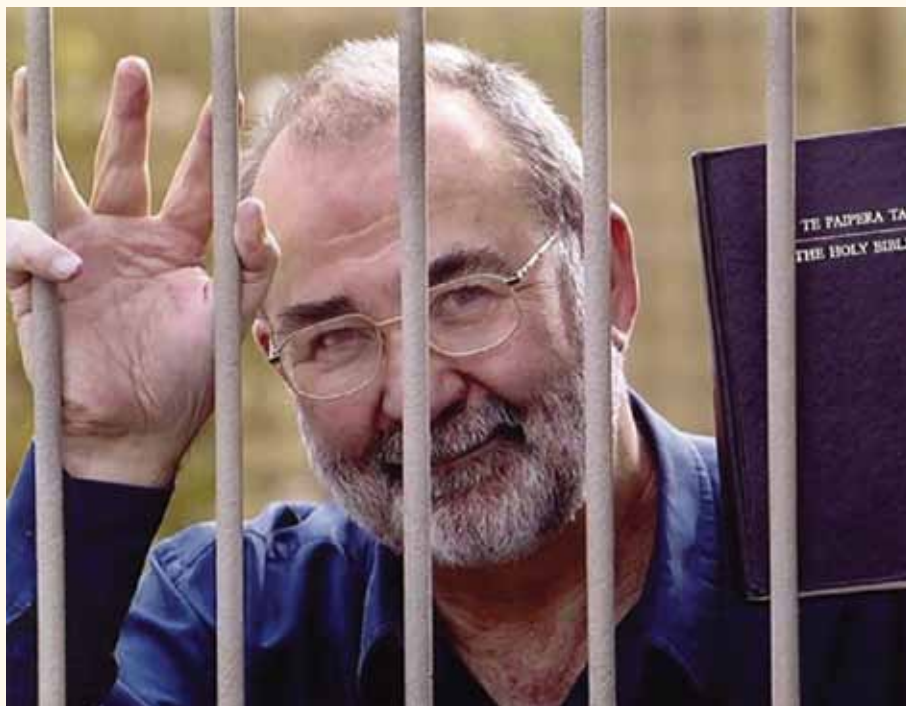
But one indicator suggests otherwise — the extent to which we punish. The prison population in New Zealand went from 91 per 100,000 general population in 1987 to 200 per 100,000 in 2009. This is well above other western democracies, with the exception of the USA. We are currently sandwiched between two West African

nations, Gabon and Namibia in the “locking up” stakes. Historically we have locked up people at a rate higher than our Western neighbours.

Criminologist John Pratt argues that while friendliness and egalitarianism were very much a feature of early New Zealand society and culture, our desire to defend “paradise” led to a marked intolerance for those who threatened its social cohesion. Homogeneity was hallowed, diversity was discouraged. Outsiders were not welcome — dissent was frowned on — paradise had to be preserved at all costs. Ferocious anti-vagrancy and anti-prostitution laws were passed in the 1870s. Our treatment of conscientious objectors and attitudes toward homosexuals were

much more punitive and harsh than other Commonwealth countries.

The market reforms of the 1980s triggered the start of a more recent trend toward increased punitiveness. Individualism competed with collectivism, meritocracy with egalitarianism, choice with uniformity, indulgence with frugality. Crime was no longer an indicator of deprivation and need; its primary function was to signal indiscipline and inadequate controls, which must be dealt with through incapacitation. These beliefs had the great political advantage of excluding any possibility that the offender may be disadvantaged, poorly socialised, or marginalised as a result of the government's social



Kim Workman



Paremoremo prison, Auckland (inmate capacity: 667)

and economic policies. Instead, the solution lay in the imposition of more controls, and a 'zero tolerance' approach to offending.

government ammunition

In recent years the criminal justice sector has become just one part of the government's artillery which opposes policies that appear to benefit the "undeserving poor", exhibits increased cynicism about welfare, and supports more aggressive controls for an underclass that is perceived to be disorderly, drug-prone, violent and dangerous.

Increasingly, punishment has extended beyond the criminal justice system. The communities that most offenders come from have experienced a reduction in primary healthcare services, increased evictions from and ineligibility for social housing, decreased access to justice, increased levels of unemployment, a decline in the level of welfare support, the introduction of "workfare", and increased pressure to "behave", without any commensurate provision of support. In this scenario, the basic idea that all humans are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, gets lost.

growing christian ambiguity

How have Christians responded to this cultural shift? In my experience, those who are actively involved in caring for prisoners and offenders find that church leaders and many Christians are unsupportive. As a

result many develop an ambivalent theological position between what they practise, and what they believe. There is often a gap between what we actually believe and what we think we should believe, between official and operative theologies. Official theology is the theology created by our particular orthodoxy, while operative theology consists of the beliefs that inform our day-to-day lives. In other words, Christians may feel compassion toward the least, lost and lonely, but publicly express views which are less aligned to the gospel, and make them indistinguishable from non-Christians.

Author Richard Snyder goes further. He proposes that the prevailing understanding of grace feeds into a punitive culture that builds upon and reinforces it. He suggests that two crucial distortions prevail. First there is an absence of creation grace — the doctrinal emphasis is upon the fall, original sin, and total depravity — it is difficult to find an affirmation of the beauty, goodness and worth in all creation. If it is only in redemption that grace is restored, it becomes easy to think that those whose condition is less favourable (criminals, the sick, the poor) are reaping the just deserts of their unrepentant state. Then it becomes possible to treat them as less than human.

who or what is redeemed?

Second, the misguided idea that the sole focus of redemption should be upon the person who has fallen.

Redemption is as much a corporate and institutional dynamic as a personal one. It is not only persons that need redeeming; it is also public policies, institutions, and the corporate structures of our lives.

In that scenario, society's own complicity in the creation of criminals is quickly lost sight of in outpourings of moral indignation at individual offenders. That in turn feeds and supports our punitive culture.

Our task as Christians is to recover an understanding of the social, collective nature of sin and salvation both in terms of contemporary reality and biblical witness — a return to the social gospel of the early twentieth century. Rauschenbusch contrasted the emphasis upon individual salvation with what he understood as the heart of both prophetic Judaism and the ministry of Jesus.

The reign of God for which the prophets hoped was a social hope on fire with religion. Their concern was for the largest and noblest social group with which they were in contact — their nation. ■

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overcoming the politics of fear

Part of A GOSPEL MANIFESTO 2014 – ‘Towards a Less Punitive Society’

Fear is a controlling factor in the way that we look at politics, government and political parties. It induces political paralysis. The writer looks at ways in which we might consider these matters in the larger context of our interconnected world, namely, our ability to be free from want, free from fear and to live in dignity. This includes reaching out to those we fear in radical solidarity with them.



Kevin P Clements

Western democracies are facing a cruel dilemma. Instead of feeling secure in our affluence and generous in our disposition we feel insecure, fearful and selfish. Politicians play on our insecurity and fear and we become passive rather than active citizens; infants instead of adults and supporters of the status quo rather than liberating change. George Orwell predicted some of this a long time ago when he said: “Do you begin to see then, what kind of world we are creating? It is ... a world of fear and treachery and torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but more merciless as it refines itself.” (George Orwell, 1984)

If we are to become active, empowered citizens we need to address our fears so that we can be politically bold, critical and engaged. To do this we have to determine what we are afraid of and what we want from our political leaders and political parties. There are two types of fear: healthy, probable and realistic; and unhealthy, imagined and unrealistic. We are hardwired physiologically to avoid risky activities that might result in danger and death. In 21st century New Zealand we do need to worry about climate change, inequality and injustice; we do not need to worry about terrorism, criminality or existential insecurity. By focusing on these healthy, immediate and realistic fears we already begin to gain some understanding about what we need to work for and what we can safely ignore.



Kevin Clements

The reality is that fear is a very bad motivator of positive behaviour and normally engenders both individual and social paralysis. In his book, *The Politics of Fear*, Frank Furedi said that,

‘The Right in politics have forgotten what sort of past they wish to preserve and the Left has forgotten what sort of future it wishes to realise so we are caught in a paralysing present.’

politics lacking ethical focus

Most politics in the West, therefore, lack any sense of purpose, perspective and meaning. It’s a sad fact that it is a default option for both the Right and the Left to lapse into cultivating a politics of fear. The major consequence of this is that citizens are infantilised and we are treated like children by our politicians.

The solution is two-fold. We need to start with something positive. “Without a vision the people perish”. If we do not have a strong

ethical frame for our politics we cannot measure whether progress is being made.

(i) My suggestion is that we start with a reinvigorated humanistic vision suitable for the 21st century. In this vision, people and communities at local, national, regional and global levels are not trapped in a paralyzing present but strive to realise justice, peace, compassion and truth in their personal, social and political relationships. Our basic expectation is that “hope and history will rhyme” and that we will develop a politics that will be enabling rather than disabling, participatory rather than exclusive, one which will enable us to connect as adult to adult rather than child to adult. We want a vision that will help us realize the common sense and wisdom that each one of us brings to life. This is a very different vision from that promoted by most politicians.

(ii) We need to be very systematic about what we want from our politicians and clear about whose interests we are promoting. It is sad to me that the notion of ‘Public Service’ seems to be at a premium at the moment and that the ‘Common Good’ is seen as a relic of a more idealistic past. If we cannot reactivate this notion that the state is the servant of the people rather than the other way around we will never be able to challenge domineering politics or discover the power inherent in every single citizen. In this we must also be guided by tactics and strategies that deal with the root causes of political violence and

not its symptoms. The US Political Instability Task force 2004, for example, correlated the following factors with incidents of terrorism and other sources of political violence: poverty, underdevelopment and maldistribution of resources; weak regimes and poor governance; poor regional integration and bad neighbourhoods (by which was meant regional neighbourhoods afflicted by drug, gun and people trafficking).

addressing serious concerns

If we wish to do something about political violence and the democratic deficit, then we need to ask our political leaders to address these and other concerns. They are much more important than current growth strategies or the potential for tax breaks.

In all of these kinds of discussions it would be helpful if all states responded to Kofi Annan's call to advance the cause of larger freedom — by ensuring freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity. In an increasingly interconnected world, progress in the areas of development, security and

human rights must go hand in hand. Both development and security also depend on respect for human rights and the rule of law.

the mystery of suffering

For Christians contemplating these issues we must enter what I call the mystery of suffering. How do we as strangers make loving sense of suffering? What are our responsibilities for the suffering of self and others? How do we witness it creatively? How do we embrace it so that we might be softened and transformed by it? With those who are suffering, how do we discern creative possibility? How in the face of polarisation and division do we stand for union and reunion of self with the other and self with the world?

In an interdependent world we can no longer afford to have narrow circles of compassion. In a world of democratic deficits we can no longer afford to be infantilized and paralysed by the politics of fear. Our individual lives and sense of well-being hinge on the well-being and safety of others. For us to assume responsibility to and for the welfare of the other we

need to reach out to those in need (including those whom we fear) and stand in radical solidarity with them as they, and we, satisfy our basic human needs together and create the conditions for each one of us being able to realize our full potential.

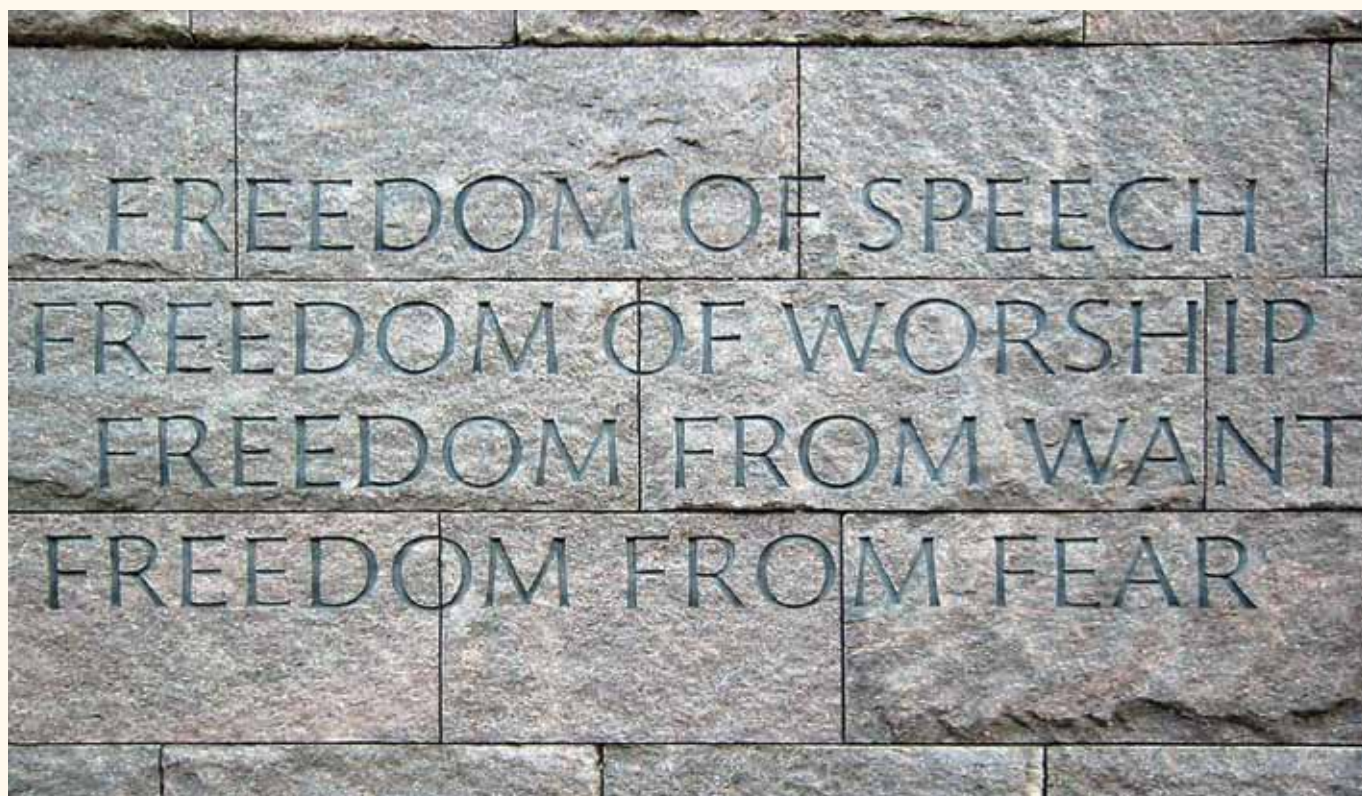
John Paul Lederach in his delightful book *The Moral Imagination: The Art of Building Peace* has a pocket mantra that we should be sharing with all candidates for political office. It goes as follows:

Pocket Mantra

Reach out to those you fear,
Touch the heart of complexity,
Imagine beyond what is seen,
Risk vulnerability one step at a time.

If we did this we would be living beyond the politics of fear. We would be empowered and emboldened change-agents for a better world. ■

Professor Kevin Clements is the foundation Chair and Director of the National Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies, University of Otago, Dunedin.



'The Four Freedoms'. Engraved on the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, DC.

called to be 'whole-makers'

The principal prison chaplain for Aotearoa New Zealand looks at the culture surrounding our prisons, the way the media portrays those who have been imprisoned. She asks us to look at our own ideas and to become people of mercy, 'whole-makers'.



'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone ... ' (John 8:7)

Veronica Casey

If the worst things we had ever done were laid out before us and before NZ through the media, how many of us would come up smelling of roses? Yet we are an increasingly punitive and blame-seeking society when it comes to others' mistakes. We are all so much bigger than what we have done and certainly more than the mistakes we have made: in fact there is no such thing as a mistake unless we haven't learned from it.

Prison chaplains minister to offenders of a wide range of crimes, who have a lack of hope, a sense of failure, a lack of belonging and connectedness, and a lack of inner knowledge of who they are. But when prisoners come to realise the impact of what they have done, no sentence, however long or harsh, will outweigh the reality and the awareness that they have to live with for the rest of their lives.

faces of those in prison

Whose face comes into your mind when you think of people in prison? Is it St Paul, Nelson Mandela or Jesus — or a family member, a neighbour or a friend? Or is it the tattooed face of a gang member, stereotyped as Maori or Pacific, or someone with evil eyes and sullen aggressive posture with no apparent remorse? That is the image we are asked to believe by the constant barrage of news media, movies and television.

In my experience the reality is a two year old child being taught to steal to support his parents' drug habits; a child thrown out of his home at the age of 12 to be taken in only by the gangs; a child

who has no concept of love and trust because of a childhood stolen through beatings, emotional and sexual abuse; a child moved from foster home to foster home, failing in the school system so dropping out unnoticed, a child in desperate need of love and security.

Internationally the majority of prisoners come from the most disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society. In every part of the world, the disproportionate rates of imprisonment provide an instant snapshot of wider social implications.

trapped in what prison?

We all have our own personal prisons in which we are trapped: loneliness, unhealed physical and emotional pain, prejudice, fear, addiction, greed, closed mindedness and we live in an increasingly fearful society where many people's

sense of security relies on high prison walls. At the same time as our society is demanding harsher and longer sentences, New Zealanders are increasingly locking themselves away behind ever more sophisticated security systems, high fences, and gated communities.

At any one time there are about 8,500 people in New Zealand's prisons. For each one of them there are numerous others in the community who are affected: families, victims, wider society and children: about 20,000 children have a parent in prison. Up to 55 percent of those in prison are between 15 and 30 years of age and the evidence tells us the younger a person is when imprisoned the more likely they are to reoffend.

No one discounts the trauma victims of crime experience, but at the same time we know God's love does



Veronica Casey

not give up on anyone. God calls even the worst of offenders to change, and offers healing to those victims of crime able to find the courage to forgive.

People coming out of prison feel they have criminal tattooed on their forehead. Landlords are reluctant to let houses to them, employers are reticent about offering employment, neighbourhoods reject them, and their only support often ends up being those who have led them into prison in the first place. Prison becomes the place they know, where they are accepted and feel safe.

reintegrating into society

Everyone who comes out of prison rightfully seeks a place in our society, maybe as our neighbour, team-mate or work colleague. Reintegrating into society is very difficult for those who do not have strong support, and one must ask where does punishment finish and revenge begin. The punishment these people receive for their offence is going to prison: the goal of their sentence is addressing their crime and its consequences and learning to live a crime-free life: unlearning lifestyles and learning new ways. For someone who has never experienced love this is a major transformation. Many experience prison as a hospital for the soul. "I came that you may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10). Those who have been imprisoned are our neighbours; they are children of God and only can learn this through experiencing acceptance, belonging and love. Those whose experience of love has been of violence, abuse and neglect have to undergo a whole new learning process to feel accepted and loved.

Imagine a society where everybody has a place, knows they belong and that they are loved and accepted? That is exactly the society Jesus modelled and Pope Francis is calling us to, as he so poignantly demonstrated on his first Holy Thursday as Bishop of Rome. Instead of the usual formal ceremonies, he visited a Youth Detention Centre and washed the feet of residents. He didn't ask what they had done: he accepted them for who they are. Jesus knew that

those without anything are condemned to live in shame, without honour or dignity. He knew that they needed acceptance, love and confidence.

jesus makes whole

Jesus was a 'whole maker' and we too are called to be whole-makers. It was Jesus' deeds of mercy that brought people to him: his gaze of love that called them to change. Did Jesus keep writing in the sand for fear he may have had judgment in his eyes? This offers a challenge to us as a society and as a church. Pope Francis says the Church must be a place of mercy freely given where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel. He says we need a Church capable of rediscovering the maternal womb of mercy. Without mercy we have little chance nowadays of becoming part of a world of 'wounded' persons in need of understanding, forgiveness, love.

Many people return to prison because of rejection and lack of friendship and support on the outside. There are many people within our communities who are reaching out to people in prison and those being released. One

parish example is St Mary's Parish in Papakura. The parishioners formed a support group and initially accompanied the chaplain on his rounds. This evolved into activities such as teaching arts and crafts and other activities and they now provide a range of support for those being released and preparing for release.

showing the gaze of jesus

We as Church can assist people in prison and those released from prison by showing them the gaze of Jesus, by warming and healing their hearts with our gaze, just by walking beside them and recognising God in them. This demands of all of us big hearts, big minds, wisdom, courage, sensitivity and an expanded humanity.

Through listening to Jesus's call and following the example of Pope Francis to be compassionate, we will find ourselves being tender to all that is broken and fragile, lost and alone in this world, for the Divine shines among us.

I sat at the foot of a prisoner and saw the face of God. ■

Sister Veronica Casey is a Presentation Sister and principal chaplain for the New Zealand Prison Service.

Prison	Status		Total
	Remand	Sentenced	
Male	1,497	6,464	7,961
Auckland	1	638	639
Christchurch Men's	158	706	864
Hawke's Bay	113	518	631
Invercargill	25	116	141
Manawatu	59	225	284
Mt Eden Corrections Facility	648	242	890
Northland Corrections Facility	86	406	492
Otago Corrections Facility	44	362	406
Rimutaka	103	787	890
Rolleston	0	256	256
Spring Hill Corrections Facility	0	817	817
Tongariro/Rangipo	0	458	458
Waikeria	182	491	673
Whanganui	78	442	520
Female	98	415	513
Arohata	15	54	69
Auckland Women's Corrections Facility	67	295	362
Christchurch Women's Corrections Facility	16	66	82
Total	1,595	6,879	8,474

Source: New Zealand Department of Corrections

the final challenge for humanity?

Here is another take on the boundaries of our electoral process. What is it that is important when looking at the big picture? How do we get our politicians to look at some of the difficult questions that keep popping up asking for good responses?



Dugald McTavish

You may have heard of the group *Wise Response* and its army of 100 prominent NZ supporters, including the likes of Bryan Gould, Chris Laidlaw, Tim Hazeldine, Te Radar, Wayne Smith, Gillian Whitehead, Fiona Farrell, Lloyd Geering and Geoffrey Palmer. But do you know why they have joined forces and what they are trying to achieve?

Every farmer knows that he can increase his stocking rate up to a certain point — by better adapting his farming system, adding irrigation or fertilizer and improving drainage. But he also knows that eventually he will bump up against natural physical ceilings that will limit his carrying capacity. The summer is only so long, the sun only shines for so many hours, the grass only grows so fast, and the soils can only handle so much compaction. For a time the farmer might be able to carry numbers above that natural limit — using hay or overgrazing his paddocks — but were it to continue, eventually systems would begin to show signs of stress — pasture damage, soil erosion, loss of condition in stock or perhaps disease.

using the analogy

This analogy is a helpful way to think of planet earth — just one big farm! On “farm earth” we are increasing the human ‘stocking rate’ and, concurrently, the demands on natural resources at an accelerating rate. The main difference is that on Mr Brown’s farm, what one sheep or cow demands is pretty much the same as any other. But on farm earth, the demand of individual humans, and therefore the impact of each, varies enormously. For

example, the adverse impact (or footprint) of the average Indian, African or Pacific Islander is typically only five to 20 percent of the average Kiwi or American. In other words, each of us generates a different “load” on the earth, which happens to be roughly proportional to both our level of material wealth and the level of fossil fuel that directly or indirectly supports that lifestyle. That means it is also proportional to each individual’s contribution to Green-house Gas (GHG) emissions and climate change.

The United Nations has estimated that the net impact of all this human activity on the planet now exceeds the natural and sustainable carrying capacity of ‘farm earth’ by about 50 percent. That degree of overshoot has accumulated since the mid 80s — over some 30 years. In other words we are collectively demanding resource at a rate of 1.5 earth equivalents while still only having one earth at our disposal. Just as farmer Brown would see signs of the effects of excess load on his property, daily, scientists working in all manner of disciplines are reporting disturbing deterioration in the natural environment. Together these are indications of ‘farm earth’ under stress.

farm earth under stress

For example, the rate of species extinction is something like 1,000 times the background level over the last 10,000 years; all world fish stocks are fully exploited and of them, 60 percent are considered over-exploited or to have crashed; excess nitrate and phosphorous leaching into aquatic systems are causing eutrophication and algal blooms; about one third of the Arctic sea ice has been lost in the last three decades and

melting rates are accelerating in the Antarctic; glaciers are receding world wide; increasing GHG concentrations in the atmosphere are correlated with steady warming of oceans, more extreme weather events and ocean acidification; we watch in horror at what appear to be essentially resource wars in the middle east; global fuel supply has been unresponsive to price since 2005, suggesting it has peaked; and logging and drilling operations threaten remaining virgin forest teeming with unique life in the Amazon.

In New Zealand, local expressions of stress include more frequent and extreme weather events, closed fishing grounds, fewer rivers safe for swimming, groaning landfills, more virulent infections and invasive species, and social impacts like child poverty. The result is an escalation in costs simply to maintain the same state. What would farmer Brown do once aware of equivalent stresses on his property? Surely he would act in short order to reduce his load realizing that otherwise he would soon be bankrupt. If we have overshoot as a globe, then unless we all make a similar correction, chaos and suffering are inevitable. On current trends we will be demanding twice the biocapacity of the planet by 2045.

how do we join the dots?

It was joining the dots and recognizing this unhealthy trajectory that was the underlying driver behind the *Wise Response* initiative. We could see many symptoms of a much deeper cultural value/belief system issue and New Zealand’s contribution to a deteriorating world, environmentally, economically and socially. The feeling was that unless this underlying mindset, one



Members of *Wise Response* join members of *Generation Zero* outside Parliament

will discuss its merits but all other Parties have ignored our concerns. We have also formally approached the 78 local governments for their support and still await a response from most.

The petition supporting an appeal for a risk assessment was delivered to Parliament on 9 April and we now await its referral to a Select Committee. The essential question posed is 'As demand for growth exceeds earth's physical limits, causing unprecedented risks, what knowledge and changes do we need to secure New Zealand's future wellbeing?'

preparing questions

Clearly, the chances of a successful risk appeal depend heavily on the outcome of the national elections. We are therefore pushing on with other initiatives still with the same general objective. We intend to submit for appropriate policy changes in Regional Plans. There we will be seeking greater emphasis on the precautionary principle and on planning criteria like fossil fuel independence, sustaining local resources, reducing complexity and maintaining ecological integrity. We will prepare questions which we hope the media and citizens will ask their electoral candidates. Some of our members are deeply concerned about the unquestioning assumptions behind school curricula that continuing growth is both desirable and possible.

Most elections are about jobs and personal wealth. *Wise Response* wishes to see included as part of the debate in these elections questions about limits, but more particularly, questions about moral responsibility and intergenerational justice. Ultimately, how we respond to our predicament is a matter of ethics. Do we care enough to see beyond our immediate desires and take responsibility for ensuring a future for our children? ■

Dugald MacTavish is a Wise Response Committee member and water resources engineer from Moeraki, North Otago.

People can add their support to *Wise Response* at www.wiseresponse.org.nz or contact Dugald directly at 03.4394824 or dugald@es.co.nz

preoccupied with profit and growth was addressed, we could battle an endless stream of growth-motivated projects and still fail to stop general environmental and social deterioration. We were attracted by the idea that all of nature has an intrinsic right to exist and therefore we needed to reconsider our relationship with it and with one another.

The big question was "how do you get a sufficient number of people to respond like our farmer and agree to take corrective action?" Even though the science is unequivocal, very few of us linger to hear this sort of litany of bad news. Nor it seems do we make decisions on apparently objective information. For example, some scenarios in the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 5th Assessment just released will render our planet uninhabitable for people now being born. Yet do we act?

The fact that the daily needs of each and every one of us are heavily invested in the status quo is very relevant to this reluctance to act. Furthermore, politicians know that alarming their constituents should be avoided if they are to be elected. While these issues are really above politics, they usually become political footballs. Society has also become increasingly specialized with the result that experts, institutions and businesses hold fragments of information so no one body has a coherent picture of our general state of affairs. And there are already many groups and some notable scientists calling for

better protection of the environment, with apparently limited effect.

to establish a public process?

So it seemed to us that our best chance of getting over these road blocks was to try and establish an authoritative public process by which all information about the symptoms of deterioration were brought together and honestly evaluated. The idea of a 'risk assessment for New Zealand' undertaken by Parliament rather than Government thus emerged. Climatologists assess climate change science under the IPCC. The International Energy Agency monitors and reports on the global energy situation. The World Bank, IMF and our own Treasury monitor financial and economic indicators. Regional Councils and the Department of Conservation monitor the health of nature and the Ministry of Health, risks to public health.

A NZ risk assessment would assemble from such organizations basic information for sustaining a living planet and a safe home for our children. In fact the required process is comparable to the due diligence we all do automatically before embarking on any significant activity involving a level of risk — purchasing a house, insuring property, choosing a school.

A wide range of national organizations and all political parties have been invited to support the risk assessment appeal. Labour, Green and NZ First Parties have agreed and United Future

the importance of soil



Eliot Coleman

If we wish to teach students reverence for the Earth, we need to insist that time spent studying and working the soils of a farm is as valuable as any time spent in classrooms.

Some day in the future, when advances in efficient equipment or different economic circumstances have made small-scale agriculture more financially viable than it is at present, I want to recreate that famous scene in *The Graduate*. I want to put my arm around the shoulder of some well-educated young person at their post-graduation party and tell them I only have one word to say to them: farming. But I am afraid that the ability to make a good living from farming will not be a sufficient inducement. There is another barrier to be overcome. In most circles it is considered somehow unworthy of educated people to involve themselves in actual food production.

the unschooled and parvenus

When the production of the foods that sustain us is considered a lowly activity, something for the unschooled, the educated have forfeited their essential connection to the source of life. They have become *parvenus*, arrivistes who deny our humble origins by refusing to acknowledge the importance of the Earth from which we spring and to which we will return. Through this choice, made not only by our society but, more importantly, by

our institutions of higher learning, today's young people are denied a real education. They remain ignorant of that thin layer of fertile soil upon which their survival depends. What better place for students to come face to face with life, death and the transformative processes that keep our planet alive than through the activities of a compost heap?

Education's dismissal of agriculture as a teacher of living systems has a historical background. For much of the past, for many people, farming was devoid of anything but incessant toil. This impression of farming has persisted to the present day. But advances in agricultural biology since the 1850s (which in the public mind have been overshadowed by the propaganda of the chemical bandwagon) have unlocked many mysteries that make today's organic farming as intellectually stimulating as any other profession.

The interrelated activities defined by soil microbiology, nitrogen fixation, symbiotic relationships, mycorrhizal associations, allelopathy, weed ecology, and systemic acquired resistance are not only mind-expanding but also showcase the intuitive brilliance of age-old practices like crop rotation, green manures, mixed stocking, and compost making.

agriculture remains an art

Back in the early 1800s many scientists held that whereas chemistry and physics could be considered as having achieved the status of sciences, agriculture remained an art. I think that is still true today. This art involves subtleties and judgement calls such as adding just enough limestone but not too much, finding the proper depth of tillage (if one tills at all), figuring out the ideal balance of ingredients (fungal or bacterial) in the compost, knowing the optimum humification of compost for each use, managing green manures as either surface or incorporated amendments, maximising the use of 'inputs' that spring from natural processes on the farm itself, and involving one's mind in all aspects of the biological world of the soil.

None of the above is either dull or unskilled. Balancing these factors is fascinating, challenging and inspiring, since skill grows with practice. The result is a world of vigorous, healthy plants and animals, a clean environment and the satisfaction of participating in a truly sustainable agriculture that can feed the human population in perpetuity. Such work cannot continue to be considered beneath the dignity of the educated.

illuminating soil mysteries

I defy anyone to read Selman Waksman's *The Soil and the Microbe* or N.A. Krasilnikov's *Soil Microorganisms and Higher Plants* and not be awed by the miraculous creatures of the soil and the many ways in which humans can pattern agriculture in alignment with natural soil processes. Works such as these, which illuminate soil mysteries, are valuable not just as a science to be studied but as guides to practical techniques for planetary survival. They describe how agriculture, rather than being a battle between people and Nature, should be a partnership, would we but learn to be aware of the biological intricacies involved and how to nurture them to assure adequate supplies of food and fibre. What better way to make those concepts common knowledge than to give students the opportunity for practical hands-on observation of the natural processes in action on a farm?

But isn't it anti-intellectual to propose giving the practical (the

actual growing of food and working, with hands in the soil) an academic respectability equal with the theoretical. Doesn't the dictionary define practical and theoretical as opposites? Yes, but what better way to encourage the questioning of possibly erroneous theories than by exposing students to the smooth functioning of practical systems that work within the elegant simplicity of natural processes?

modelling future solutions

If we expect today's students to find solutions to ensure the future of their world (which they will need to do), what could be better than the direct knowledge that compost (the world's best fertilizer, made for free in their backyards from plant and animal waste products) is a model for other solutions? We have a belief on our farm that if what we are doing is in any way complicated it is probably wrong, and we modify our practices accordingly. Biologically-based agriculture is not just a subject. It is also a skilled teacher.

Modern education has been much too often co-opted by the spectacular and the industrial while ignoring the fundamental and the biological. Schools and colleges spend millions to familiarise students with internet systems in the ether above their heads, while nothing is spent to introduce them to the vital systems in the earth beneath their feet.

the susceptibility of soil

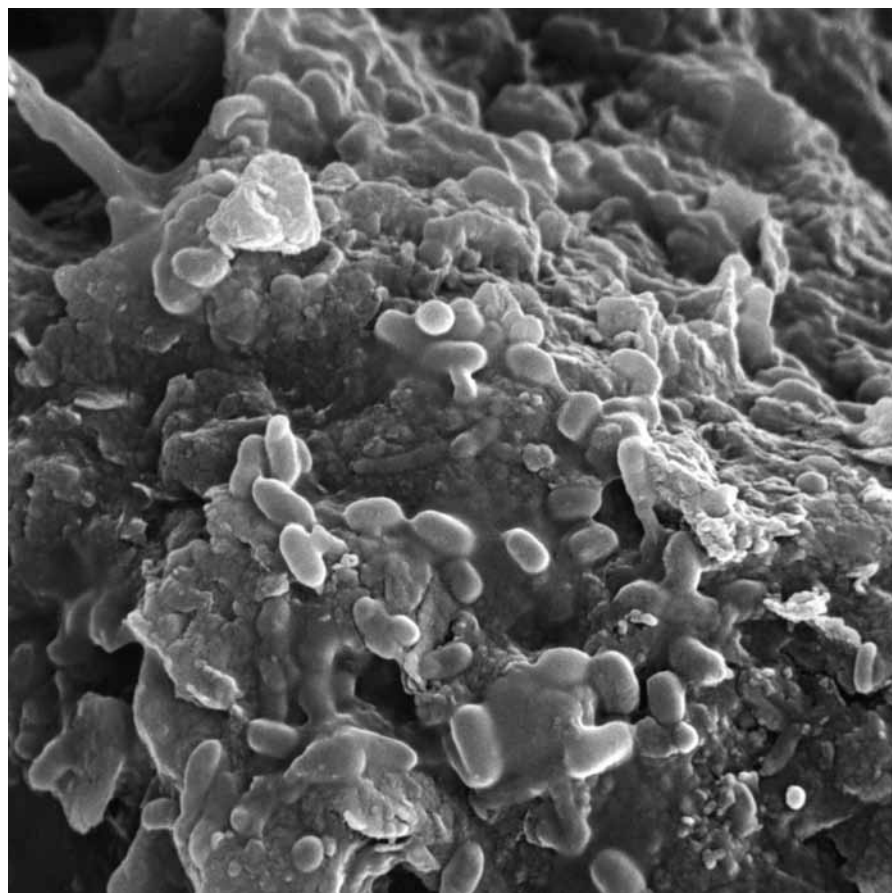
We impress students with the spectacle of millions of stars in the heavens but neglect to awe them with the miracle of millions of living organisms in a single teaspoon of fertile soil. We introduce them to the chemical table of elements but leave them unaware of the susceptibility of the creatures in that teaspoon to the daily chemical residues of our industrial production. How can we hope to train students to care for the planet when they are unfamiliar with the irreplaceable role of the skin of that planet in the miracle of their lives?

Students know about the Adam of Genesis without knowing that his name comes from *adama*, a Hebrew noun meaning 'earth' or 'soil'. They know the Latin phrase *Homo sapiens* without knowing that *homo* is derived from *humus* — the stuff of life in the soil. They miss the connection that was so obvious in ages past.

Our educators are doing a reasonable job of explaining the intricacies of human society to students in lab and classroom, but they are neglecting to make them aware of the web of life in field and garden. If we wish to teach reverence for the Earth, we need to insist that practical time spent on the soils of a farm is just as valuable in training citizens for the 21st century as intellectual time spent in the halls of academe. ■

Eliot Coleman is an organic farmer and author who lives in Maine, USA.

Permission to reprint this article has been sought from Resurgence & Ecology magazine.




Colony of bacteria in humus. (High-magnification electron microscopy image.)



Fresh Morning Cloak

Photo by Bridie Southall



Winter Womb of Grace
blest are we that
you would shroud us
for birth.

Intimate fog
blanket of soft mist
you cover the land, the sea
resting on mountains
in crevice in valley
transforming
illusion
that we might look
Anew.

Warmth of sun
moves you
seeping up through
the valley you
arrive at my window
drawn to the heights
on your way to
dispersion.

Silent you are
mystical presence
of wordless encounter
I see you reveal a truth
or is it illusion?

For a mistful moment
I am part of you
It truly is as if I am in you
and
you are in me.

Like tomorrow's tide
a new mist will come
morning will follow evening
where your invisible
garment awaits
to visibly
cloak us.

— Bridie Southall

let true humanity shine

Christian spirituality is rooted in the Incarnation and a person's birth marks the start of a journey towards growing into the very likeness of God. While there are plenty of distractions along the way, Pentecost provides a reminder of who we really are.

Daniel O'Leary

The mirror was as big as the wall of the room we were gathered in. It was my first Pilates class. Halfway through, I caught a glimpse of myself writhing on the floor, arms and legs all over the place like a beached octopus. Around me, flexible bodies rotated rhythmically on their mats, balancing, stretching and pulsing to the music and the instructions. Sweat was dripping off my chin. My limbs were hurting. And so too was my ego, appalled at the truth of the mirror on the wall.

The pressure to be perfect is driven by deep influences — from the ego-vanity within, and from marketing forces without. The beauty image industry is worth billions, its compelling promises often maintained by unhealthy and unnatural means. The weekly magazines and supplements play havoc with people's vulnerability, insecurity and desperation, relentlessly pushing magic diets, cosmetics and expensive fitness regimes. The media eye objectifies all of us; every day we are reminded of how inadequate we are. Then we begin to objectify ourselves. Deeply dissatisfied, we assume a false persona. But that betrayal forgets the Christian story. Our faith is not about becoming more religious. Our work and goal is to experience, nourish and appreciate the divine beauty of our true humanity, no matter what form it takes.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin reminded us that we are not human beings struggling to become spiritual; we are spiritual beings in pursuit of authentic humanity. What is meant by this? From before our birth we are, in essence, full of God's dream for us, God's seed. Then starts our journey of growing into real and true human

'Jesus, in the Garden, was in pieces – vulnerable, humiliated, wracked by pain, pleading for companionship'

beings, into the very likeness of God.

That is why we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost as the birthday and validation of incarnate Christianity. In his book *The Eternal Year*, theologian Karl Rahner writes that: 'we can no longer say what a human being is if we omit the fact that God's own self is humanity's possession ... that is the glad tidings of Pentecost.' He sees Pentecost as the completing of the birth, death and Resurrection of Jesus – therefore a time for remembering who we really are, where we really belong, and what we are called to be and to do.

Common humanity is the home of God. How we live it is everything. The tragedy is that we have forgotten this core of our faith. In his encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem* (1986), Pope John Paul II wrote that 'the image and likeness of God, which man (sic) is from his very beginning, is fully realised and revealed in the Incarnation ...' Our humanity, in all its individual shapes and sizes, Thomas Merton assures us, is God's way of fleshing and manifesting the divine beauty.

And later, in his *Theology of the Body* (1997), John Paul included a wonderfully revealing statement: 'The human body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible

what is invisible, the spiritual, the divine, the very presence of God ...' If any truth is capable of healing our body hatred, of transforming our self-image, then surely those words will succeed. And our living role model for a deeper self awareness is, of course, Jesus himself, the Human One.

In *Dr Zhivago*, Russian novelist Boris Pasternak referred to the "flea-pit" that was Rome, to the degrading excesses that blinded people to their true worth as they debased themselves before false gods. 'And then,' he matchlessly wrote, 'into this tasteless heap of gold and marble, he came, light-footed and clothed in light, with his marked humanity, his deliberate Galilean provincialism, and from that moment there were neither gods nor peoples, there was only one man — man the carpenter, man the ploughman, man the shepherd with his flock of sheep at sunset ... At that moment gods and nations ceased to be, and mankind came into being.'

And into the fleapits and sins of our lives, too, steps a man who is sorely tempted and distressed, who is transfigured by the light of his humanity, who breaks the laws and builds the bridges, who entered and harrowed hell. Each Sunday's Gospel tells of a compassionate man who revealed God through his human senses, by the way he looked, listened, spoke and touched, a man who was all too human for many.

But there was a deeper dimension to the humanity of Jesus. Michael Buckley SJ compared the death of Jesus with that of another celebrated human being, Socrates. After much reflection, Buckley believed that Jesus' humanity was the weaker of

the two. Socrates went to his death with calmness and serenity. Jesus was deeply distressed, fearful, agitated and dependent. Before his death Socrates was internally at peace, utterly stoical. Jesus, in the Garden, was in pieces, vulnerable, humiliated, wracked by pain, pleading for companionship. Commenting on Buckley's study, Fr Ronald Rolheiser writes, 'In contemporary language Socrates was simply better set together as a human being than Jesus was ...'

When Socrates drank the hemlock, in his integrated self-possession, he looked awesome. When Jesus drank the vinegar, in his blood and tears, he looked awful. And yet, who was the more human of the two?

Socrates' perfection was in his astonishing and courageous control of every situation. The perfection of Jesus' humanity lay in the way he intensely felt and outwardly expressed his powerlessness, emptiness and grief. Great love demands great suffering. His humanity shone with both. And here is the image we seek, already within us, waiting to be recognized and set free.

It was to be inextricably a part of us that God became human, present, embodied. The seeds of our true image were sown in Creation, nourished in evolution, consecrated in Incarnation, fleshed in humanity and made accessible forever in bread and wine. So that we will never forget our origins, destiny and true identity, our divine-human bodies and their senses are forever remembered as 'temples of the Holy Spirit' in every baptism, perennially celebrated as wind, fire and light at every Pentecost, and consumed as 'who we already are' at every Mass. ■

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PIWAKAWAKA

*my companion fantail
comes before me this morning
dancing upon thin air
backlit as if by a halo
bringing sacred shafts of sun
deep into my soul
piwakawaka
my littlest canoe
vessel of light and song
drifting in at dawn
nestling down at night
you dear fantail
are my autumnal visitor
my companion by nature
and it is to you
that purity of heart
belongs*

– Paul Armstrong



dairy co-operatives

These are thoughts on “Co-operatives” based on a lifetime involvement with them. The writer’s grandparents came to New Zealand from the United Kingdom in the mid-nineteenth century to get away from feudalism and begin a life of freedom in a free land. They came to Taranaki, building their homes with pit-sawn timber and raising large families.

Tom Gibson

One of my grandmothers, a city girl from the Firth of the Clyde, came to New Zealand with her parents and family. She lived with my parents for the final years of her life, dying in 1950 at the age of 90. As my secondary education was by correspondence, Grandma played a big part in my learning. Grandma was a God-loving Knox Presbyterian. I don’t know how she met my Grandfather, but she told me many times that they married in a little church in Normanby, South Taranaki, and after the wedding she was put on horseback for the first time in her life and together they rode a horse each, plus one pack-horse, out to his farm at Te Roti. She was not to see another living soul for the first six months of her married life. Religion played a big part in her life as it did in the lives of most pioneers. She believed in God, secure in the knowledge that there was a loving and trusting God. When transport became available, Grandma would take her three children to Sunday Service in Eltham.

the lister milking machine

Until shortly before World War I cows were milked by hand. Both my parents hand-milked the family herd of cows before and after they went to school. As the average person could milk eight cows an hour, each person had about 12 cows to hand-milk twice a day. It was a great day for my father when Grandad Gibson purchased a Lister Milking Machine. There was still much hand-milking to do as cows had to be ‘started’ by hand to encourage their ‘let-down’ then hand-stripped after to make sure all the cream was extracted. In the Waikato the farmers separated the milk, sending the cream to the butter factories in ‘cream cans’ for manufacture into butter. Here in Taranaki we had an entrepreneurial Chinaman



Cream carts arriving at the Moa Co-operative Dairy Company, Inglewood, 1899.
[Image from the Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries.]

named Chew Chong, a storekeeper, who around the 1880s bartered butter for goods and supplies with the dairy farmers before exporting about two tonnes of butter weekly to England and Australia. Milk and milk products are notoriously difficult products to keep fresh and Chew Chong ran into financial difficulties with inferior quality product losing money. In 1885 Chew Chong built his first butter factory at Eltham. He built or purchased several in the Taranaki district.

1st co-operative dairy factory

In 1892, Chew Chong’s business received a set-back when Dairy Farmers came together to build the first co-operative dairy factories in Eltham, Stratford, Ngaere and Cardiff. However, the co-operatives came on hard times because of inadequate capital funding. Many of these co-operatives fell into private ownership around the turn of the 20th century.

Farmers quickly came to realize the proprietary companies they supplied may have brought profits to their urban owners, causing them to review the co-operative model of ownership again. In

doing this, farmers established a stronger shareholding model, putting up half the capital to build a factory while borrowing the other half from a trading bank. This is how the dairy industry was established in Taranaki.

Most of the Taranaki factories manufactured cheddar cheese, enabling the farmers to bring home the whey to feed pigs. The cheese was shipped to England, where a good market existed but the farmers, while able to sell the cheese FOB (Free on Board) or FOS (Free alongside Ship), had no control of the product market price. Merchants from Tooley Street in London travelled to New Zealand annually, bargaining with the various Company Boards of Directors on a price. Farmer directors had little or no idea of the London market value of the cheddar cheese, accepting a similar price to their neighbouring co-operatives, falling victims to the bonhomie of the Tooley Street Merchants. These people did business by increments of farthings per pound of product. Worse, they used whisky to soften the minds of the farmer directors who fell victim to their guile and were conned into accepting low product

prices that kept themselves and their shareholders at the mercy of the bankers.

first just price for milk

It took until the advent of a Labour Government in the late 1930s for the farmers to receive a just price for their milk production. The socialist Labour Government decided that if farmers produced 6000 pounds of butterfat and were paid two shillings and sixpence a pound for it, the average farmer producing 200 pounds of milk-fat from 60 cows would gross 1,500 pounds, which the government considered enough for a farmer to maintain his family and his business. Thus a guaranteed price was established and farmers were never indebted to government.

From the start of World War II the British Government asked the NZ government to supply England with all New Zealand's dairy production. This continued post-war until England was keen to join the European Economic Community. But fortunately for New Zealand, France's General de Gaulle said 'Non.' This gave the New Zealand dairy industry time to find other markets for their butter and cheese and the new milk-powder products.

upside of dairying

Today New Zealand exports over 90 percent of its annual production to markets in over 100 countries in the world. Ninety percent of this production comes from co-operatives. Farmers, thanks to their manufacturing and marketing co-operative structure, have raised their status from being peasants to being *nouveau riche*.

Throughout my lifetime of 64 years of farming there have been many changes. It is difficult to imagine the hardships 100 years ago and even more difficult to foresee what the future holds for the dairy farmers. When I started milking cows, 70 cows was a good sized herd and there were usually three people associated with the task. Today they claim two people can milk 200 cows. A century from now robotic milking machines will do the milking. Dairy farming has never been easy and

the rich will delegate their work to less skilled and less ambitious people.

downside of dairying

The downside of dairy-farming is like a sphinx rising from the ashes. A small but growing percentage of farm and herd owners and many groups of farm investors are purchasing land solely as an investment rather than as a vocation. Dairy farming happens to be the best return there is on capital. Most people who invest on the stock-market have no control over their investment but see dairy farming simply as a means of capital gain. The outcome will see investors in control of the industry with few dairy farmers owning any land. All the money will be in few hands.

Today's phenomenon of dairy farmers being well-to-do contradicts what has occurred throughout history. The sole reason this has happened is because of the foresight of our fathers barely 100 years ago. They saw the advantages of the co-operative movement and put aside their personal ambitions for the common good.

At the turn of this century, the dairy industry was overcome by the Free Market economy theory. The NZ dairy industry was intentionally a monopoly owned by dairy farmers for dairy farmers, with these same farmers owning and controlling the marketing arm. There was nothing 'free-market' about what was being done, so the NZ government decided to take away the Dairy Board monopoly. This may have been the wish of our overseas competitors but was done against the will of the dairy farmers. However, the government decided by law that a portion of NZ milk be made available to private companies to process.

The New Zealand dairy industry still processes and markets 90 percent of NZ milk but the affection for the co-operative industry is waning for two reasons. First, the younger farmers no longer understand the history of their industry and secondly, the more commercially orientated business person can see the 'Free Market' does little for a co-op supporter. We have become a selfish society which will make us economically exploitative. Because of our

failure to love our neighbour we may for not much longer be masters/mistresses of our own destiny.

parallel to Jesus' time?

Is there a danger in New Zealand that our economic and social practices are bringing us close to what happened during the time of Jesus, when peasants lost their land and had to work as day-labourers on large estates owned by the powerful?

I conclude with a passage from the Jewish tradition that expresses the outrage created by the existing state of affairs. In it, the Romans give their account to God of all they have done for their Jewish subjects, to which God's reply is: 'Imbeciles! Everything that you did, you did only for your own good. You established marketplaces to have your brothels; you built bathhouses to give pleasure to your bodies. And the gold and silver you stole from me; for so it is written, the silver is mine and the gold is mine.' (Avoda Zara 2b)

Does this apply to our time? ■

Tom Gibson is a retired Taranaki dairy farmer with an interest in the history of co-operatives and their meaning for today.

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to bomb or not to bomb?

Should scientists assume moral responsibility for the uses to which their discoveries are put? Or can they simply claim that their job is to find the truth, and that the rest is the responsibility of politicians and industrialists?

Michael Hill

One person who came down solidly on the side of scientists being responsible was the greatest of all modern physicists, Albert Einstein. From an early age Einstein was an internationalist and a pacifist. In spite of this fact, he is often hailed as the ‘father’ of the atomic bomb: a title he found acutely embarrassing. All his life he was so averse to conflict that he didn’t even like playing chess.

The first half of the 20th century was a time of breathtaking progress in atomic physics. Much of the impetus came through the genius of Einstein. During four short months in 1905, working not in a laboratory but in a patent office, Einstein conceived both the theory of relativity and the notion that light comes to us not in waves but in quantum packets — as particles later to be called photons. These discoveries form the basis of modern physics. They sparked the creativity of a whole generation of scientists especially in Germany.

Einstein also noted that sometimes in early experiments investigating radioactive decay, there was a mysterious disappearance of mass. To quantify this process of atomic splitting he produced the simplest of all equations: $E = mc^2$. When fission takes place, the energy released equals the mass lost multiplied by the square of the speed of light. Since the speed of light is very great, a small amount of mass produces a huge amount of energy. So, even prior to World War I, Einstein was aware that this line of research could unleash prodigious quantities of energy.

During the war Einstein was a pacifist. He found war morally repugnant, and shunned the wave of German nationalism that was inflaming his

people. “We scientists in particular”, he wrote, “must foster internationalism”. He was horrified that his friend and fellow Jew Fritz Haber, who had discovered the process of fixing atmospheric nitrogen to make fertilisers, should focus his skill during the war into producing poison gases.

getting inside the atom

Apart from during wartime, new discoveries and theories were freely circulated and not kept secret. The Nobel committee in Oslo could hardly keep pace with the number of prizes for more and more discoveries. Radioactivity was observed and investigated. New forms of radiation were identified, like X-rays and alpha particles. The interior of the atom was researched by Rutherford and his team in Manchester, England.

A series of sub-atomic particles was discovered and their properties researched. The electron had a negative electric charge; the proton a balancing positive charge. Rutherford first pictured the atom as being like a miniature solar system, with tiny electrons in orbits round the nucleus of protons. But there was something else there making up at least half the mass of the nucleus but having no charge. This third particle, named the neutron, was eventually discovered and its properties researched.

Being without electrical charge meant that neutrons could be used as projectiles to penetrate the interior of the atom and split it. It was then discovered that the nuclear fission caused by this bombardment liberated huge quantities of energy, the energy which normally binds the nucleus of an atom together. At once, this energy was viewed by physicists with awe — a

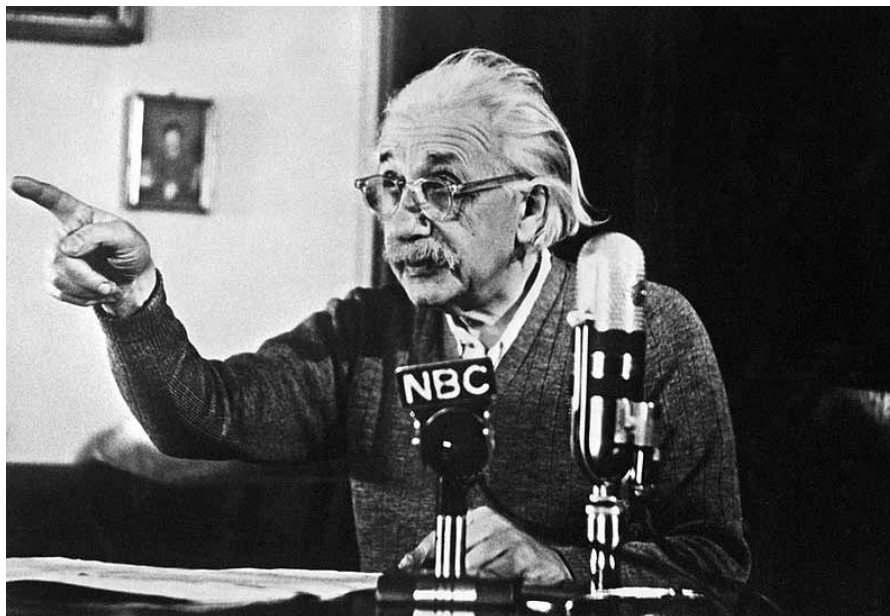
massive new source of power for driving industrial processes or making electricity; the flip side of this new coin was the possibility of developing a horrendous explosive, far more powerful than anything previously seen.

nazi germany

Germany had become powerful because of its rapid industrialisation, and this was partially fuelled by some of these advances in scientific knowledge. World War I and the Allied regime of reparations crippled German prosperity for a decade, and it also triggered huge civil unrest, providing an ideal environment for the rise of Nazism. When Hitler came to power in 1933, overnight Germany ceased to be a democracy and became a dictatorship. German scientists were, at least in theory, ideally placed to serve Nazi expansionism, providing new weaponry for Hitler’s wars.

However, an essential tenet of Nazi racism was anti-Semitism. Jews had never been well treated in most European countries, but Nazism transformed hatred of Jews into a diabolic ideology. It was not sufficient to persecute Jews and rob them of their livelihoods. They were to be ruthlessly eliminated. It so happened that at least a quarter of the leading physicists were Jews, including Einstein himself.

As soon as Hitler succeeded to power, Einstein escaped from Germany to live in the USA. Many others followed during the period up to 1939. This brain drain not only crippled German scientific research; it drove many of these most fertile minds to seek asylum in England or America, and so strengthened allied opposition to Hitler.



Albert Einstein declares his opposition to the atomic bomb.

development of a strong international body capable of preventing an armaments race and committed to the keeping of peace.

This debate among scientists touching on moral responsibility continued even in Germany but especially among the Allied powers. One consequence was the emergence on both sides of so-called 'traitors' who deliberately leaked information to the other side to prevent the dominance of any one military power. But were they really traitors? Or were they simply possessed of a higher moral sense?

After the war Lise Meitner criticised her fellow physicists in Germany for their cowardly support of the Nazi regime:

"This is Germany's misfortune, the fact that you had lost your standard of justice ... you have all worked for Nazi Germany and have never even tried to put up a passive resistance. Certainly, to buy off your consciences you helped a person in distress here and there, but you allowed millions of innocent people to be slaughtered without making the slightest protest."

A damning indictment indeed! Most atomic physicists in Germany (and in the USA) put aside their scruples and were often inspired by unquestioning patriotism, becoming totally loyal to the war effort. One powerful motive was the fear that the other side might make the atomic bomb first, thus guaranteeing them victory. The Nazi war machine abandoned its support for nuclear research only because they thought atomic weapons would be impossible to make. ■

Michael Hill is the editor emeritus of Tui Motu, and the author of a recently published biography of Blessed Antonio Rosmini.

Author's note: As we shall see in a second article, the Americans came to the opposite conclusion. They had the resources to develop this terrible weapon; and they successfully applied them.

One of these refugees was Lise Meitner. She was acclaimed as the finest nuclear physicist in Germany, and was called the 'German Madame Curie'. An Austrian Jewess, her position from the time of Hitler's accession became precarious. She was deprived of her official status, but hung on to her research position in Berlin until 1939, working with the equally renowned Otto Hahn. Their experimentation was concentrated on the effects of bombarding uranium with slow neutrons. Hahn was the technical genius but Meitner had the intuitive mind to interpret the results.

They found that some products of the bombardment had the properties of the element barium. But the barium atom is only half the size of uranium. Up to this time radioactive decay had been seen as purely the chipping off of small fragments from large unstable atoms like uranium, yielding products close to it in the list of elements.

Meitner recognised that in this new process the uranium atom was actually breaking in two. The process also released neutrons which, unlike the ones causing uranium to split, were very fast moving, because a lot of energy was being released. Meitner gave the name nuclear fission to this process. She had discovered a vital ingredient in the development of the atomic pile and the atomic bomb.

It was 1939. Meitner had had to escape Germany to avoid arrest. Nevertheless the Germans were persuaded by some of the non-Jewish physicists that research should continue to develop an atomic weapon. But it was only half-hearted, while huge resources were being poured into developing rocketry. The search for an atomic bomb was eventually dropped, especially when the Allies bombed and destroyed a Norwegian plant producing heavy water — a vital moderator of the chain reaction at the heart of both the atom bomb and the atomic pile.

the scientists' thought?

Einstein found a new home in America and soon became an American citizen. He admired the freedom and tolerance of American society. When in 1939 he learnt about Meitner's and Hahn's discoveries, he became alarmed that the Nazis might be the first to develop an atomic bomb. So he wrote a letter to President Roosevelt warning the American government of what could happen. This letter was a major factor in the decision of the Americans to launch the Manhattan Project and develop their own atomic bomb.

Against a tyrant like Hitler Einstein was prepared to moderate his pacifism and see the need to resist an unjust aggressor. Nevertheless, he always remained passionately in favour of the

suzanne aubert – new zealand heroine

Suzanne Aubert, 1925.

Michael Fitzsimons

Suzanne Aubert lived a life of heroic service and compassion. Her witness shone beyond the Church to reach a wide cross-section of New Zealand society. In living a life of bold fidelity to Gospel values, she became an inspiration to New Zealanders then and now.

Within months of her death in 1926, several Cardinals in Rome suggested that one day Suzanne Aubert might be honoured as a saint. Ninety or so years later (these things take time!), the case for her beatification and canonisation is with the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If accepted, Suzanne Aubert — founder of the Sisters of Compassion — will become New Zealand's first saint. So far, the signs are promising.

Born near Lyons in France in 1835, Suzanne Aubert was one of a number of young French men and women who responded to the missionary call to serve in the Pacific. Against the wishes of her parents, to whom she was very close, she joined Bishop Pompallier and companions and made the hazardous trip to New Zealand aboard a whaling ship. Stepping off the ship in Auckland

at the age of 25, she began a faith adventure that would last 66 years. She would never see her parents again.

Once in Auckland she worked for a time with the Sisters of Mercy but, wanting to help indigenous people, she and the young French sisters were transferred to the Nazareth Institute — a boarding school for Maori girls. She worked alongside a young Maori woman, Peata, who educated her in Maori language and *tikanga*.

— Maori and Pakeha, Catholic and non-Catholic. By this time, she was highly proficient in the Maori language and knowledgeable about Maori customs and values.

In 1883 the opportunity came to revive the Catholic Mission on the Whanganui River. Together with French Marist, Father Soulas and three Sisters of St Joseph of Nazareth, she set up base at the Maori village of Hiruharama (Jerusalem) on the Whanganui River. There the little religious community taught and nursed, tended an orchard, made and marketed medicines that became famous throughout New Zealand, and raised homeless children. Between 1890 and 1901, the Sisters took 74 babies and children under their care.

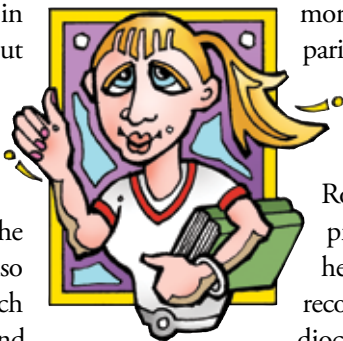
It was during this phase of her life that the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion came into being. The Society of Mary, with whom Suzanne was associated as a member of the Third Order, was unhappy with the direction the Hiruharama community was taking. Archbishop Redwood intervened and on 14 October, 1892, Suzanne became Mother Superior of a newly formed Diocesan

The Hitchhiker's Guide to
CHURCH HISTORY
1800–2000

Her work, however, was unsupported by Bishop Pompallier's successor, Thomas Croke, and in 1871, at the age of 35, she went to Hawkes Bay to work on the Catholic Maori Mission with her countrymen, the pioneering French Marists. She became very well known in Hawkes Bay for her skilful nursing and pastoral care, as she trudged round the district ministering to all-comers

congregation, the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion.

A number of factors, including caring for babies and young children in the isolation of Hiruharama, led Suzanne and some of her Sisters to move to Wellington in 1899. There they set about their work as social welfare pioneers, caring for the suffering and destitute and setting up a home for the disabled and the abandoned elderly. They also set up a soup kitchen, which has endured to this day, and in 1903 established a crèche for the children of working parents. Suzanne and the Sisters became a familiar sight around Wellington, pushing wicker collecting-prams, and collecting food and clothing for the needy, whatever their religious background.



made a number of recommendations, three of which which Suzanne could not accept: that the Sisters could no longer work with Maori on the Whanganui River, that they discontinue taking in babies from birth and that they operate more within the Catholic parish system.

Suzanne rose to the challenge. In 1913, aged 78, she set sail for Rome to seek a 'decree of praise', which would give her congregation papal recognition and free it from diocesan control. World War

1 intervened and it was not until 1 April 1917 that Pope Benedict XV granted the 'decree of praise' to the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, the only New Zealand-born congregation and the smallest congregation in the world to be granted that status. The decree protected all her works, widened her scope for health care and recognised the distinctive charism of her congregation.

Back in Wellington, an increasingly frail Suzanne took the helm again, organised nursing training for the Sisters and expanded the scope and services of the Island Bay hospital. She continued to be seen around Wellington, leaning on the arm of one of the Sisters and using her umbrella as a walking stick.

This life of stellar service was evident for all to see. When she died in 1926, her funeral was the largest ever accorded a woman in New Zealand. The Governor General of the day, the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice all attended. The High Court and Parliament adjourned for the funeral, and thousands lined the streets of Wellington as the cortège made its way to the Karori cemetery.

By any reckoning, Suzanne Aubert was an extraordinary woman — a friend to Maori throughout her life and expert in their language, health innovator, social welfare pioneer, advocate for the defenceless young and the feeble old, a woman of determination and unassailable faith who

was unbowed by those in authority where matters of social justice were concerned. She would never allow her vision, based on the Gospel, to be limited by church or state.

Acclaimed New Zealand historian Michael King had this to say about her place in New Zealand history: 'Mother Aubert's vision and example — her insistence on seeing Christ in every person who needed help, her refusal while doing so to distinguish between Catholic and non-Catholic — were among the most pervasive and enduring forces to emerge from the Catholic Church in New Zealand.'

We may ask what place can a saint have in the life of contemporary New Zealanders? The life of a saint shows us what is possible, and what grace makes possible. The life of Suzanne Aubert shows us in the most powerful way, through example, that ideals are for living and struggles, however great, are never in the end insurmountable. ■

Michael Fitzsimons is a writer for Tui Motu, resident in Wellington.



This new painting of Suzanne Aubert, as she would have been in her prime, was unveiled at the recent Assembly of the Oceania Bishops, following Mass at the Home of Compassion in Island Bay. The painting was done by the Studio of St John the Baptist in Auckland.

"Mother Aubert's vision and example ... were among the most pervasive and enduring forces to emerge from the Catholic Church in New Zealand."

– Michael King

Suzanne's vision and confidence grew, as she tackled her most ambitious project to date. In 1907, following a huge fundraising effort, an impressive Home of Compassion was opened on the slopes of Island Bay, initially for the care of children and babies. Civic as well as church leaders turned out in force for the opening. The Sisters' non-sectarian approach, and their tireless, practical brand of Christianity, had won the respect of the entire Wellington community.

It was around this time that this determined and dynamic sister had issues with Church authorities. A report on the Sisters claimed that the Congregation was over-stretched and

“come,” invites jesus

Matthew 14:22-33 – 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time, 10 August 2014

Kathleen Rushton

The Sea of Galilee is 21 km from north to south and about 12 km at its widest place. Today, fishing is again the important industry it was at the time of Jesus. Then, as now, small boats can be caught by sudden gusts of wind from the surrounding wadis which in a few minutes can unleash havoc on the calm surface. These waves wash up against one shore then leap back to bump into those coming in. Sailing in boats can be risky. Night time was a time when danger could lurk.

So much of the gospel story is centred around the Sea of Galilee and on boats. Two brothers, Peter and Andrew, who were casting a net into the sea (4:18) left their boat immediately to follow Jesus (4:20). James and John, too, left their boat to follow Jesus. These four left sizable businesses and a prosperous industry. They left everything, including the market economy of Galilee. They went against the tide. Their involvement hereafter with boats is recorded in storms — when Jesus was asleep (8:23-27) and when he came walking on the water (14:22-33). Other times, it is crossing the sea (9:1; 15:39) or when Jesus got into a boat so he could better teach the large crowd on the shore (13:2).

material and scriptural links

A very material link with the times of Jesus is an ancient wooden boat found in 1968 by two brothers from Kibbutz Ginosar. After a period of drought, the water-level of the Sea of Galilee was lower than usual. Buried in the mud near



1st century BCE Galilee Boat at the Yigal Allon Centre, Kibbutz Ginosar.

the shore was the most complete ancient vessel ever discovered. This 9 metres long, 2.5 metres wide and 1.25 metres high boat was dated to the first century BCE. Therefore, it is likely to have sailed on the Sea of Galilee during the time of Jesus. After a complex excavation, this treasure was housed in the Yigal Allon Centre about halfway between Tiberias and the Mount of the Beatitudes. The boat may have been used as a ferry boat. However, its measurements match the size of those which fishers used with a seine or dragnet as described in the parable: ‘Again, the kingdom of heaven, is like a net that was thrown into the sea’ (13:47, Gospel of 17th Sunday – 27 July).

Matthew’s story of Jesus calming the sea begins with another crossing of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is not in the boat. He sent the disciples to the other side so he could go

up the mountain alone to pray. Meanwhile, the disciples struggle as their boat is battered during the night by strong winds. They are a fair distance offshore. During the fourth watch of the night, a Roman term for the time between 3.00 and 6.00 am, the disciples see Jesus walking on the water. They think it is a ghost.

This story occurs in a culture immersed in generations of linking divinity with power over water. In addition, for those steeped in the Scriptures, the actions of Jesus are highly significant. In biblical imagery, it is God who walks on the sea: ‘Your way was through the sea, your path, through the mighty waters’ (Ps 77:19; Isa 43:16). God alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea. (Job 9:8). The psalms tell repeatedly of God stilling storms that sweep over chaotic waters (Ps 65:7;

89:9; 93:3-4; 107:29). The words of Jesus to the disciples: 'it is I' (Mt 14:27) are reassuring. Yet, these same words were disturbing when said by God to Moses from the burning bush: 'I am who I am.' (Exod 3:14). When Jesus reaches out his hand to catch Peter, this recalls God who 'reached down from on high, took me; drew me out of the mighty waters.' (Ps 18:17 cf. 144:7).

Although very similar to Mark's account, Matthew inserts an incident about Peter as he does often. This is the fourth reference to Peter who was the first to be called by Jesus from their boats (Mt 4:18); then the mother-in-law of Peter was healed; and in the naming of the twelve, Peter is listed first (10:2). More of this 'Peter' tradition follows later in the gospel.

not a story back there

Jesus reassures those in the boat: 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid' (14:27). Peter asks: 'Lord, if it you, command me to come to you on the water.' Jesus invites: 'Come' and Peter steps out. While his attention is on Jesus, he can walk on water. When he takes his eye off Jesus, he lets his fear take over and sinks into the depths crying out: 'Lord, save me!' In an earlier storm, Peter's voice was among the desperate cries of the disciples who awoke the sleeping Jesus: 'Lord, save us ...' (8:25) The response of Jesus: 'you of little faith' echoes, too, not only throughout this gospel (6:30, 8:26; 16:8;

17:20), but over the centuries to those, including you and me, who sink when we take our eyes off Jesus. Yet, there is a counter-echo. To a persistent outsider crying out on behalf of her daughter, Jesus affirms: 'Woman, how great is your faith!'

Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat. The wind ceased. Those present fell down and worshipped him as had the Magi (2:11); the Canaanite woman (15:25); the women at the tomb (28:9); and the eleven who went to Galilee, to the mountain to meet Jesus who had gone ahead of them (28:17). 'Truly you are the son of God' echoes the soldiers keeping watch over Jesus (27:40) and the centurion after his death (v 54). Matthew repeats words and actions to stress that the story is not just back there.

The whole of the gospel story serves to engage the reader in the drama so as to create the sense of taking part in what is happening, not being an observer. I am the disciples in the boat being battered by strong winds. I am Peter who calls out and who responds to the invitation of Jesus to come. I am Peter who walks while my attention is on Jesus. I am Peter who sinks into the depths when I take my eye off Jesus. I am Peter of little faith. Yet, Jesus and I climb into the boat. The wind ceases. The Gospel is not a story 'back there' at all. ■

Kathleen Rushton is a Sister of Mercy working in adult education in the Diocese of Christchurch.

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the pastoral care of the sick

Book: You Visited Me: A Pastoral Care Companion

By James B. Lyons

Otane: Pleroma Press, 4th revised edition, 2013. 118 pages, NZ\$15-00.

Reviewer: John Meredith

This book is an invaluable resource for those who minister to people unable to participate in public worship or Holy Communion in church. The contents reflect the deep spirituality of the author, who is known personally to the reviewer.

As stated in the preface, *You Visited Me* was first published in the 1990s as a resource for lay people involved in pastoral care of the sick and the serving of Holy Communion in private homes. That this resource has proved its worth is shown by the fact that it is now in its fourth edition. In recognition of changes in pastoral needs this edition has been extensively revised.

Drawing on his experience as a pastor, which he acknowledges has enriched his spirituality, in the introduction James Lyons offers some wise, helpful and practical advice for all pastoral ministry. This includes making appointments to visit and sticking to them, listening rather than dominating by talking, and not outstaying one's welcome. Visitors should always be discreet, honest, cheerful and prayerful.

Visitors are reminded of the importance of their own preparation in prayer, reflection and inner silence. When Holy Communion is to be served some brief comments are made on the form this may follow. Suggestions are offered as to intercessory prayers, but it is recognised that spontaneous



prayers may be more appropriate. Prayers after communion remind us that the Eucharist is an action of the whole people of God and not a private ritual.

Intended as a pastoral care companion the book is attractively presented in a size easily slipped into a pocket or bag. There are prayers and images for special times and any time. The prayers are sensitively expressed in fresh language linking spiritual insights with everyday experience. Examples are: Protect us from the cloud of anxiety that

clamps reason and dampens trust ... Keep us still long enough to know that hearts still beat and life goes on without my constant monitoring ... Though death separates us from those we love, your presence is the bridge that carries our hope ... Let me be a light shining where it is most dark, letting others see that pain and fear cannot block the path to life. Each prayer is reflected in a thoughtful and well-chosen photograph by Evan Morgans on the facing page. Those who use this book may find spiritual inspiration by reflecting on both words and images. This section is followed by a comprehensive selection of words of hope and healing drawn from the scriptures.

I keep this book within easy reach at all times. I refer to it constantly and have found it to be a friendly and indispensable companion in the challenging and rewarding ministry of pastoral care. ■

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exploring identity and faith



Film: *Ida*

Director: Paweł Pawlikowski

Reviewer: Paul Sorrell

Meticulously crafted, and with strong attention to styling and aesthetics, *Ida* tells its arresting story not just through the plot, but by means of carefully designed imagery and a soundtrack that consists solely of sound effects that are part of the world of the film.

An orphan from early childhood, Anna (Agata Trzebuchowska) has been raised in a Polish convent where she is a postulant about to take her final vows. Before this can happen, she is sent away

to visit her aunt Wanda (Agata Kulesza) who has an important message for her — that she is Jewish (her real name is Ida Lebenstein) and that her parents were killed in the Holocaust. Ida and Wanda travel across Poland in search of their relatives' graves, forming an uneasy bond as their relationship develops. Living at close quarters with her chain-smoking, hard-drinking, sexually adventurous aunt, the teenage nun has a rapid education in the ways of the world. Neither is she immune to the charms of a handsome young musician who hooks up with the pair in the course of their travels.

Shot in faded black and white, the film suggests the bleakness of life in 1960s Poland. There are other

interesting quirks to the cinematography. When people appear in frame, even as head shots, they often take up only a small portion of the screen, or appear dwarfed by the urban and natural landscape. We feel the weight of history and tragedy on a land devastated by the Nazi war machine and now controlled by a grim-faced communist regime.

Everything is pared down in this film, reduced to its essential elements. If nothing external has been added to the soundtrack, the characters themselves speak sparingly, as if words — like everything else in their world — have been rationed. Because *Ida*'s facial expression and body language are so fixed, the slightest change or hint of relaxation becomes significant. The plot, too, is simple, and all the more moving and engaging for it.

The film deals effectively with questions of choice and identity, both personal and communal. When Ida and Wanda make their final decisions — however starkly opposed they may be — their actions are taken in the light of the knowledge and experience they have each gained. We are left to judge whether they have taken the right path. *Ida* is a subtle and complex film that treats the audience like adults and would definitely reward a second viewing. Highly recommended. ■



Maureen Conroy RSM, D.Min

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Crosscurrents

Jim Elliston

chinese national security threatened?

'Western hostile forces are infiltrating China's religions in a more diverse way and in a wider range; deploying more subtle means either openly or secretly; and are strongly seditious and deceptive in nature,' says a report jointly released at a conference in Beijing, May 6, by the University of International Relations and the Social Science Academic Press (China). The report states: 'Foreign religious infiltration powers have penetrated all areas of the Chinese society.'

Exporting of democracy by western nations, western cultural hegemony, the dissemination of information on the internet and religious infiltration are highlighted. It claims 'infiltration of religion has constituted a threat to Chinese identification with socialist belief.'

Gerard O'Connell, reporting in *Vatican Insider*, quotes Fenggang Yang, a professor of sociology at Purdue University (USA), as claiming China is destined to become the largest Christian country in the world very soon. The report comes at a time when Marxist ideology has lost its attraction for most Chinese, and especially the younger generations. It appears Christianity, particularly in its Protestant expressions, continues to attract many new adherents, especially through house churches. Catholicism continues to retain a stable membership of around 12 million faithful. Indeed, various sources predict that the number of Christians could increase significantly in China over the next 25 years.

O'Connell says a social media study released recently found that Jesus Christ is more popular than Mao on Weibo, the Chinese version of Twitter used by some 300 million people, while Christian content attracts far more than Communist Party material.

A comment: the breakdown of

traditional social structures was initiated by Mao's revolution, thereby undermining existing social norms and associated religious values. This process was hastened by the post-Mao introduction of a Chinese version of capitalism, creating internal pressures for political and ideological freedom among the masses. This is ripe territory for the 'subversive' forces causing alarm.

Although opportunities are there for the growth of Christianity, I think there are indications that the reported strong growth in a 'consumerist mentality', which tends to become a philosophy of life, could well weaken any impetus towards a religious one.

slaying the octopus

There are myriad problems of a serious nature in today's world. Most of them are variations on old themes. Common to most is an underlying attitude regarding people as commodities to be used for financial gain or emotional satisfaction. Slavery is one such problem. A virulent form is that of enforced prostitution of girls and women — chattels enslaved for the benefit of the traffickers and their emotionally deprived clients in the more affluent countries.

In many places help has been provided for some of the victims, usually by members of women's religious orders (so often pioneers in new ministries). But the tentacles of the octopus are many, slippery and powerful. Ineffective laws and enforcement systems in some countries, compounded by lack of international cooperation, have all contributed to the infliction of misery and degradation on the weak and vulnerable. Now a significant start has been made to combat this scourge.

Last March the Vatican announced an agreement among representatives of major faiths to inaugurate the Global Freedom Network (GFN) which also has the Walk Free Foundation as a major partner. Its object is to eradicate

modern slavery and human trafficking across the world by 2020. In particular, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is working closely with Pope Francis on this matter.

In a May *London Tablet* article, headed 'Prevent, rescue, support' the London Metropolitan Police Chief describes how he participated in an international conference at the Vatican on the subject. It was organised by the English Catholic Bishops who have been working with police in the UK in this field. Attended by police chiefs from throughout the world, it will help establish an international hub in London to coordinate an attack on the problem.

'we are all francis now'

Paul Brandeis, Executive Religion Editor of the *The Huffington Post*, summed up for me the effects of Francis' Middle East visit. Brandeis describes himself as a progressive protestant minister and great-grandson of Louis Brandeis, a powerful figure in the Zionist movement.

Under the above heading he wrote: 'Through his witness and statements, Pope Francis reminded us that we can recognize the injustice experienced by the Palestinian people and insist on the right of statehood for Palestine, and that does not diminish our support for the State of Israel. We can visit the separation wall and protest the damage the settlements are doing to the Palestinian people, and at the same time we can insist that violence and terrorism is never legitimate or a pathway to peace. We can visit the Dome on the Rock and the Western Wall on the same day and pray for peace at both. We can honor the victims of the Holocaust and pledge our support for a homeland for the Jewish people, while visiting camps for Palestinians where poverty and degradation are a way of life, and insist that they too deserve a homeland a secure future.' ■

what's wrong with anzac?

Robert Consedine

It was watching the famous Alan Bennett play at the National Theatre in London, *The History Boys*, that I first began to wonder about the purpose of commemorating wars. In the play the history teacher and the students are approaching a First World War memorial. The history teacher explains, 'It's not so much "lest we forget", as "lest we remember"'. Because you should realise as far as the memorials, the last post, the Cenotaph, the two minutes silence and a photograph on every mantelpiece and all that stuff is concerned, there's no better way of forgetting something than by commemorating it.'

The New Zealand Government is spending NZ\$12 million on an upgrade of the National War Memorial, plus NZ\$75 million on an underpass to connect the precinct which will commemorate the sacrifices servicemen have made in overseas wars.

To describe many of these wars as racist, futile and unnecessary is to stamp on the myths of generations of family stories and to risk being called ungrateful, insulting, unpatriotic and, at worst, treasonous.

Yes, we must honour the dead and care for the survivors, however much they were deceived by politicians and generals.

All wars are built on lies, including Vietnam and Afghanistan.

Resistance to the stupidity of war has a long and honourable history. In the First World War Archibald Baxter, one of 14 forcibly sent overseas, was the best known and suffered the extreme punishment for his resistance known as the crucifixion. In France they were tied tightly to a post, at the front, between the lines. Baxter and the other conscientious objectors were the real heroes, and they suffered. 273 were imprisoned in New Zealand for refusing to serve.

2600 conscientious objectors lost their civil rights for 10 years.

For sheer stupidity we can't go past Gallipoli — an ill-advised, imperial invasion of present day Turkey by a ruthless war-mongering British Empire pursuing its own empirical goals. 2779 New Zealanders died at Gallipoli and the Allies gained nothing.

So what exactly are we commemorating?

In 1933 United States Army Major General Smedley Butler described 'war as a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious. It is the only racket international in scope. It is the only one in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives.'

Perhaps we need the myths to justify the body count. 18,166 New Zealanders died in the First World War. Five were executed for desertion.

During the 19th and 20th centuries New Zealanders fought wars for the British Empire. In the 20th and 21st centuries we have signed up for the American Empire. Even defence experts are alarmed at the

level of New Zealand's sycophantic commitment to USA's wars. These wars are not to promote democracy and human rights. They are a race for the world's remaining resources.

Former USA State Department official William Blum gives an insight into American goals: 'If you flip over the rock of American foreign policy of the past century, this is what crawls out ... invasions ... bombings ... overthrowing governments ... occupations ... suppressing movements for social change ... assassinating political leaders ... perverting elections ... manipulating labour unions ... manufacturing "news" ... death squads ... torture ... biological warfare ... depleted uranium ... drug trafficking ... mercenaries ...'

There is a battle raging in Australia about the militarisation of ANZAC Day and the promotion of USA's wars. ANZAC is becoming a sacred myth. Is the underlying agenda in New Zealand to promote and legitimate today's wars? Have we learnt anything? ■

Robert Consedine

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a Mother's Journal

by Kaaren Mathias

Walk beside me! When I pootle around the kitchen putting things away, wiping down the stove top on the evenings while it is 12-year-old Rohan's turn for washing dinner dishes, all goes well. Dishes are washed. We chat. Kitchen is semi-tidy at the end of it.

When I sit on the couch reading to 5-year-old Jalori, and remind Rohan about the pile of dishes things often work out less well. Stomping. Dishes only semi-clean. Working beside him at job times is important.

Two nights ago after a long day facilitating a workshop on the other side of town, I hauled my way up the hill with my bicycle and a backpack full of laptop, manuals, fruit and vegetables. I walked in the door feeling beleaguered, tired and put out with my lot in life. Collapsed and grouched on the couch.

Last night I returned again up the same long hill, again with a bicycle and a backpack full of laptop, manuals and groceries, but this time also with the company of my 14-year-old and her quirky observations. I walked in the door and

felt no need for a couch or sympathy. Her company was a tonic.

Next week we are moving house, from an upstairs apartment to a slightly bigger house just 300 metres along a stony path. It's our 20th move in nearly 20 years of marriage. I have already invited several friends to join us for the main moving day because I know doing all that packing up, hauling suitcases, and unpacking will be fun with friends. Drudgery without.

These observations are hardly rocket science. Banal even. Yet I ponder aloud because standing up and being beside is something I seek to do more of in many different dimensions of my life.



Supporting my children in their chores, and supporting team members in new undertakings, even virtually 'being beside' family and friends in far off places through prayers and writing emails. ■

"Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend." – Albert Camus

Kaaren Mathias lives with her husband Jeph and four children in North India, where she works in community health and development. Her email address is: kaarenmathias@gmail.com



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