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OUR LIVES ARE EVOLVING

Te ora i te ao hurihuri

CAROL RITTNER on what Auschwitz can teach us for these times

SUSIE HAYWARD, PHILIP SHELDRAKE, BRIDGET TAUMOEPEAU and VIRGINIA NOONAN about safety and healing in the Church

ANNE KENNEDY and JENNY DAWSON on spirituality

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Tuimotumag TuiMotuInterIslands Tuimotu

EDITORIAL

Life-Long Learning

Like you, I've found Jean Vanier's idea of L'Arche — a community that supports people with developmental disabilities — an inspiration for living inclusively. We've seen L'Arche members pouring their energy into these communities, convinced of the capacity of every person to learn and develop throughout their lives. So I felt sickened learning about the allegations of Vanier's sexual abuse of women — it devastated my idea of the man, not the movement. I think of the women who were suffering through the years while the world feted Vanier for his "spiritual guidance". I was heartened by the Head of L'Arche International Stephan Posner saying that though they were shocked, annoyed and disappointed "everyone I know in L'Arche goes back to their own experience, and says: 'This is not what I have lived; and I still want to get up each morning and work for L'Arche.'" Sentiments echoed by a New Zealand L'Arche member: "Our hearts are broken — and we are called to live in hope." They're speaking of hope for the movement grounded in an authentic love of every person. They will support one another in this ministry. But how will the women, victimised by the abuse, be supported and healed from such a betrayal of trust?

This year we are using principles of being human as a theme for each issue. These are demonstrated particularly by the L'Arche movement which refuses to define people by disabilities. They focus on all members belonging and thriving — an example of furthering the common good.

The theme for this issue is the principle that our lives collectively and our individual lives are evolving. This means that we take responsibility for life-long learning — individually and in the development of our societies and institutions. It calls us to reflect and question, to be informed and discuss, to analyse, evaluate and to change throughout our lives. It calls us to contemplate our lives and the decisions we make for our individual and common life.

By reflecting on this principle we may discover pockets of naivete, complacency or rigidity which prevent us growing. For example, Jack Derwin explains the recent Treaty settlement with Moriori which shows that our take on history concerning these people has been wrong. We now need to learn a different history. Carol Rittner reflects on the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and how the allure of power and profit, which convinced German business people to build the camp, can allow such evil to happen again. Other writers address the findings of recent investigations into clerical abuse of children and vulnerable people which reveal that most of us have been uncritical of the power of clericalism. Unchecked power has yielded terrible results. The writers point to why and how we need to grow into a safe Church for everyone.

We thank all the contributors whose research, expertise, reflection, art and craft has made this a thoughtful issue.

And, as is our custom, our last word is of blessing and encouragement.

Celebration & Challenge

Last month the New Zealand government signed a Deed of Settlement with Moriori — one of the ongoing Treaty of Waitangi settlements — and in doing so, demonstrated it is politically far ahead of its cross-Tasman neighbour.

Ancestors of the Moriori came from East Polynesia, like Māori, and settled in the remote Chatham Islands/Rēkohu about 600 years ago. They were thought to have been wiped out by Pākehā from 1791 as well as by invading Taranaki Māori tribes after 1835 and were recorded officially as being rendered extinct. This grim end was the version of history taught in schools and accepted as fact.

We know today, however, that this is definitively not true. While the peaceful Moriori lived enslaved by Māori, they were not wiped out. In the 2013 national census, nearly 738 people identified as Moriori — some with affilations with other iwi as well. This contradicts the extinction myth.

Of course it was not a simple bureaucratic mistake. Moriori have been seeking recognition and recompense for decades. In 1862, they wrote to Governor George Grey requesting their freedom and the return of their lands. They filed formal Treaty of Waitangi claims more recently in 1988 and their claims were finally accepted by the New Zealand government in February 2020 — more than three decades later.

In signing the Deed of Settlement, the Crown not only recognises the continued existence of these people and an agreed account of their history, but formally apologises for their treatment and for the loss of their lands and water. Now, $18 million will be paid in redress but, more importantly, their lands of cultural and spiritual significance on Chatham Island and Pitt Island will be returned to them.

Where Moriori were unfairly and incorrectly relegated to the history books, New Zealand has now corrected course. In doing so, it has achieved two important feats. First, the Crown has admitted it got it repeatedly wrong and second, it has finally listened to those wronged in order to make amends.

Such integrity is missing when it comes to Australia's relationship with its own indigenous people. While the government has recognised the existence of its First People, after erroneously calling the land "terra nullius", it has never signed a treaty with them.

It has, to its minor credit, apologised for literally stealing Aboriginal children and destroying their families, and has paid some compensation to living members of those "Stolen Generations". But it has not gone far enough to ease the untold and continuing harm such as the imprisonment of Aboriginal people at astronomical rates and the decades shaved from their life expectancy. We may not be able reverse this damage, but we can certainly do much, much more.

Our indigenous people, meanwhile, have actually made the path forward clear by directly appealing to the Australian people in the 2017 Uluru Statement. In it, they outline the need for three things: Voice, Treaty, Truth. First, an indigenous voice to parliament — which would allow Aboriginal voices to be heard on policy that affects them. Second, true constitutional recognition that would enshrine their status as Australia's First People and the country's responsibility to them. We still do not recognise them in Australia's founding document. Third, they want the truth to be known about them and their history — the good and the bad.

It is no coincidence the Statement uses the word "truth". Just as for the Moriori, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders there can be no justice and way forward without the truth being told and accepted. If New Zealand recognises the truth and rights of indigenous people, it's my hope Australia can one day do the same.

Photo by Steve Todd/Shutterstock.com

Jack Derwin is a senior reporter at *Business Insider Australia*. His interests include all aspects of social justice particularly in the South Pacific region.

WHEN NIGHT ENDS

CAROL RITTNER reflects on the horror of Auschwitz and the world's capacity and willingness in these times to resist the evil that leads to atrocities.

January 27, 2020 marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Auschwitz was not a single camp: 39 satellite camps formed its malignant universe. Auschwitz should jar our sensibilities, but does it? It is the place where at least 1.1 million people were murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators in cold blood. That alone should be enough to confer notoriety on a location for all time.

In March 1941, Heinrich Himmler, Adolf Hitler's deputy, ordered the establishment of a new camp — Auschwitz II (aka Birkenau). It was to house 100,000 prisoners of war whose capture was anticipated in the forthcoming war on the Soviet Union. When the Russian POWs failed to materialise in such numbers — most starved to death at the hands of the German army in Russia — Slovakian and French Jews were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau instead. The first Jews deported to Auschwitz in early 1942 were used for labour. When Auschwitz was integrated into the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" it was by means of improvisation, and not as the result of some carefully thought out plan. That may seem strange to those of us who think of the Germans as a people who do things carefully, methodically. With Auschwitz, however, that wasn't the case at all. Necessity became the mother of invention.

Solution to Dispose of Bodies

Between 1939 and 1941, Nazi Germany invaded and conquered 10 countries in Europe. Millions of Jews were caught in the Nazi maw of death. Many Jews not killed on the spot were deported to Auschwitz. The SS in Auschwitz were faced with the necessity of killing thousands of people in a relatively short time, then having to dispose of large numbers of bodies.

Lessons Learned

They made a number of important discoveries. First, they discovered that Zyklon-B gas, a pesticide, could be used for homicide. Second, they worked out a means to deliver hundreds of Jews on a daily basis to the gas chambers, kill them and dispose of their bodies as if operating a production line. Third, the SS discovered the potential for supplying cheap labour — slave labour — to business and industry before disposing of the victims once they were "used up". German businessmen and industrialists got involved. Even while the plans for Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II (Birkenau) were still at the drafting stage, the SS administration ordered that Auschwitz I and II be converted into huge killing and disposal facilities.

Lure of Profit

In the 1956 film, *Night and Fog*, directed by Alain Resnais, the narrator says that: "A concentration camp is built like a grand hotel . . . you need contractors, estimates, competitive bids . . . even friends in high places and maybe a bribe

or two." Photographs show civilian businessmen and contractors walking through Auschwitz with SS officers, looking at architectural plans and surveying the landscape. The SS enticed draftsmen, designers, architects and technicians in the project. "Decent" men, not psychopaths, organised industrial-scale mass murder — and in the process, made a profit.

You can tell when the night has ended and day has begun when you look into the face of any man and recognise in him your brother, or when you look into the face of any woman and recognise in her your sister.

From early on, Auschwitz exemplified the capacity of modern industrial capitalism to coexist happily with and profit from slavery. Numerous German companies exploited the presence of Jews — and others — at Auschwitz. Among them were Bayer, Agfa, BASF, Pelikan (which produced the ink to tattoo prisoners) and, the most notorious of all, I G Farben.

Depravation and Holocaust

The 20th century was fraught with atrocity, and the first two decades of the 21st do not seem to be much better, but there is a kind of unprecedented horror to what the Nazis did to the Jews in Auschwitz and elsewhere. The industrial exploitation of Jewish slaves and Jewish corpses — their ashes and their teeth — was a uniquely Hitlerian atrocity. At Auschwitz the murder of the Jews was made a civic virtue; and in this way, Germany departed from the community of civilised human beings.

By the time the Soviet Army reached Auschwitz at the end of January 1945, just 75 years ago, more than a million people — mostly Jews, but non-Jews as well — had been murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators. The battle-hardened and weary Soviet soldiers were literally shocked at what they found, dead and dying people, filth, ashes, crushed bones and storehouses of hair, eyeglasses, children's clothing, suitcases, and artificial limbs.

Rampant Delusion

Never again! Those were the words — that was the promise — made with shocked fervour by the victorious Allies 75 years ago after having seen the concentration and death camps across Nazi Germany and occupied Europe. These places contained the horrible evidence of an evil the pre-war world foolishly thought no advanced society was capable of: genocide masked by bureaucracy and aided by greedy business people out to make a profit. The Third Reich, fuelled by ridiculous claims of an Aryan racial purity and racial supremacy, was a criminal enterprise. It was built on murder; it lived for murder.

Genocide did not end with the liberation of the Jews and others from the Nazi concentration and death camps, as the West promised it would. Sadly, the world has witnessed other genocides since the end of World War II and the Holocaust, and the likelihood is great that the world will face more tests of its capacity and willingness to stop genocide.

End the Night

I have visited the site of Auschwitz on a number of occasions. People ask me what I have learned as a result of my visits to that place of horror in the heart of so-called Christian Europe. I think of the rabbi who asked his students this question: "How can you tell when night has ended and day has begun?"

"Teacher," said one of his students, "you can tell when the night has ended and the day has begun when you see an animal in the distance and can tell whether it is a cow or a horse."

"No," said the teacher, "that is not correct."

"When you look in the distance and can tell if it's an orange tree or an apple tree," answered another student.

"Wrong again," said the teacher.

"Well, then, when is it?" they asked. "Tell us, please."

"You can tell when the night has ended and day has begun," said the rabbi, when you look into the face of any man and recognise in him your brother, or when you look into the face of any woman and recognise in her your sister. If you cannot do that, no matter what time of the day it is by the sun, it is still night."

I have no idea whether what all those world leaders said at the events in Poland commemorating the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz will make any difference in our world, but I hope that at least one of them tried to tell the world how to recognise when night has ended and day has begun. And I hope his or her fellow leaders and everyone listening will transform that knowledge into action for the betterment of humankind.

Follow the Leaders by Isaac Cordal An installation in Annecy, France July 2019
Photo by Jean-Luc Ichard/Shutterstock.com

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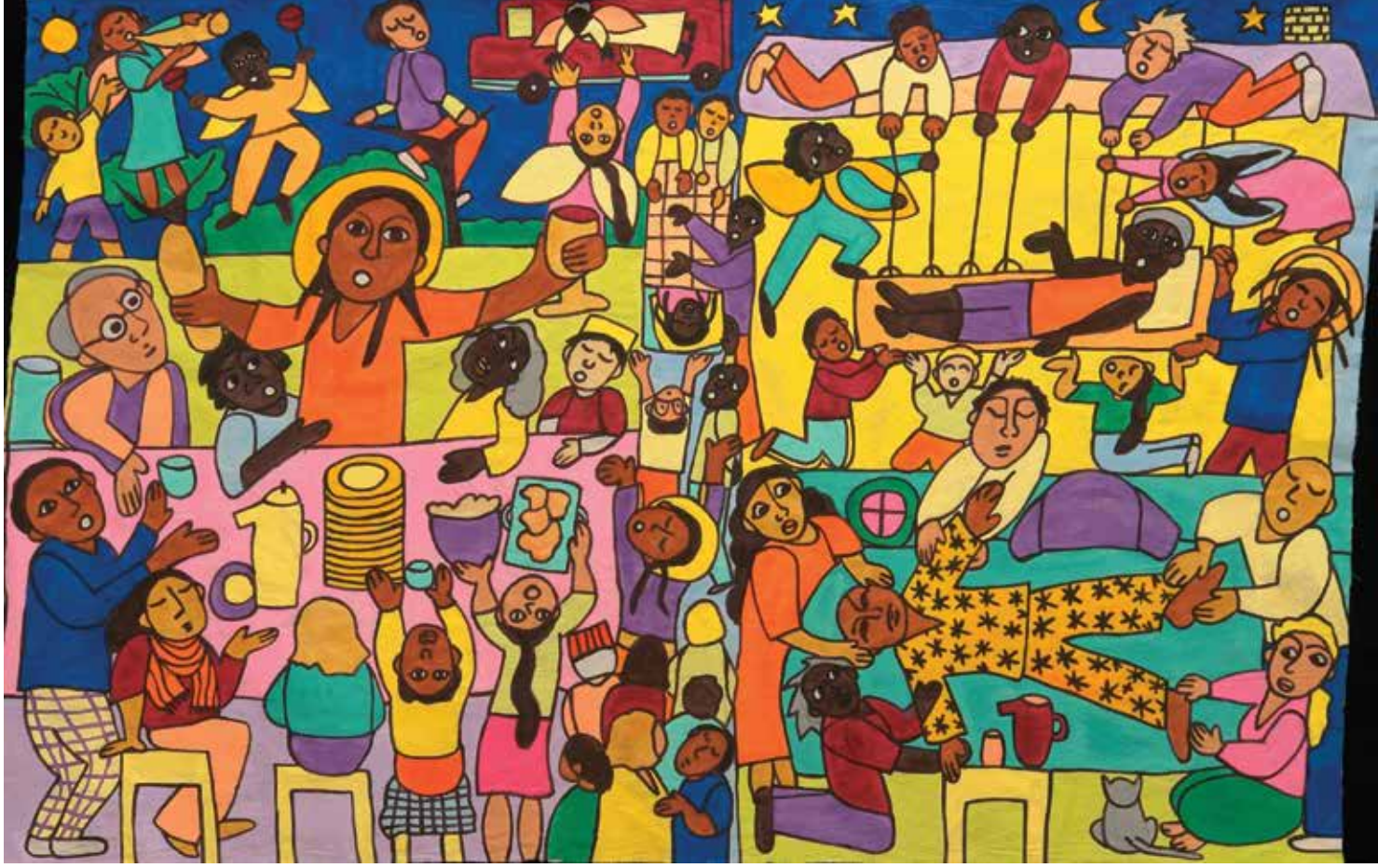

DEVELOPING COMPASSION AND SERVICE

An authentic spirituality must accompany all safeguarding practices write SUSIE HAYWARD and PHILIP SHELDRAKE.

Several inquiries, investigations and television documentaries have revealed shocking details of how clerics at the top of the spiritual tree — exploiting the deference that goes with their presumed sacred status — have abused children, been complicit in the cover-up of abusers' crimes, or have failed to establish or properly manage safeguarding guidelines.

The majority of priests and ministers across the Churches and denominations are pastorally sensitive and attentive to safeguarding; the pastoral work priests do is often not well enough honoured by the institutional Church, and their own needs frequently neglected. But when the spiritual qualities that bishops and priests stand for are not lived out with integrity, they are worth nothing.

Abuse in the Churches can take many forms but we will focus on the clerical sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults.

It is vital to recognise that good safeguarding involves more than simply protocols, policies and mechanisms. Genuine safeguarding is about ensuring the protection of the most vulnerable: guarding the reputation of people in authority, or protecting the hierarchical institution from criticism should have no part in it.

Essential to Safeguarding

This is why an authentic spirituality must be part of safeguarding in the Churches, to ensure that it does not become a defence of the clerical system.

Safeguarding must be genuinely accountable to the whole Church community; there should not be a top-down approach. The limits of conventional safeguarding practices include the fact that fear of litigation and of insurance claims can outweigh attention to human development, in which spirituality plays a vital part. The safeguarding of the victim — not of the institution — must always come first.

Embrace of Spirituality

What do we mean by the word "spirituality"? Spirituality cannot be reduced to acts of piety or devotional practices. Rather, an authentic spirituality embraces every aspect of our lives: how we work, how we play, our relationships, our priorities and our values. Our whole lives should express our vision of human existence and what it means.

Spirituality points to the ways in which our human spirit is able to achieve its fullest potential. For this reason, spirituality is necessarily holistic: in other words, it involves a quest for a fully integrated approach to life.

Equally, spirituality is not a purely individual matter. In Christian terms, being human is to be part of a collective identity: we belong to a community, a family. So spirituality is linked to ethics, to our behaviour towards other people and to an aspirational approach to how we live out our shared human existence. And, because spirituality is aspirational, it needs to be worked at all the time. It is a never-ending journey.

Finally, all genuine spirituality is necessarily "tough spirituality",

because it must be capable of confronting the destructive side of our personality and behaviour.

We recently heard of how a senior member of a religious community, which talks a great deal about spirituality and claims high spiritual values, persistently abused a child in his care. This child ended up some 30 years later deeply damaged and suicidal; he has only just had the courage to report his abuse to the police and is currently in recovery. Paradoxically, this survivor of clerical abuse continues to look to the Church for his spiritual nourishment.

Spiritual Enhancement

What is needed, both for abuse victims and for the wider Church, is to take spiritual enhancement seriously.

What do we mean by "spiritual enhancement"? It means paying attention to human development in its widest sense. Everyone working in safeguarding and being trained in safeguarding procedures must be helped to become more attentive to their own experiences and personalities.

Safeguarding training programmes should include a spiritual dimension as a matter of course. The more spiritually attentive you are to yourself, the more authentically attentive you will be to abuse victims.

The primary concern in all safeguarding should be to heal the vulnerability of victims, who often experience a sense of guilt about whether the abuse was in some way their fault.

Key Values

To build a better relationship between safeguarding and spirituality, we would highlight four key values.

Respect

First, a critical value in safeguarding practice is the duty to respect the dignity of others. Underlying this is the fundamental truth that, in Christian terms, everyone without exception is sacred in God's eyes and is equally a "child of God". All people are created equal. There are no exceptions. The call to recognise and to promote human solidarity should help to counter any tendency to unconsciously imagine any individual to be more important or more valuable than any other.

Put the Victim First

A second spiritual value follows from this. True safeguarding puts the victim first, focuses on their care and nurture and cultivates loving kindness and "having heart" before everything else. The depth of care, the selfless quality of good empathy, is crucial. This is more than simply sympathising with the victim, "understanding" what they feel, and why. It is feeling the suffering of the other person, without becoming over-involved.

To build a better relationship between safeguarding and spirituality . . . highlight four key values.

Compassion

However, on their own, empathy and sympathy are not enough. Compassion goes much further and is the third critical spiritual value. From the Latin word *compassio*, compassion literally means "suffering with". This prompts you to take radical action to relieve the suffering of others and to confront its causes where possible. Compassion is intrinsic to social justice as envisaged in Catholic Social Teaching. It is unconditional love applied to the suffering of others and has a powerful capacity to heal both the person expressing it and the person receiving it. Christians are called to "be present" to others in the deepest possible sense, most of all to children and to vulnerable adults.

Service to Others

Finally, compassion connects with the spiritual value of service to others. The Church does not exist for itself. Before everything else, the service of others is central. In spiritual terms, true service involves being attentive to "the common good". As Christians, we are called to be "people for others" who focus our lives on helping other people to thrive.

These vital spiritual qualities are underlined in the Gospels. For example, in the Beatitudes, the "blessed" in God's eyes include those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness". In the parable of the Good Samaritan, members of the religious establishment walk past and ignore the victim of a violent assault. It is the Samaritan, a despised outsider, who acts as a true neighbour and cares for the victim. Jesus welcomes little children and says that God's kingdom belongs to them. And, most powerfully, there is the portrayal of the Last Judgment, where the people who are invited to inherit God's kingdom are those who, unconsciously, had welcomed God by responding to the needs of vulnerable fellow human beings.

A holistic practice of safeguarding incorporates these four spiritual qualities. Safeguarding protocols, regulations and systems and well-trained safeguarding officers to put them into practice are vital, but we can all contribute on a daily basis to safeguarding as a spiritual practice. The opportunities are everywhere. We can assist the needy by being attentive and showing compassion and solidarity.

We write from a position of considerable experience. One of us is a psychotherapist who has been involved worldwide for many years with priestly formation and, more recently, was involved in safeguarding within the Catholic Church and has also served as a consultant to a diocese in the Church of England. The other was formerly active as a priest, is an academic theologian and writes extensively about Christian spirituality. Both of us are survivors of childhood clerical sexual abuse.

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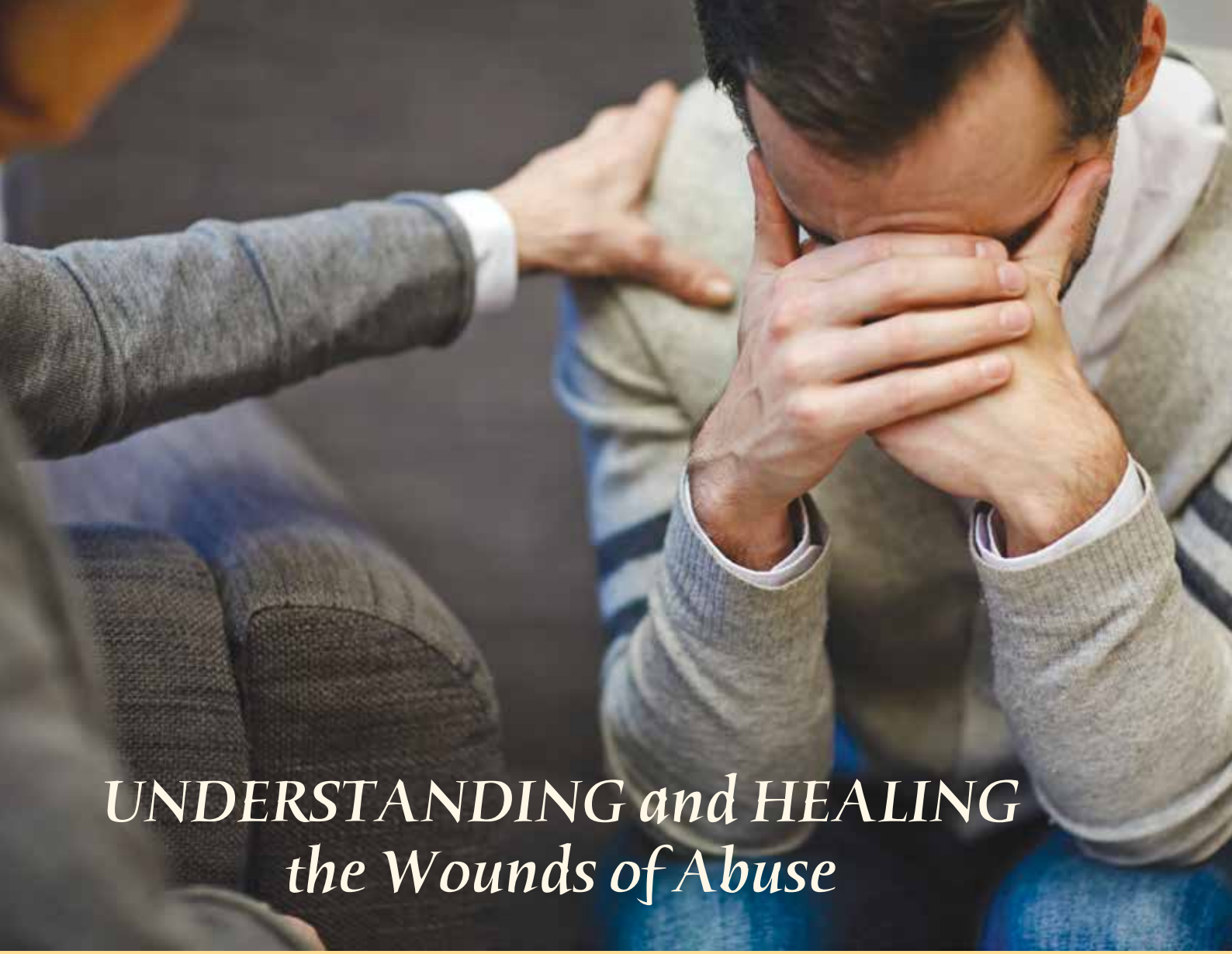

UNDERSTANDING and HEALING the Wounds of Abuse

BRIDGET TAUMOEPEAU **discusses the care needed to heal the effects of sexual abuse on the person and those close to them.**

Sexual abuse causes suffering on many levels and like all forms of suffering, healing needs to occur.

We are all familiar with treatment for those with physical illness. But we may know less about — and be less open to — the need for healing of the wounds to the psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of our lives.

Silence and Denial Do Not Heal

We know that those who have experienced sexual abuse often take a long time to tell people what has happened. There are many reasons for that — the abuser is a family member or friend; the wish to try and "forget" about it all so as not to retraumatise oneself; fear of not being believed, or of being blamed, especially in the case of clerical abuse, where the cover up has caused further trauma; the feeling of shame and guilt.

But silence and denial never work and the mind and spirit need the opportunity to share the hurt, be assured of their worth and hopefully heal. Telling the story is very therapeutic. When the sufferer finds an outlet for pain in the relationship with another who values them and helps them recognise themselves as a treasured individual, then healing can begin.

Abuse Damages the Person's Self

Jesuit Greg Boyle works with ex-gang members in Los Angeles, all of whom have been exposed to violence and some kind of abuse, including sexual abuse. He points out that the burdens of these young people are more than anyone should be expected to bear. He works to restore them to themselves, so that they can flourish and be whole. It's a pathway to healing.

If we think of the effect that sexual abuse can have on a person's way of thinking — they may be frightened; anxious; shamed. They may feel worthless and sometimes blame themselves for what has happened and for not preventing it happening to others. In turn, this way of thinking may lead to anger; difficulty in trusting others; poor concentration; a sense of being chronically stressed; the use of maladaptive ways to relieve distress; difficulty in emotional control and judging relationships with others; difficulties with intimacy and sexual relationships; symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), including extreme reactions to triggers, or memories of past experiences; depression and suicidal thoughts.

This summary illustrates how pervasive and devastating the damage from sexual abuse can be, especially childhood abuse. The effects may be further exacerbated if the person is vulnerable in other ways, or does not have a supportive environment in which to flourish. And so it follows that support, management and treatment of the effects of sexual abuse are essential.

Forms of Help

So, what form should this help take? This depends on the individual needs of the person; their resilience; what other factors there are in their lives; the severity of the trauma; whether or not there is co-existent mental illness or specific symptoms; and what they can cope with at the time.

Telling the Story

Common to all possible therapies is the importance of telling the narrative; seeing the person's story as unique to them; an empathetic listening ear; a non-judgemental approach; allowing a healthy and trusting relationship with the therapist to develop; acknowledging the importance of hope and how hard that can be for the sufferer.

Being Believed

Some people, even children and young people, have great resilience. For them the support of a loving family that is open to discussion and understands that a child is never responsible for an abusive relationship may be enough. Later in life people may have the experience of meeting someone in whom they can confide; who values them; who loves them for who they are; who is able to deal with their sadness and reactions to abuse, and becomes a source of healing for them.

Professional Help

However, all involved should always to be open to the idea that more professional help may be needed. That is not a failure, but a recognition that the person deserves the best care available to them. The victim should have the opportunity to have others involved in their therapy, so that they can understand how to help. All that can be worked out by the person, the therapist and those who are in a supportive role, always remembering that what is decided should never be seen by the victim as disempowering in any way. Those close to the victim will also be greatly affected by the abuse. They may require their own therapy, but involvement in the healing of the primary victim can be of great help to them as well.

> Support, management and treatment of the effects of sexual abuse are essential.

Counselling

Some people greatly benefit from counselling which can afford them the opportunity to examine what has happened; put things in perspective; reinforce the positive things in their lives and help them to look to the future, rather than dwell on the past.

Pyschotherapy

Others require more formal types of psychotherapy, which include supportive psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, or a more analytical approach, as well as very specific therapies for certain symptoms or difficulties.

In New Zealand this need is recognised by ACC who acknowledge the trauma that is caused by the abuse and support sufferers in accessing appropriate counselling and support.

Psychiatric Treatment

If a person is displaying symptoms of mental illness caused by, or co-existent with the history of abuse, it is important that they get the appropriate psychiatric treatment, which may or may not include medication either short or long term.

Therapy of all kinds may occur as a one-off treatment or may be something to return to at different stages in life when triggers or circumstances cause the trauma of the abuse to reoccur.

Addressing Criminal Behaviour

When the behaviour is also criminal in nature, this needs to be addressed. For some, that is extremely difficult, but on the other hand the act of reporting may also be helpful, particularly if the victim recognises that it may expose a pattern of offending or may prevent further victims. There are various ways that the criminality can then be addressed, including police investigation perhaps leading to a court case, which can be very daunting for the victim, who should be given adequate support and advice.

Restorative justice is another avenue. This can be much less distressing for the victim and may also be more effective in getting the perpetrator to face up to the harm their behaviour has caused. Consideration should also be given to reporting to the relevant professional organisation where there has been abuse of power, such as by a group leader, teacher, doctor or priest.

> Those close to the victim will also be greatly affected by the abuse.

Offender to Face Their Behaviour

Obviously, when considering healing, the victim is the main focus. But we should not forget the offender. Even if it is not a criminal matter, the person needs to face up to their behaviour and be assisted with appropriate help and a safety plan to prevent further abuse. It can be reassuring for a victim and their families to know that there has been accountability and steps taken to minimise risk.

Abuse causes damage to many spheres of a person's life, all of which need healing. Many others may be affected or hurt and require healing of their own. How that journey to wholeness occurs is different for each individual, but always with the aim of restoring hope, health and wellbeing.

Photo by Pressmaster/Shutterstock.com

Bridget Taumoepeau is a retired psychiatrist, who later studied theology and now works voluntarily for vulnerable children and their families.

Let children be safe

We don't want abuse to continue in the Church. VIRGINIA NOONAN outlines how we can ensure a new safeguarding culture.

The Catholic Church believes that every human being has a value and dignity which derives directly from their creation in the image and likeness of God. This implies a duty to value all people and therefore to protect them from harm.

This statement in the *National Guidelines for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Feb 2017) sets out the fundamental responsibilities and commitment of the Church to ensure that the sexual abuse and cover-up of the last decades is addressed and the clerical culture changed so that it may not happen again.

The gospel values of love, dignity and justice as demonstrated by Jesus, remind us that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is an integral part of the life and ministries of the Church. We are all called to create a culture which cherishes, nurtures and safeguards children and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is so much more than a question of compliance. The belief that everyone is created in the image and likeness of God flows from the Scriptures and places on us the responsibility to protect those who are at the greatest risk of harm.

The harm that has been inflicted against our most vulnerable — children and others — by those most trusted within the Catholic Church, is indefensible. Pope Francis has made it clear he expects the Church, on every level, to implement whatever steps are necessary to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults and to respond to their needs with fairness and mercy.

Cultivate New Culture

I am National Director at the National Office for Professional Standards for the Catholic Church in this country which is set up to lead and facilitate a change in Church culture in response to Pope Francis's call. The work of our office is twofold.

First, we strive to provide a secure and supportive atmosphere in which those who have suffered

abuse within the Church can disclose this to a trusted person in the expectation of receiving a sensitive and compassionate response, and to be supported in their continued healing. To enable this process, our office is responsible for implementing the Church's protocol *Te Houhanga Rongo — A Path to Healing*. This protocol seeks to provide a pastoral response through a process of natural justice and accountability.

Second, our office is also responsible for supporting the six Catholic dioceses, all Religious Congregations and Catholic organisations to implement the *National Guidelines for the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand*. This document sets out the Church's commitment to safeguarding which was adopted by the New Zealand Bishops' Conference and Congregational Leaders' Conference in February 2017. It sets out the expectations of Church leaders that our faith communities provide environments in which we are vigilant to the needs of our children and vulnerable adults.

New Care in Ministering

The Church provides a wide range of services and ministries particularly to children and vulnerable adults — sacramental programmes, training for altar serving, pastoral visits, youth camps, liturgy of the Word for children, Communion to the sick, to name a few.

We must continue to provide these essential ministries and the new focus is on doing them safely with care. It is imperative that we act always in the interest of child and vulnerable adult safety — and to be aware of who might be vulnerable. Sometimes a "vulnerable" person is not always obvious. Practices that we often take for granted need now to be reviewed to ensure that incidents or allegations of wrongdoing are avoided.

We adults need to be aware of and accept appropriate boundaries, behaviours and practices. And we need to do so in a way that is more than ticking off a checklist or paying lip service. We need to embed a culture of safeguarding in our Church. It's an essential change and will require of us all effort, time and a willingness to engage — like all important changes in our lives.

Getting Started

To support the commitment to have a consistent safeguarding practice across the country, our office has developed a set of standards which aim to develop and grow a culture of safeguarding. Together with the national safeguarding policy, this provides a "one Church" framework for all Catholic entities.

> ***"We need to embed a culture of safeguarding in our Church. It's an essential change and will require of us all effort, time and a willingness to engage."***

Talk about Safeguarding

The first thing we need is for safeguarding conversations to occur at every level — at parish council meetings, at prayer groups, at training sessions for volunteers involved in ministry with children and vulnerable adults, at staff meetings, at meetings of clergy and religious. We need committed leadership to ensure that a culture of guardianship extends into every aspect of our faith communities. We need to have safeguarding on everyone's agenda — this way we will all be actively engaged in communicating the Church's message.

New Code of Conduct

Our faith communities rely on the inestimable contribution of volunteers who provide important ministries. We have taken for granted that our volunteers will always act appropriately. In this new time we need to make our expectations of volunteers explicit especially how they act and respond when working with children and vulnerable adults. To some extent we are shifting our mindset and viewing volunteering as a privilege rather than a right. The "Code of Conduct" sets out expectations in carrying out ministry — they're the common sense expectations we would all want for those working with and around our children. When we volunteer we need to hold ourselves and others to account.

Training and Support

Each diocese is providing safeguarding training which gives an overview of safeguarding practice, advice on how to access safeguarding resources and support, and encouragement for everyone to be part of this positive change.

We need the clergy, religious, our Church volunteers and employees to look at situations and environments though a "safeguarding" lens.

We have numerous examples of how people are already thinking: a parish council redesigning their parish centre with safeguarding in mind by increasing visibility in office and meeting spaces; a priest talking to parents in a rural parish about how he can continue to provide transport to children in a way that keeps himself and their children safe; parishes police vetting volunteers who provide ministry to children.

Review and Evaluation

To assure ourselves that safeguarding practices are being implemented in all faith communities, our office will be piloting a review and audit procedure this year so we can identify what is working well, areas for development and any areas of non-compliance with the national safeguarding policy.

The team at the National Office for Professional Standards is committed and passionate about our work to ensure a "one Church" approach to complaint response and safeguarding practices.

Photo by Zak Holland © Used with permission

Virginia Noonan from Christchurch has been in private legal practice, Boards' director and government consultant in statutory management and governance facilitation.

Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives

ANNE KENNEDY explains how adults can engage with children in nurturing their spirituality.

Having children, grandchildren and young people in our lives is a great blessing. We are wholehearted in nurturing them so they grow to be healthy in every way. We do all we can to care for them and respond to their needs. One of the aspects of nurture I am particularly interested in is children's spirituality, their taha wairua, and how we can recognise and nurture it.

The spiritual lives of children and young people has become a focus of research here in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally over the last few decades. Despite the differing directions and settings of research projects, findings show that there are spiritual characteristics and spiritual qualities shared by children and young people.

Understanding Spirituality

What do we mean by "spirituality"? Theologian Neil Darragh gives a useful description: spirituality is "the combination of beliefs and practices that animate and integrate our lives". It is like the atmosphere in which we grow.

Using Everyday Language

One interesting research finding is that all children express themselves in spiritual ways regardless of whether they belong to a religious tradition or not. Whereas once we may always have used religious language to express our spirituality—like some of our traditional prayers—we are now doing so using a greater breadth of expression. Children may speak of the awe they feel or inspiration someone gives them in everyday language.

Of course the spiritual traditions of denominations and faiths continue to be widely practised and used to nurture children in the family's spirituality. But it is clear that in our increasingly secular societies, spirituality is being understood and interpreted in a wider frame and it can be applied to non-religious and religious spiritual expressions.

Shared Characteristics

The research shows that there are characteristics of spirituality common to the everyday lives of children. These characteristics can be seen through children's growing awareness of their identity, through the ways they make meaning in their lives, through their sense of belonging and connectedness to their family whānau, their land and culture, through their values and beliefs and through the ways they live in relationship with themselves, with others, Earth and for some, with God. All of these aspects of spirituality can be interpreted outside or within a religious framework.

I know of one child who received a necklace as a birthday gift from a loved one—too special and personal to be shown to just anyone, she wears it under her clothes. Another has a sort of sacred place on top of his dresser where a collection of his most special things—a train ticket, letter from Nana, Baptism certificate—are kept separate from the general clutter.

Adults to Be Attuned

Educationalist Maria Montessori

spoke of children as "spiritual embryos" to be nurtured and cared for by people around them. Once adults are attuned to all that spirituality encompasses, they can help children to understand what it means in the context of their spiritual life journey. Children need help to make meaning of their everyday relationships and to express who and where they belong.

Knowing adults who are sensitive to this spiritual dimension helps childen to understand their identity and connectedness with their family, whānau, school, community, the Earth, their land and for some the Divine. Children navigate these experiences in their own way, in their own time with the guidance of adults who recognise and affirm their spiritual characteristics and qualities.

Children may seek out adults who are alert and sensitive when they want to share something from their spiritual world. They sense: "Here is someone who values this special part of who I am." It is often only by reflection that adults recognise that a child's comment was really a glimpse of their soul. It may be when they shared their awe and wonder or showed empathy to another. These are privileged moments to be treasured.

Responding to Children

By actively listening and encouraging children to talk more about their experiences, letting them lead the conversation, we can respond to them. Children need to feel they are free to check out their ideas and that they are being taken seriously. Like all of us, children are looking for openness and guidance — or just the attention of a sensitive adult. We know how life-giving these interactions can be in our lives.

Myriad Ways of Expression

Children often speak in emotive, sensitive and sacred language when sharing spiritual experiences. Some may express their ideas through art or writing. Many show interest in stories about dreams, visions, mystery and what is real and unreal.

Children's spontaneous acts of gentleness, caring, compassion, sharing, fairness, encouragement, inclusion of others, initiative, responsibility, humour, fun and joy are expressions of their inner spirit. We need to recognise these valuable personal traits as the child's spirituality. They are qualities that are helping to create a better world. We need think only of the way young people are responding to the concern for the environment and Earth as their common home as an example.

Adults' Own Spirituality

By nurturing their own spirituality we adults are forming our capacity to nurture children's spiritual lives. We have similar spiritual characteristics and qualities to children which we express in adult ways. Attuned with our spiritual antennae we can re-cognise, to know again in a new way, how children express their spiritual ideas. And attending to what children say helps us to interpret what they are saying at a spiritual level.

By being alert to children's spiritual expressions, we can affirm them and point out that what they are saying and doing shows what a caring person they are growing into. We can share with children something of our own spiritual experiences, which shows them that we mutually understand what they are talking about. We might suggest that children write or draw about their experiences and share them with others. Teachers often use children's questions to initiate class kōrero about spiritual ideas. Their questions are good indicators of the vibrancy of children's spiritual lives.

> Children's spontaneous acts of gentleness, caring, compassion, sharing, fairness, encouragement, inclusion of others, initiative, responsibility, humour, fun and joy are expressions of their inner spirit.

Discussing through Stories

Another way to start a spiritual dialogue is through children's literature — particularly from New Zealand or the country of the child — in which are stories with spiritual themes. These stories identify, affirm and nurture the spiritual characteristics the children are growing in. Such readings help to generate questions and discussion. They can also encourage children to pray, sing and share how they recognise the Spirit's presence.

We can learn from the way children are aware of the Spirit. And while we are learning to nurture children's spiritual lives we are also attending to the Spirit in our own life, in our family, community and in the world. It can be through the spiritual awareness of children that we awake again to the ever-revealing mystery of life and love.

Photo by Andy Heyward/Shutterstock.com

Anne Kennedy married to Tony has three children and four grandchildren. She works for Te Kupenga Catholic Leadership Institute developing Religious Education curricula.

COME LORD JESUS

PETER SLOCUM **reflects on his childhood in the Church and suggests that we take up the reforms of Vatican II again now to be a questioning, thinking, fully involved pilgrim people.**

Being a "good Catholic boy", the wall above the desk of my home office sports the Columban Calendar and a casual glance reminds me that today is Waitangi Day and the liturgical colour is green. For a representative of the generation which attended senior high school in the early 1960s there is that peculiar irony that I have been far more familiar with the English Reform Bill of 1932 than I have been —until relatively recently— with the Treaty of Waitangi.

England in the 19th century was spreading the *Pax Britannica* across the globe like maple syrup over a hot waffle. And all the while, under the guise of sharing "enlightenment", was effectively drawing an estimated 400 million people into a new model of slavery and subjugation.

Around the same time, an English Anglican priest, theologian, and rather handy poet John Henry Newman, a leading light of *The Oxford Movement*, in almost 400 pages of the most detailed narrative wrote his justification for his controversial conversion to Roman Catholicism. Newman had virtually unlimited luxury to defend to his detractors his entry into the Roman Catholic Church.

On the other hand, I'm neither priest nor theologian but an unpublished poet of marginal sorts, and I have merely 1,200 words to defend my potential exit from the Catholic Church. Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene One: In the Beginning

In broad terms, my thesis is that we need Christ to come among us again now. Jesus was a laid-back—but nonetheless, determined—revolutionary. In the social, political and economic world of his immediate experience, Jesus saw that *Pax Romana*, along with roads, bridges, aqueducts and civil laws, was equally characterised by widespread slavery and subjugation.

The message Jesus bequeathed to his followers was to tear

down tyranny in all of its many manifestations and to let God's people—that's everyone without exception—go!

Now looking at the Gospel Jesus proclaimed, and taking an uncompromising look at the Church's report card today, I can only say: Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene Two: Freedom and Slavery

Carol Rittner's extremely moving reflection on the liberation of Auschwitz by Soviet troops 75 years ago on the 27 January 1945 is in this issue. Carol suggests that the "liberation" of Auschwitz has become a well-recognised symbol of the overthrow of the prevalent totalitarian regime of the time.

Nonetheless, the "liberation" of the people by the Soviet Army at that time brought its own irony and the direct replacement of one form of slavery and subjugation by another.

It had the same result, the virtually complete loss of personal freedom, and any capacity for self-determination and fulfilment. Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene Three: Influence Matters

I was born a few months after the "liberation" of Auschwitz. Carol's canvas prompted me to reflect that had I been born in 1925 in Nuremberg, rather than 1945 in North Sydney (at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital), I suspect I would have been seriously attracted to the general razzmatazz propagated so deliciously well by the Nazi Party hierarchy.

This was exactly 100 years after the tide of reform that emanated from the British Parliament. And at the very time when John Henry Newman and his *Oxford Movement* confreres were pining for the restoration of the pomp and ceremony of the Catholic Church, strenuously abhorred by various reformers 300 years previously. Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene Four: Church Culture

I am grateful that I was not born in Nuremberg in 1925. However I find it difficult not to draw some close parallels with the 1950s Catholic Church in Sydney deeply ensconced in the Irish tradition.

As a child born into "The Faith" of both sides of my family—considerably before I knew about Don Bradman, Dame Nellie Melba, Dally Messenger, the Rats of Tobruk and meat pies swamped in rich red Fountain tomato sauce—the mantra of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church was indelibly drilled into me. Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene Five: Controlling Church

The Church was the club of all clubs. It provided purpose, solidarity and, most of all, it served to set us apart from everyone else. Peter was the Rock on which it was founded—and that made me feel so special.

Vatican II promised replacing institutionalism with Gospel-based paradigms.

The Church was characterised by order and discipline. There was colour, ceremony, pageantry, parades, societies, sodalities, banners and, above all to my highly impressionable mind, there was the lure of the full-length red cassock, the crisply starched white surplice, the white collar with gold stud and the soft and silent red slippers worn by the altar boys. What could be a better calling than at 6.05am on a cold frosty morning kneeling before the altar reciting the meaningless (to me) Latin *Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam*. "They" had me well before the age of seven—and in a sense (in keeping with the Jesuit tradition) I was in for the term of my natural life.

But this is the thing: even as a child I was puzzled by the maze of mixed messages. We sang "Sweet Heart of Jesus, make us know and love Thee". We were drawn to the eternal life and happiness in heaven—yet, despite the silent, red slippers (I loved those slippers because I had no slippers at home) the world in which we lived was a "vale of tears"—and no one ever seemed to be happy. Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene Six: Glimpse of Gospel Church

For a brief moment the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium — Light for the Nations* shone among us with the prospect of purposeful reform. We glimpsed ourselves as the pilgrim people of God and the universal priesthood. It was mind-blowing for us and we began to understand and explore this kind of Church.

I had been strongly influenced by the "See Judge Act" movement among Christian students and workers inspired by Cardinal Joseph Cardijn. This was Christian leadership by the laity. I had been well-schooled in the Catholic Social Teaching encyclicals *Rerum Novarem* and *Quadragesimo Anno* and had been introduced to the Jesus of the Gospels. Vatican II was a logical realisation of the "movement", with the promise of revolution, redemption, release from bondage—but most of all, Vatican II promised replacing institutionalism with Gospel-based paradigms.

But the time was brief in the sense that successive holders of the papal office, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, have progressively pushed back the current of reform. John Paul II has been rewarded for his efforts with the status of canonised sainthood—go figure!

Come, Lord Jesus!

Scene Seven: As in the Beginning

My call to like-minded and all readers is to turn the barque of Peter to its true gospel course. To encourage again love, compassion, tolerance, understanding, real participation, happiness and fun in the wonderful now and the glorious hereafter.

And let there be not the least suspicion of slavery and subjugation. We have no time to lose.

Come, Lord Jesus!

Painting: ***Three*** by Scott Andrew Spencer © Used with permission www.singulart.com/en/artist/scott-andrew-spencer-3475

Peter Slocum, living in Auckland, is a slightly "pre-Boomer" Australian raised in the Irish-flavoured Catholic Church. He waits impatiently for the Vatican II *aggiornamento*.

EYES

He looks at me with eyes
That look deep inside of me
Knows me better than I know myself.
He looks at me with eyes
Completely filled with love and patience
Despite all that he has lived.

He calls me with a voice
That calls me to community
To let go of my fears and stress.
He calls me with a voice
Filled with wisdom, strength and beauty
Despite the fact that he can't speak.

He touches me with a lo
That knows no bounds
A love that is so strong.
He touches me with a lo
That shows such strengt
Despite the fact that he

by Stephen Rigby

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ove

ove
th and boundlessness
is dependent on others.

He holds me so tight to his soul
That I know a little piece of him
Will always go with me wherever I go
He holds me so tight to his soul.
He trusts me completely
Despite all that he has known.
He shows me such joy
A joy for life, a love of it all
A passion for life.

He shows us such a joy
I want to be more like him
To learn to love the journey of life.
In so many ways he is such an enigma
Many see in him only weakness
Fragility, struggle and inability.
In so many ways he is such an enigma
From him I have known only strength
Trust, love and ability.

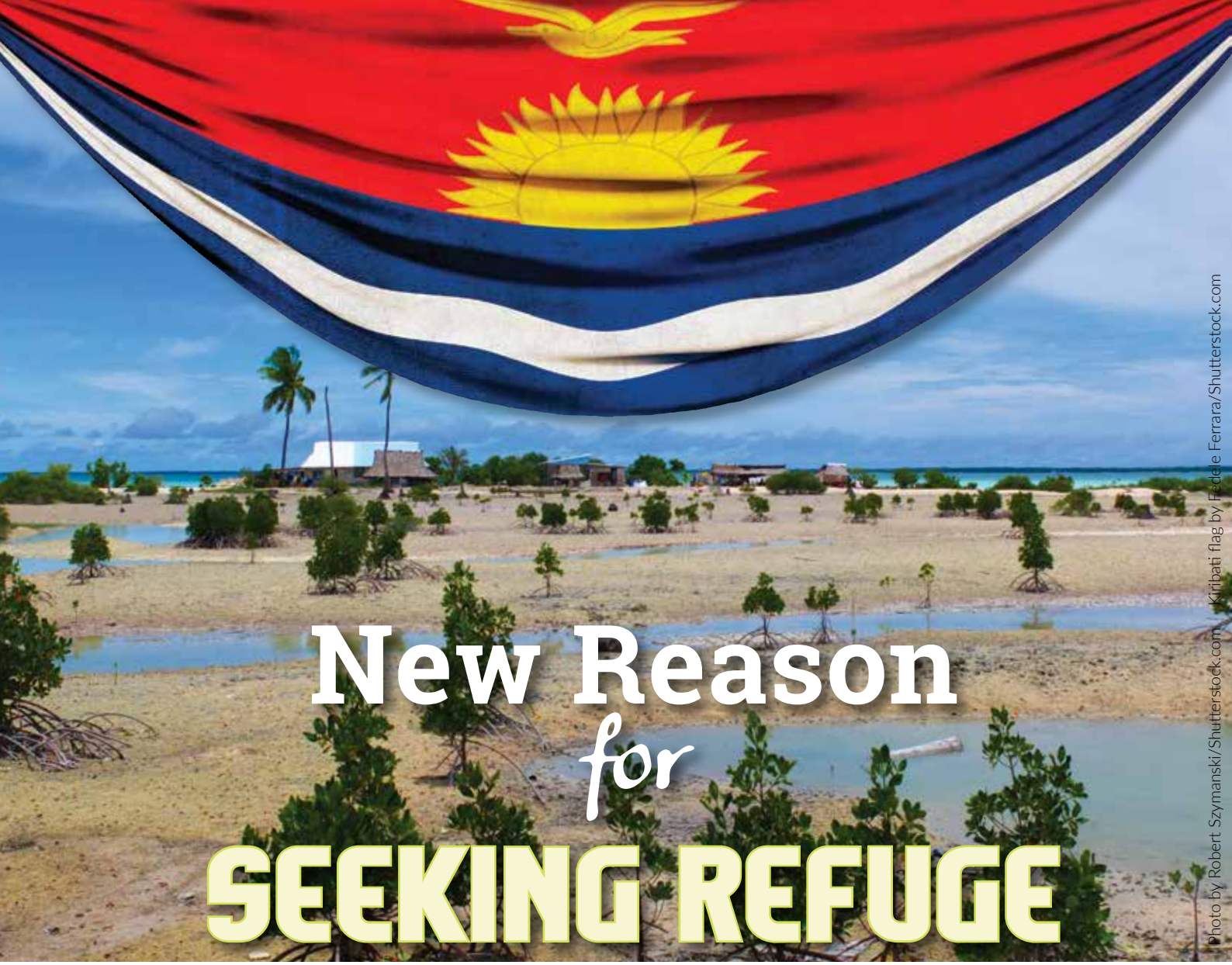


Photo by Robert Szymanski/Shutterstock.com, Kiribati flag by Fedele Ferrara/Shutterstock.com

New Reason for SEEKING REFUGE

Ioane Teitiota is from Kiribati which is sinking as the Pacific waters rise. He came to New Zealand seeking status as a climate change "refugee". BINOY KAMPMARK follows his case through the courts and suggests that this new category of refugee will be accepted in law.

The Pacific island of Kiribati is doomed to disappear. Its people are fated to become a generation of climate change refugees. What direction jurisprudence takes on this issue will be of more than just academic interest. The term "climate change refugees" is coming into vogue and even Australia, whose politicians resist accepting the gloomy and turbulent realities of climate change, risks producing its very own. In the words of climatologist Michael Mann: "It is conceivable that much of Australia simply becomes too hot and dry for human habitation. In that case, yes, unfortunately we could see Australians join the ranks of the world's climate change refugees."

Suing Governments and Businesses

At the legal level, the debate about culpability for climate change inaction has found form in some 1,300 legal actions across 28 countries, the vast majority of them being lodged in that land of litigation, the United States. As Joana Setzer of the Grantham Institute and the London School of Economics pointed out last year: "Holding governments and businesses to account for failing to combat climate change has become a global phenomenon."

Expanding Refugee Category

In the legal field, the idea of expanding the categories of refugees that arise from climactic disaster is as bold as any, and has generated its share of supporters and sceptics. A remarkable effort to do so came in the New Zealand case of Teitiota v Chief Executive Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment [2014], the first recorded instance of climate change being cited as a basis for refugee status, though the man in question, Ioane Teitiota, failed to convince the courts. New Zealand's various judicial channels found against the Kiribati national, claiming that he did not satisfy the definition of "refugee"

within the conventional understanding of international law. This was a different sort of threat to his livelihood, rooted neither in political oppression nor tyrannical cruelty.

Appeal to Supreme Court

At stages of the appeal process, however, there was acceptance on the part of various judicial officers that climate change was a serious matter affecting Kiribati. The Immigration and Protection Tribunal, for instance, acknowledged that "the limited capacity of South Tarawa to carry its population is significantly compromised by the effects of population growth, urbanisation, and limited infrastructure development, particularly in relation to sanitation." These effects had been "exacerbated by the effects of both sudden onset environmental events (storms) and slow-onset processes (sea-level rise)."

Appeal Failed

Ultimately, the Supreme Court found that, in being returned to Kiribati, the applicant did not face the prospect of "serious harm" and could not be granted asylum. Nor was there evidence that the Kiribati state had failed to take adequate steps to combat the effects of environmental degradation. Teitiota was subsequently deported.

Appeal to UN Human Rights Committee

The last option open to Teitiota was the United Nations Human Rights Committee, a body not always governed by the rigidity of black letter law. In its decision last month, the majority of the HRC did not find the deportation unlawful, there being no immediate danger to Teitiota's life on account of climate change. They also noted that "the timeframe of 10 to 15 years, as suggested by the author, could allow for intervening acts by the Republic of Kiribati [. . .] to take affirmative measures to protect and, where necessary, to relocate the population."

Warning for Future

That said, it was incumbent upon decision-makers to take the degrading nature of climate change into account when examining future deportation appeals. In the majority's words of warning: "Without robust national and international efforts, the effects of climate change in receiving states may expose individuals to a violation of their rights under Articles 6 [the inherent right to life] or 7 [the right not to be tortured or subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment] of the [International Convention on Civil and Political Rights], thereby triggering the *non-refoulement* obligations of sending states." That is, States had to be on guard not to return future applicants to places of imminent danger.

Criticism has been heaped from across the spectrum. Former Fleet Street editor Damian Wilson was one. "Irresponsibly, the UN Human Rights Committee, in claiming that 'something must be done' in its deliberations over the Kiribati family, has ducked out of directly helping them in any practical way, burnished its woke credentials and simply piled on the misery in the climate change mess." Others see the issue of climate change as merely one feature in forced migration, though there is an acceptance by President Bill Clinton's former White House Chief of Staff John Podesta that current legal standards are "not equipped to protect climate change migrants, as there are no legally binding agreements obliging countries to support climate migrants."

Movement Towards New Category

Even the UNHCR has preferred the tag of "environmental migrants" rather than refugees. But words and categories change. Definitions can be stretched. The Human Rights Committee, albeit modestly, has done so. Those intent on building walls will find little cheer in it. Those wishing to see breaches in the barriers of receiving states will take encouragement from the words of one of the two dissenting members of the HRC, Duncan Laki Muhumuza of Uganda, who openly found for Teitiota. The effects of climate change in Kiribati "are significantly grave, pose a real, personal and reasonably foreseeable risk of a threat to life under Article 6(1) [of the ICCPR]. Moreover, the Committee needs to handle critical and significantly irreversible issues of climate change, with the approach that seeks to uphold the sanctity of human life."

Where the law requires a more than capable handmaiden will be in the measures undertaken by states and international institutions to address such a category of refugee and the conditions that produce it.

Efforts to "Climate Proof"

The focus now is less on relocation programmes than building resilience at the vulnerable points — a point emphasised by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat. The World Bank, for instance, is assisting Samoa to develop "climate proof" transport infrastructure. In Vanuatu, the same institution has established a joint venture with the European Union to "encourage farmers to introduce climate resilient livestock and crops".

Ultimately, the issue of relocation is inescapable; no measure of legal redress escapes that vital point. Former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has suggested "constitutional condominiums" as a possibility, an arrangement that would permit Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru to cede control to Australia responsibility "for their territorial seas, their vast Exclusive Economic Zones, including the preservation of their precious fishing reserves". The trade-off here is relocating the citizens of all three states to Australia, where they would be granted the rights of Australian citizens after the disappearance of their countries. Such plans tend to suffer from the stigma of colonial presumption. As Kiribati's former president Anote Tong has noted, the country "must not relocate as climate refugees but as people who would migrate with dignity."

Binoy Kampmark was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge, UK. He lectures in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University, Melbourne.

Silent Song (2018) by Carolyn Parton © Used with permission www.carolynparton.co.za

Sharing Spirituality with Monks

JENNY DAWSON describes how Cistercian Associates live a monastic spirituality in their daily lives.

As I turn off Kopua Road, car radio now silenced, driving very slowly (not only to avoid the chooks), I relish again the embrace of the big, old trees and anticipate the quiet presence of the monks. A few days later, I exit Southern Star Abbey from the same driveway carrying a peace and gratitude that many thousands of people have experienced. But for those of us who are Cistercian Associates there is something a little different.

Jenny Dawson is the Coordinator of the Cistercian Associates of the Southern Star Abbey at Kopua, Hawke's Bay.

Associated with Benedictine Spirituality

Associates are similar to "Tertiaries" or "Third Order" or "Oblates" of Religious Orders. They are people who share in the charism of a Religious Order or Congregation. Throughout the history of Religious Life, people have been attracted to and want to be part of the spirit of a particular Religious Congregation but do not necessarily want to become a professed sister, brother, nun or monk. In response religious communities have established various ways for these people to share more formally in the spirit of the Community. These formal relationships with a Community usually involve mutual responsibilities, a renewable or life-long commitment and a rule of life. From the very beginning in the Middle Ages the Cistercian Order received lay members, called *conversi*. In New Zealand the monks of the Trappist Southern Star Abbey in the Hawke's Bay have fostered a growing Associate community in the Benedictine-Cistercian spirit since 2002.

We Associates, 43 very diverse women and men from around New Zealand, have committed ourselves to living the Cistercian life outside the monastery walls, beyond the driveway, in the world in a missional manner. So each time I leave the monastery I am not only refreshed but also refocused towards the values of simplicity, balance and contemplation — the well-known Benedictine values.

Relationship of Lay and Monastic

Our Associate group is related to the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance, or Trappists — the Benedictine tradition of the monks at Kopua. (Trappists are a reform of the Cistercian Order which, in turn, was a reform of the original Order of St Benedict. Trappists, Cistercians and Benedictines all follow the Rule of St Benedict.) Cistercian Associates practise in their everyday lives constant conversion to the way of Christ, meditative prayer, praying the Psalms (although not usually all 150 every fortnight as the monks do),

being community in the way that we can and, above all, silence.

Cistercian Practices

I find silence possibly the most challenging practice in my daily life. It means monitoring the impact of social media in my life, not filling my diary, cultivating the awareness that comes when chatter is removed even temporarily. I think Brother Paul Quenon puts it best in the title of his memoirs *In Praise of the Useless Life* (2018)—"unused" time is truly counter-cultural in a world that equates busyness with goodness and value.

As Associates we develop community among ourselves by daily prayer for one another, sharing study materials and, for those who are able, gathering in local groups for prayer and support. We have annual retreats together at the monastery. Perhaps the retreat aspect of spiritual companionship is more aspirational than a reality for some of us who are isolated by distance. However, part of the role of the Coordinator of the group is to keep us connected and supported, especially through regular newsletters. These are available to anyone who is interested in the Cistercian life. We also have the support of an international organisation linking Cistercian Associates around the world.

We have community with Fr Niko Verkley and the Kopua monks as we recognise each other's call to the "School of the Lord's Service" which may be lived within the monastery, or in teaching, farming, family, parish work or wherever Associates are engaged.

I am most conscious of being a Cistercian Associate when, from time to time, I awake about 4am and think lovingly of the monks gathering in the dark church to sing Vigils — the first "hour" of the monastic day. St Benedict in his Rule said that monks are "to arise at the eighth hour of the night". This was around 2am at the time when the day was calculated from sun-up to sun-down. Making this early start and keeping the other six times of prayer that punctuate the monastic day may not be possible for lay people with the demands of our day. But I find the discipline of going to bed early enough to be able to get up to enjoy the presence of God in the hours of first light is rewarding.

Inclusive Hospitality

We also cherish the ecumenical nature of our community. Our Associate group has an almost equal mix of Anglicans and Catholics and a few members of other denominations. I believe this aspect of Associate life has come about through the hospitality of the monastery, as we are all made welcome there—true to the Rule of St Benedict. We express this hospitality outside the monastery in diverse ways: getting to know neighbours, giving genuine attention to our human encounters, working to make the world a more inclusive place.

Exploring New Relationships in Spirituality

In the 21st century many Religious Orders and Congregations are exploring unnavigated waters in their relationships with groups who share the charism. In New Zealand most Religious Orders have groups associated with them and identifiying the charism as their spirituality. Our Cistercian Associates of the Southern Star Abbey at Kopua Leadership Team will be meeting with international representatives of other oblate and associate groups expressing the Benedictine charism this year.

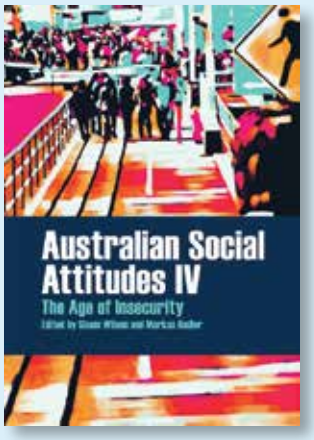
Associate life holds us in a spirituality that is of and for the long haul. We remain "lovers of the people and lovers of the place" through our prayer, through Eucharist and through our cherishing of silence and solitude. We are linked deeply to Southern Star Abbey wherever we find ourselves.

Australian Social Attitudes IV: The Age of Insecurity

Edited by Shaun Wilson and Markus Hadler
Published by Sydney University Press, 2018
Reviewed by Jane Higgins

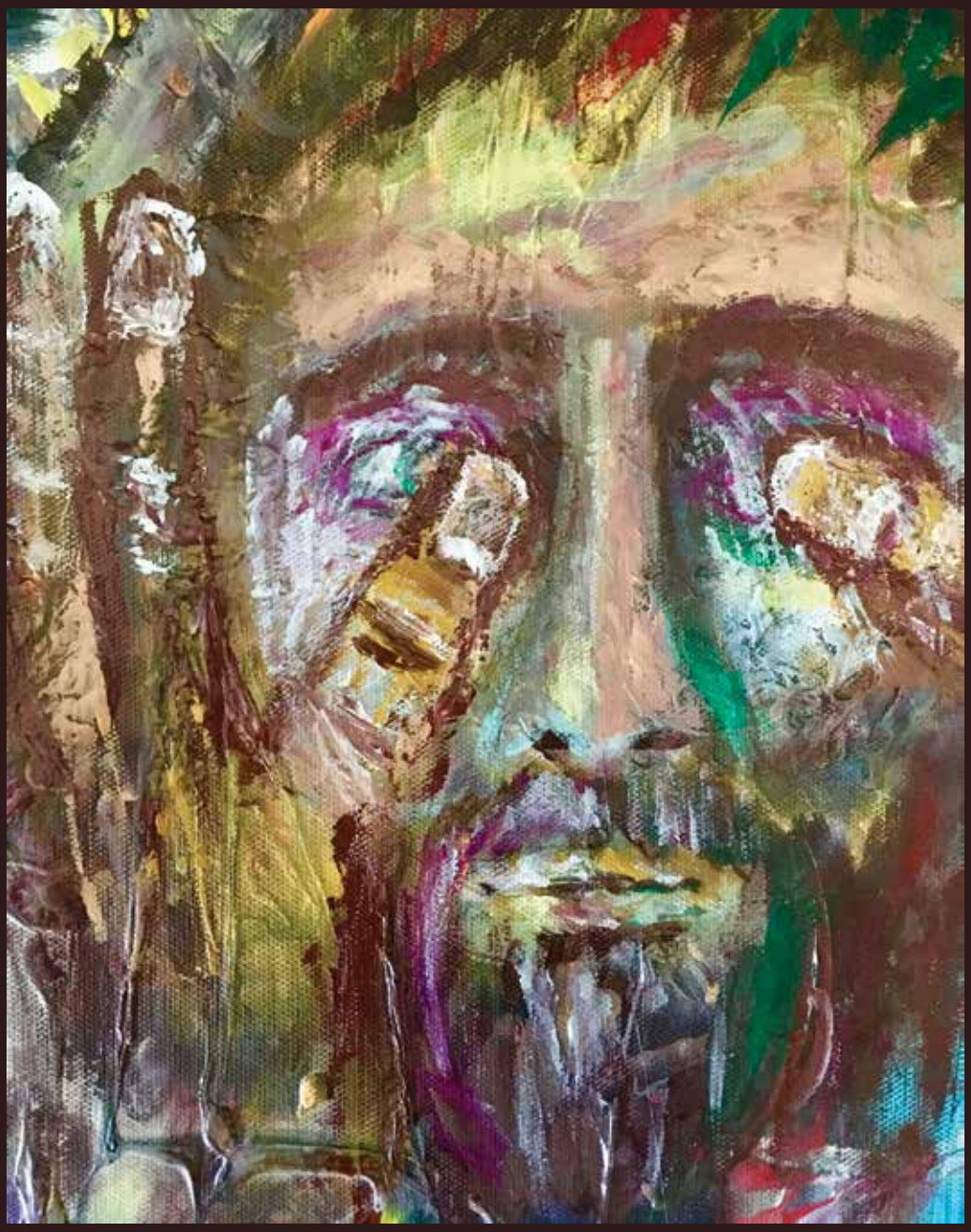
BOOK

I read this book as the Australian bushfires raged and wondered if it might be out of date already. In fact, it proved insightful in the current situation. It presents a systematic analysis of Australian public opinion surveys, setting that country in its global context. The insecurities of the title include employment and inequality, as well as hostilities and confusions over social diversity, immigration, national institutions and, of course, climate change.



Each chapter offers insight from analysis, the chapter on climate change particularly so. It finds Australians to be among the most climate sceptical populations in the Western world, but notes that its climate sceptics overestimate the numbers in their camp: over 60 per cent of Australians acknowledge the scientific consensus that climate change is anthropocentric. The authors make sense of climate scepticism through a detailed analysis of data, finding that key drivers are climate sceptical leadership and conservative media outlets. Notably, both have featured in recent analyses of responses to the bushfires.

It was refreshing to read about these issues through rigorous analysis based on actual data. This book is for students and teachers studying our near neighbours, but also for anyone keen on understanding Australians better.



GAINING SIGHT AND INSIGHT

KATHLEEN RUSHTON interprets John 9:1-41 and suggests how this story of the man born blind can influence our lives.

The Man Born Blind by Ronald Raab CSC © Used with permission www.ronaldraab.com

In the first 11 chapters of John Jesus is shown to be deeply concerned about social reconciliation. In a deeply divided society he invites disciples to create a new community (Jn 1:38-46), to work with him to "complete the works of God". In his barrier-crossing ministry, Jesus moves among representatives of groups in conflict with each other and calls them into his new community. For example, he engages with Nathanael, a "true Israelite", a nationalist, searching for a new king of Israel (Jn 1:47); with Nicodemus, a "ruler of the Jews" and "the teacher of Israel" (Jn 3:1–21); with the woman of Samaria (Jn 4:4–42); with the royal official (Jn 4:46–54); with those deemed ignorant of the Torah (Jn 7:48-49) and with those with physical disabilities (Jn 5:2–9; 9:1–41).

Kathleen Rushton RSM lives in Ōtautahi Christchurch where, in the sight of the Southern Alps and the hills, she continues to delight in learning and writing about Scripture.

Jesus speaks and acts openly in public—especially in Jerusalem, the centre of religious and political power (Jn 7:4). The story of the man by the pool (Jn 5.1–18) prepares the reader to meet the man born blind. These two, like the majority of the people, are physically and religiously marginalised by the religious leaders. The religious leaders' attitudes towards those who are ignorant of the Torah are acted out in story form in this chapter.

Blind from Birth

Jesus and his disciples meet a man "who used to sit and beg" (Jn 9:8). Because he has been blind from birth, he has no choice but to beg. Along with others with disabilities, including the man who is chronically ill (Jn 5:1–18), this man is marginalised by society and religion (Lev 21:17–23).

The story focuses on the person—"*a man* born blind"—

rather than a *blind* man. This can raise our awareness about how we refer to people with disabilities and ensure that such things as access to places is equally available for them. I was reminded of that awareness recently when a visitor who uses a mobility scooter commented on our "inclusive house". This was because we have a ramp at the entrance and other features.

Opening the Eyes

Jesus anoints the man's eyes with clay and tells him to wash in the Pool of Siloam. Clay and water are Earth's elements — here they heal the body and carry the healing power of God. This is not a restoration of sight story because the man never had the gift of sight.

Sight is a gift of creation. Jesus's use of clay evokes creation — "the dust of the ground" (Gen 2:7) from which God creates Adam (*adam*) from the earth (*adamah*). Further, in the beginning of the Gospel creation is evoked by the opening sentence "in the beginning" and in the motifs of light and darkness. A cosmic struggle ensues between light and darkness. Jesus speaks of working the works of God while it is still day because when night comes no one can work (Jn 9:4).

Emerging and Growing

The irony is that the man born blind, an outcast, has his eyes opened to believe in Jesus while the learned Pharisees, who ostracised him, move into darkness and blindness. The man becomes an enlightened disciple. We have examples of understanding being reached through reflective conversation with Jesus — Thomas, the Samaritan woman — but the man born blind reaches understanding in the process of *confrontation* with the Pharisees (Jn 9:13–17, 24–34).

The man given sight witnesses bravely to the Pharisees about Jesus in contrast to his parents, the man who was healed (Jn 5:1–18) and the secret believer Nicodemus. His courage is like that of Jesus before the high priest (Jn 18:19–23). Thomas Brodie writes of this story as "the complex process whereby a person is created, comes to birth, grows up and matures". The man given sight is an "emerging person" who grows in confidence and knowledge.

Developing Our Sight and Courage

This story begins with the disciples' question: "Who sinned?" because they thought of suffering as an occasion to moralise about the victim's part in the suffering. Jesus turned this attitude around to be an occasion to do the works of God — to relieve suffering and marginalisation and increase inclusivity. In this time of Lent we can discern the biases that prevent us from seeing and responding to the needs of Earth and the marginalised in our neighbourhoods and country.

Pope Francis speaks of three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with Earth. We are invited to come "to see", "to open our eyes", to confront "blindness" and to respond with love whenever we find whakawhanaungatanga/right relationship with God, people and Earth being damaged.

We can think of our "sight" as evolving as we become more and more aware of what damages relationships and

This is not a restoration of sight story because the man never had the gift of sight.

how we can participate in healing the damage. For example, we can be blind to injustice and modern slavery around the world when we engage unquestioningly in unsustainable lifestyles and patterns of consumption that protect our comfort and wealth at the expense of the common good.

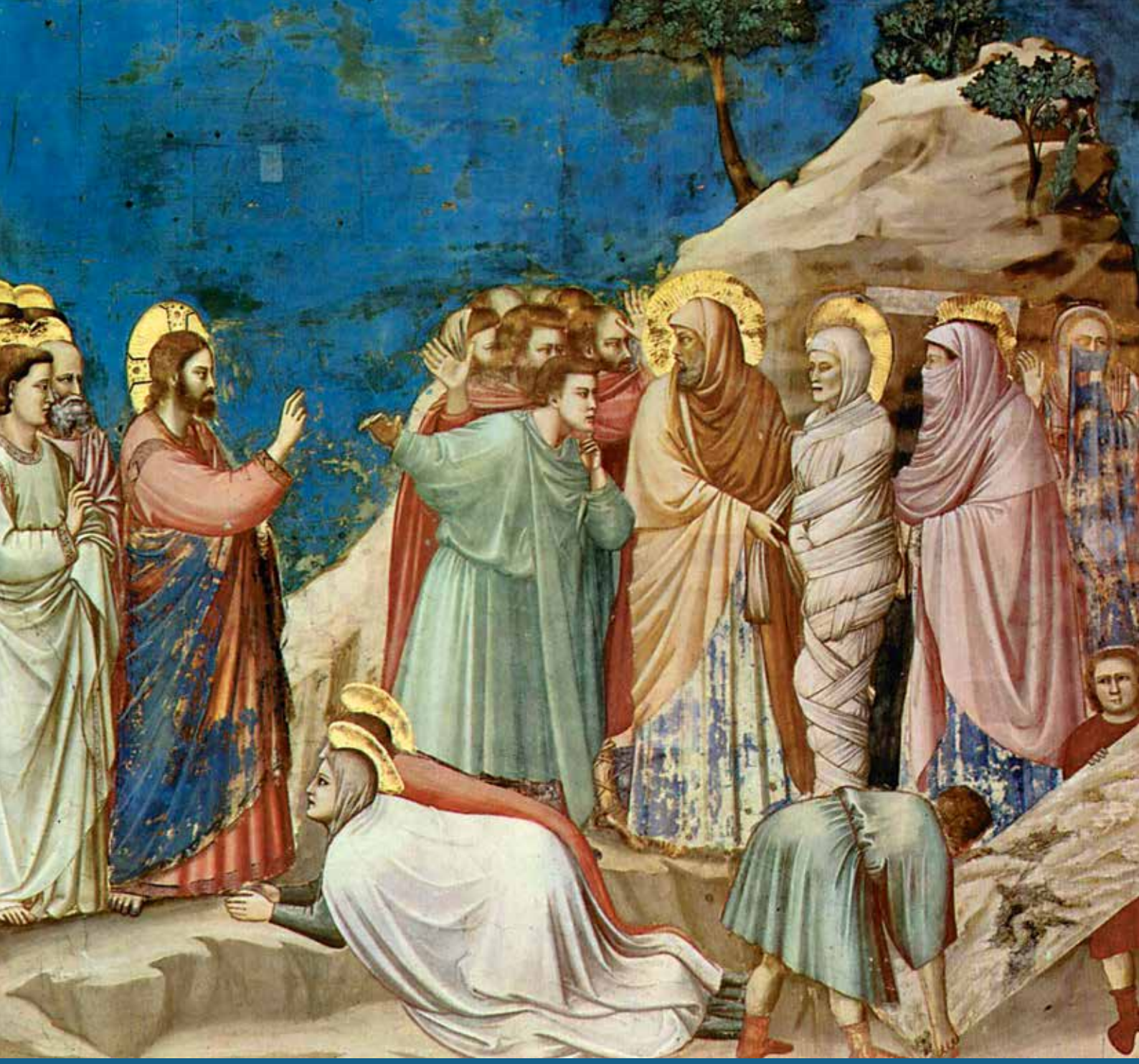
We can move from blindness to sight when we discuss how and what safeguarding practices we need in our parishes so that we build a new culture in which children and vulnerable adults are included, loved and protected.

We can move into "sight" when we question our childish understandings of God and risk developing a deeper, meaningful faith as adults — a life-time journey.

We can move from blindness when we cease supporting "clericalism" in our Church and take up our own responsibility for Church as people of God.

Like the man given sight we are invited to join Jesus in God's mission — the "work of the One who sent me". We are to grow up, to stand up, to mature in our knowledge and love of God, to draw on our rebirth through "water and Spirit" and to act justly and with kindness. Jesus speaks of the works he does and of the greater works that "the one who believes *into* him" will do (Jn 14:12). This is why we are always in the process of evolving into more insightful people.

Reading for 22 March 4th Sunday of Lent



FROM DEATH TO LIFE

ELAINE WAINWRIGHT reads the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, John 11:37-45, from an ecological perspective.

We will read excerpts from John 11 on the last Sunday of the Lenten journey, the Sunday before Palm Sunday. And the key themes of Lazarus's death and raising to life will be played out even more vividly in the drama of Jesus's death and resurrection read during Passion Week.

I'm reminded when reading with an ecological perspective that the human and divine drama in the Scriptures is played out in an other-than-human context. By attending to this context we develop the capacity to read the ecological aspects of the text.

The Intimate Circle

The opening verses set the relationships of the characters in an intimate setting. First Martha and Mary are named as "sisters" and together they send a message to Jesus alerting him to their brother Lazarus's illness—named by them as "the one you love". The Johannine narrator makes the circle of intimacy explicit: "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" (Jn 11:5). As ecological readers we take note of this intimacy as a significant element of all relationships in the communion of the planet when they are rightly ordered and of the circles of intimacy in our lives.

Jesus Delays

In the narrative, Jesus seems to do the unexpected in the face of the seriousness of Lazarus's condition and their relationship. Jesus stays "in an unknown place for two days". These two key ecological elements, time and place, hold him. The narrator does not explain further. This obscurity can remind us that time and place are at the heart of the unfolding of our lives and our ecological awareness.

Arriving After the Funeral

We attend to the materiality evident in the text. First, we learn that Jesus arrives in Bethany, a village — where the material and social intertwine. Bethany is a small village on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. We read that the people are grappling with the death of a beloved member of the community. Jesus hears that Lazarus was buried in his earthen tomb four days earlier. Many mourners are coming from Jerusalem to comfort Martha and Mary (these few verses are rich in both materiality and sociality — the fabric of life).

Exchange with Martha

Martha goes out to meet Jesus and their engagement unfolds on a range of levels — as we will know from our own encounters with the death of loved ones. At first Martha seems to challenge Jesus: "If you had been here Lazarus would not have died — but even now you can ask God for his life". Even within her words there is hope. She recognises death as one of the limitations on human life, as well as hope in what is even stronger than death.

The exchange between Martha and Jesus can draw us to reflect on the relationships between life and death in the human community. Earth, itself, makes a space for and holds the profoundity of what is unfolding in the encounter in this Gospel.

The human encounter between Martha and Jesus deepens as Jesus invites Martha to consider the possibility of a return to life: a resurrection. Martha believes that resurrection belongs to the "last day" — it is a time factor. Jesus expands her consciousness of time and of place and space with: "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn 11:25).

Jesus's profound invitation is at a specific time — Jesus's arrival in Bethany in response to word of Lazarus's illness — and in a specific place — at the house of Martha, Mary and Lazarus in Bethany. Even so, Jesus's words shatter the boundaries of time and space and even life itself, as we know them: "If anyone believes in me, even though they die they will live. And whoever lives and believes in me they will never die" (Jn 11:25-26).

And for Us Today

Jesus's proclamation and invitation into life is addressed to Martha in the Johannine text. However, we hear the invitation today in a broader ecological framework. We might trace the way Jesus's claim to be resurrection and life, first heard by Martha, became a foundational belief of the community of faith through the ages. We can think of that belief being for the human community and also the Earth community.

Following the theological engagement between Jesus and Martha, the narrator returns readers to the situation at hand. Jesus is said to be in great distress and with a deep sigh asks where Lazarus has been laid. Material and social elements play within this narrative as the crowd interprets Jesus's emotional response: "See how much he loved him" (Jn 11:36). Others asked: "Why couldn't he have prevented Lazarus' death?" (Jn 11:37).

The narrator describes a typical tomb of first-century Jerusalem — a cave with a stone to close the entrance. The crowd, which has come to sympathise with Martha and Mary, has gathered at the tomb and Martha brings Jesus there. Death is symbolised by the stone firmly closing the mouth of the cave. Jesus instructs that they take the stone away. Then after praying, he calls Lazarus to come out of the grave.

We can find death and resurrection narratives of our day . . . species saved from extinction by efforts to restore their habitats; movements to curtail the proliferation of plastics in our waterways; contemplative practices that make us appreciate and reverence other life.

In these actions Jesus enacts the resurrection that he had spoken of earlier with Martha. The resurrection of Lazarus takes place in the material of a cave and rock and stone.

Jesus's final words are significant and powerful when read ecologically. Lazarus's feet and hands are bound with "bands of stuff" and a cloth is around his face. Jesus commands: "Unbind him and let him go free" (Jn 11:44). In this powerful climax Lazarus is restored to human life.

The narrative provides us with a challenge: can we as human community unbind all that our human-centred way of life has bound up in the other-than-human world? Can we change our way of living so that we recognise flora and fauna, animal and mineral as related to us and we to them in the Earth community? Maybe we can find death and resurrection narratives of our day — eg, species saved from extinction by efforts to restore their habitats; movements to curtail the proliferation of plastics in our waterways; contemplative practices that make us appreciate and reverence other life.

As we move towards Easter we can reflect on the deep meaning of Jesus's words: "I am the resurrection and the life" and practise them in our own discipleship.

Painting: *The Raising of Lazarus* by Giotto di Bondone
Commons Wikimedia.org

Elaine Wainwright is a biblical scholar specialising in eco-feminist interpretation and is currently writing a Wisdom Commentary on Matthew's Gospel.

MASS IN THE BAY

Catholic Māori of Te Tai Tokerau — Ngāpuhi, Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kuri, Te Rarawa and Ngāti Kahu — and manuhiri gathered on 19 January at St Joseph's in Kaitaia to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the first Eucharist in New Zealand waters. Although there are no official records of the event, Dominican Fr Paul-Antoine Léonard de Villefeix was on the French ship *Sainte Jean-Baptiste* anchored in Doubtless Bay from 17–31 December 1769. Given the customs of the time, he would have celebrated Mass at least once during this period. This was 45 years before Reverend Samuel Marsden's Christmas service at Rangihoua in 1814. It was also 69 years before Bishop Pompallier celebrated Mass in Mary and Thomas Poynton's home in January 1838.

Fr Villefeix would have celebrated Mass onboard the *Sainte Jean-Baptiste* captained by Jean-François-Marie de Surville. At that time it was customary for priests to say Mass daily and Sunday was a holy day of obligation for the laity. So Villefeix could have celebrated Mass on several occasions — the two Sundays the ship was anchored in Doubtless Bay, on Christmas Day and a requiem Mass for sailor Mathieu Lapieu, who died of scurvy and was buried at sea.

There are no records of Mass in the ship's logbook even though the Sainte Jean-Baptiste was from Catholic France and had Villefeix and Bretons on board. However, it was not unusual for events associated with the crew's piety to go unremarked. And the first lieutenant Labé, who maintained the ship's log, considered Villefeix somewhat inept and may not have thought his activities as chaplain worthy of note. In his research into the life of Villefeix, historian John Dunmore discovered that he left Paris for Pondicherry in India probably with the intention of being a missionary.

We might wonder about the significance of this event for Catholic Māori of Northland and for Aotearoa. It unsettles our firm ideas of when the first Christian service happened in New Zealand and adds other perspectives to Christian history and to the history of this country. It shows that we don't have a single linear history of New Zealand but many stories. They may interweave, support, question and contradict the credibility of the "official" account of memories, relationships and events of the past. In this country the perspectives of Māori iwi in the telling of history is vital, especially at this time when the history of New Zealand is to be compulsory in the school curriculum.

The celebration of this first Mass stands alongside a traumatic happening for Māori in Northland. At first relationships between De Surville and Māori were cordial. They traded much-needed green vegetables for European foodstuffs and cloth. But Māori hospitality was overrun. The records show that de Surville had a penchant for taking captives to replace his crew who had died of scurvy during his voyage in the Pacific. He captured Ranginui, a Ngāti Kahu chief, during a skirmish when Māori took the ship's dinghy that had drifted ashore after a storm. Ranginui died of scurvy on the journey across the Pacific. To date Māori have not received an acknowledgement or apology from the French government for Ranginui's kidnapping and death. The incident exemplifies the deep-seated trauma that such imperialistic behaviour inflicted on Māori. And it remains a source of mamae, grief and pain, for the Northern tribes. Without a moral response by the early European explorers and their governments, such murders and abuses perpetuated injustice, racism and worse on indigenous peoples.

So while we celebrate this event in Catholic history, we also acknowledge the imperialistic attitude of this European captain towards Māori, an attitude at the centre of much of our colonial history. And we celebrate the faithfulness of Māori Catholic in Northland who, despite their treatment, have shown the Gospel has firm, eucharistic roots among them.

Doubtless Bay by Rudmer Zwerver/Shutterstock.com

Brendan Bergin lives in West Auckland where he enjoys gardening, meditation, reading, exploring beaches and walking tracks. He is a Religious Education advisor.

Hospitality and Kindom

I've always liked new beginnings. I'm a person who enjoys journaling my goals and plans for the year. It's a time to reflect, not so much about specific resolutions that feel arbitrary and hard to stick to, but rather dreams and ideas. One of the dreams I want to work on this year is hospitality.

Flatting is often the first time in a young adult's life where whom you welcome and how doesn't come under a parent or guardian's jurisdiction. As a child, you have to put up with (I mean, welcome) any guests your family members may choose to have. But when you go flatting you have your first chance to run a household: shopping, cooking, cleaning, paying bills. Most importantly, as a group of flatmates we learn how to resolve disagreements, cooperate, look after each other and welcome our literal and figurative neighbours.

In the West, home ownership has become increasingly inaccessible through rising prices and widening inequality. Recent studies have shown New Zealand to be among the least affordable countries in the world for home ownership, and so flatting and house-sharing have become a common —and for longer periods and a wider demographic. This is especially true as many of my generation are getting married, having families and moving into their own homes later than was common 30 years ago.

Living with unrelated others isn't a new practice. It's what happened in the early Church: "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had" (Acts 4:32). In the 21st-century model, though, it can often be merely transactional, with people sharing bills and spaces but not life.

This year, I've chosen to live in an intentional community. We want to share radically with flatmates, our neighbours and the people beyond. Jesus was absolutely hospitable, not with a physical space but in the revolutionary new kindom he was declaring. And it wasn't just his friends he welcomed, fed, healed and listened to. He welcomed the people nobody liked, a motley collection of lepers, prostitutes, tax collectors, sinners, blind people and the crazy demon-possessed. In Jesus's kindom, wine, food, time and ideas were bountiful.

Thinking about welcoming the "wrong people" feels hard to me, because unlike friends, those on the edges are often less able to reciprocate hospitality. Most of me screams against generosity with time and money—I'm busy and poor, I justify to myself. I can't imagine ever being as open and liberal as Jesus.

But God is bigger than my lack of imagination. It's something to pray about, but also to do immediately, even in small ways. This year's community is a chance to define what Christians living together looks like for myself, my flatmates and the people around us. I know our hospitality will be messy and imperfect, just like all the people who will be part of it. But we can be willing to let God lead us to be more welcoming and open all the time.

A bit of the kindom might just appear.

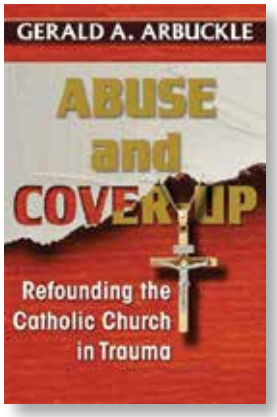
Shar Mathias enjoys reading, running, tramping, music and a lot of other things. She studies ecology and lives in Dunedin.

Abuse and Cover-Up: Refounding the Catholic Church in Trauma

by Gerald A Arbuckle
Published by Orbis Books, 2019
Reviewed by Michael Dooley

BOOK

This is an upsetting book on a number of levels. First of all, the author begins with the present day sexual abuse scandals and cover-up in the Church and details the trauma that it has caused. Second, the author suggests that the solution to the problem entails an upset, a radical cultural change in the Church. Gerald Arbuckle, a priest of the Society of Mary, approaches the issue as a cultural anthropologist. His conclusion is that the Church has never moved into the vision put forward at Vatican II. Problems such as clericalism, lack of accountability and cover-up of abuse are symptoms of a church culture that has lost touch with the Gospel. Arbuckle quotes Marie Keenan: "In an irony of the current situation, it may well be that the greatest impetus to change in the Catholic Church going forward will turn out to be child sexual abuse by Catholic clergy, and the strength that survivors of abuse have had in challenging the system that failed them." After analysing the problem, Arbuckle proposes that the Church needs to be "refounded" on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and suggests ways this can be done.



This is a worthwhile and challenging book for everyone in the Church to read.

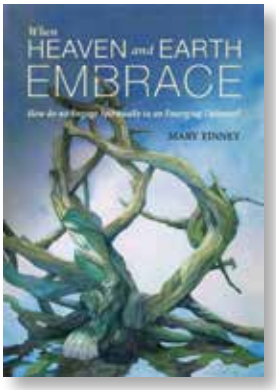
When Heaven and Earth Embrace: How Do We Engage Spiritually in an Emerging Universe?

by Mary Tinney
Published by Morning Star Publishing, 2019
Reviewed by Shaun Davison

BOOK

I visited the snowy burial site of my theologian hero Thomas Berry in 2013. His ecotheological insights inspired the setting up of the group "Earth Link" in Australia, which aims to foster "respect, reverence and care for the whole Earth community". Mary Tinney was a founding member of the group and this book is the fruit of her doctoral studies on the organisation and its five key principles.

It is an important book for all who are concerned about planet Earth. It links love of God and care of Earth to our Catholic tradition, to the Scriptures and in contemporary writing like *Laudato Si'*. The book is carefully constructed and discussion of the five key principles is easily understandable. It is not a dry academic discourse. It provides a theological and spiritual foundation for social action of caring for Earth. Berry said the "great work" of our day is the journey from acting in a way that devastates our home Earth, to adopting ways that are mutually beneficial to us, all living beings and the whole Earth community. This book provides some useful signposts for that journey.



The Dark Island: Leprosy in New Zealand and the Quail Island Colony

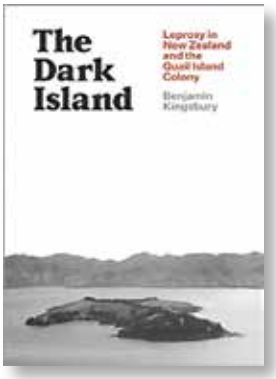
by Benjamin Kingsbury
Published by Bridget Williams Books, 2019
Reviewed by Margaret Gilroy Johnson

BOOK

Benjamin Kingsbury's meticulously researched *The Dark Island* tells the story of leprosy in New Zealand and how the disease was managed from 1906 to 1925. Sufferers were shepherded into quarantine on Quail Island in Lyttelton Harbour, isolated, shunned and shamed — sometimes for the rest of their lives. There was a great fear of leprosy at the time because it was infectious and incurable. The book tells the story of the men sufferers, their personalities and their lives on the island. It details their abysmal living conditions, their lack of amenities and the feuds among the support staff.

I finished this book when Coronavirus hit the headlines and the mass quarantine of people began. The amenities offered present day sufferers are in stark contrast to the lack of humanity shown the exiled patients on Quail Island. Winter on Quail Island was brutal for the sick, often bedridden, men. In the early days they had no nursing staff. The standout character was Dr Upham who visited each week to administer treatments, dress the wounds and provide human contact. He battled the Health Department unceasingly for better conditions for his patients.

This book detailing a slice of New Zealand history is well worth reading.



The Two Popes

Directed by Fernando Meirelles
Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

FILM

If I was to choose a metaphor to describe this film, it would be the dance — Francis (played by Jonathan Pryce) and Benedict (Anthony Hopkins) moving around each other, sometimes warily, sometimes with abandon, but always treating the other with courtesy and respect. The brief scene where Francis (then, of course, still Cardinal Bergoglio) attempts to teach Pope Benedict some basic tango steps brings the metaphor to life.

The film sets out to overturn preconceptions about the two men — Benedict as the dour intellectual and hardline conservative, Francis the radical who threw the rule book out the window. About halfway through the film we realise that these dancing partners have effectively changed places. Visiting Benedict at the pontiff's summer residence of Castel Gandolfo to tender his resignation as archbishop of Buenos Aires, which Benedict refuses, Bergoglio then finds himself having to dissuade the Pope from carrying out his own plan to vacate the Petrine office.

Despite this interchange, the two protagonists are not presented in equal depth. We are given Francis's back story in considerable detail, including his early attraction to football and to the young woman who looked set to become his wife, as well as the controversial years during the brutal rule of the military junta in Argentina, when his attempts to protect the Jesuits under his authority cast him as a collaborator in the eyes of many.

Benedict, by contrast, is not given a past life — we see him as a defeated, isolated, rather curmudgeonly figure who is nonetheless invested with humanity and the capacity for love. It is his spiritual insight that finally compels him to give up the papacy: "I can no longer hear God's voice".

There is so much that is fine about this film. The depth of feeling and understanding, the humanity of both men and the wonderful sets, from the garden at Castel Gandolfo to the splendours of the Sistine Chapel where the two popes cast almost jaunty figures as they sit beneath Michaelangelo's great frescoes. Above all, the dialogue — by Kiwi screenwriter Anthony McCarten — is fresh, witty and humane. How often in a movie are we privy to a conversation about the spiritual life that excites and stimulates us, rather than making us wince in embarrassment?

I'm uncertain if *The Two Popes* will have a general release – I saw it with friends on Netflix – but be sure not to miss this memorable and beautiful film.

CROSS CURRENTS

by Susan Smith

Universality of the Catholic Church

I attended the General Chapter of the Mission Sisters in Thailand last month, along with 60 other Sisters, most from Asia. The first Christian missionaries reached Thailand from Portugal in the 16th century, followed by French missionaries in the 17th century. Although by the 19th century there was a substantial number of foreign missionaries in Thailand, not many Thais became Catholic. Even with the influx of missionaries in the 20th century giving the Church a significant institutional presence, the number of Thai Catholics remains less than 1 per cent of the population. Most Thais—94 per cent—are Buddhist. About 4 per cent are Muslim—and are often harassed. Catholic schools, in which Catholic students are usually a minority, are highly regarded for their educational excellence. Since the mid 1900s the schools have had a signficant social outreach to refugee communities.

The composition of our General Chapter reflects the changing demographics of the Church. In 1969 there were three delegates from Asia at our General Chapter in England. Fifty years later, 32 delegates were from Asia, two from Latin American, four from Kenya and 16 were European. By 2044, it is projected that 92 per cent of our Sisters will be Asian. We had no foundations in Africa or Latin America until after Vatican II, and our number of Sisters from those countries is less than from our Asian provinces where the Mission Sisters went in 1883. We see this change in our New Zealand parishes, too, with Catholics from India, South Korea and the Philippines in the pews. It shows more of the universality of contemporary Catholicism.

More diverse congregations and clergy can be a good thing but it is important, too, that our liturgical and theological practice is in the spirit of Vatican II teachings. I've noticed a trend towards statues and images appearing in the churches and an increase in devotions—and I can't help but feel it's a backwards step. We need to engage in consultation to become united in our ethnically and culturally diverse parishes.

Bin Laden's Legacy

Saudi Arabian Osama Bin Laden was the mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks which led to the USA and its coalition partners, including New Zealand, invading Afghanistan. Now the newly released "Afghanistan Papers" have revealed that the invasion was muddled, confused and the source of suffering for the people of Afghanistan. Bin Laden's death in 2011 has not ended the terrorist attacks nor the fear and anxiety associated with them.

Those travelling by plane are confronted by numerous airport security checks. Security officers can be efficient, brusque and, sometimes, terrifying. These security checks eat up millions of dollars worldwide, cause travellers frustration—and have not stopped international terrorism.

Forest Fire Hazard

Is it worth covering more of Aotearoa with pinus radiatus? In January Aotearoa could have been described as the "land of the long brown cloud" as smoke from Australia blew across the Tasman. We need to rethink the forestry policy. Although fast-growing trees may bring economic returns they are also a fire hazard. Politicians need to consider what best serves the long-term needs of our country, including youth employment, in this environmentally-threatened age.

TUI MOTU InterIslands
The Independent Catholic Magazine Limited

Tui Motu magazine provides Catholic as well as ecumenical and inter-faith perspectives and discussion on current issues in church and society. It focuses particularly on issues affecting Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific. Its intent is to promote the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, engaging faith and the world through informed, thoughtful comment and discussion for a general readership. The magazine publishes 11 issues per year in print and regular digital postings on social media.

The magazine invites contributions from writers of Catholic and other Christian traditions or faith backgrounds, who can offer our readers insights which resonate with the Gospel as it affects us today. We value diversity and seek contributions which are representative of our church and our society: Maori, Pakeha, Pasifika, other cultures, a range of ages and genders, lay and ordained. We offer feature articles, interviews, reviews, poetry, comment and opinion on theology, spirituality and history, as well as on social justice and ecology.

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We welcome letters of comment, discussion, response, affirmation or argument of up to 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge longer letters, while keeping the meaning.

IGNATIAN SPIRITUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Finding God in the Dark by Monty Williams (*TM* February 2020) is in fact a manual taking me through the Ignatian Exercises as described in the article. I recommend it to those like myself who have a visual learning style. I have copies of the (59!) DVDs used and would be grateful to know of others in the Feilding area who would like to take on what is an absorbing study task.

Can I point out your magazine has within its monthly covers a delightful real time illustration of the "stagemental" nature of spiritual journeying? It's a syntax thing—when I compare (without being too patriarchal I hope) the writing of mother and daughters (Mathias) I see new beginnings and mature wisdoms that are both embraced by your editorship. Richard Rhor would love you all.

Dave McCann

AMERICAN LIVES LOST IN WAR

Recently I saw the blockbuster film *Midway*. While we faithfully remember the Anzacs of two World Wars, we should not forget the heroic sacrifice of thousands of young Americans who died in the many naval battles of the Pacific in WWII. The film *Midway* is a very potent portrayal of just one of those battles, certainly, the most important one, as it proved to be the turning point in the war.

Max Palmer, Southern Star Abbey

ECONOMIC MOTIVATION

In "Trump and the Evangelicals" (*TM* February 2020) Peter Matheson does an excellent job unpacking things which make no sense to us in New Zealand. Why would blue collar workers vote against universal healthcare?

I believe the problem is economic as well as political and religious. Since the war of independence 250 years ago money has dominated the American psyche. In the last election Trump ran 5.9 million ads and Hillary Clinton 66,000—at what cost?

Going back to the 17th century, money was the trigger and the commercial types were the kingpins. A significant starter was the Boston Tea Party opposing taxation. The militia fighting the War of Independence had to hire their muskets from the merchants. The Federal Government licensed US ships to capture British vessels. Federal troops were woefully short of artillery but the government had to bid at auction for the cannons captured off British ships. Soldier and Republican President Eisenhower referred to the military-industrial complex.

But as Matheson points out all is not lost. Eisenhower sent 2,000 crack paratroops to enforce the enrolment of nine negro students at Little Rock High School, Arkansas as ordered by the Supreme Court. Then, as often now, the opposition was violent and widespread. But the current Head Student at Little Rock High School is African American—so there is hope. Let's heed Peter Matheson's conclusion: "They need our compassion and our prayers."

***Dennis Veal** (abridged)*

If you or someone you know has been abused by a Catholic priest or member of a religious congregation, we urge you to seek counselling and healing. You do not have to report the abuse to the Church, but if you do the Church will take your story seriously — even if you prefer to remain anonymous, and even if the abuse happened many years ago. Your call will be taken with sensitivity and confidentiality.

If you'd like to make a complaint please contact the **National Office of Professional Standards:** 0800 114 622 or email: prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz

Survivor Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP)
Call or text: 022 3440496
email: aotearoa-newzealand@snapnetwork.org
Website: www.snapnetwork.org

Looking OUT and IN

Now in late winter it is mostly easy to weave across the forest floor between the Himalayan oak, Deodar cedar and rhododendron trees. At this time the cold has pushed back all the leafy undergrowth so thick in monsoon. Now there are no nettles, no jack-in-the pulpit plants and the green leaves of kalighas that made it through winter stand forlorn and translucent. The first tiny ground-violets appeared on the forest floor a week ago, but the general sense of the forest is holding on and holding still.

Now, in late winter, the birds and animals are quieter, too. The dogs are curled up by heaters and bukharis (fire-boxes) inside. Many birds prefer winter down in the Dehradun valley 1,500m below us, as do many of the people of Mussoorie. The cuckoo and fly-catchers have flown south where winter is mild and warmer. A few stoic birds remain. The Himalayan griffin circles high above us, catching warm thermals rising from this watery lemon sun. The Himalayan magpie, trailing her showy tail hops and pecks, looking around for approval. There are others too, small, nondescript but busy, and I don't know their names.

Now, in late winter, the plants in pots outside our front door, imports from warmer climes, have suffered greater winter injury than the forest species. While we were fossicking among tarns and sunny tussock far away in New Zealand's summer, they endured weeks of snow and frosts. Their leaves are frost-blackened, lank and sullen. Yet irrepressible, underneath the black leaves are spikes of green and hopes for the spring. As the days lengthen and sunlight grows lusty there is perhaps a growing forgiveness for these winter injuries. Perhaps late winter is a time to let go of leaf losses and to resolve on chlorophyll and spring.

This month Jeph and I celebrated 25 years together — 25 years since our wedding on the flower-spangled hills of the South Waikato. So many adventures, so much fun, so much tenderness and beauty in parenting and sharing life together. Like most long-term human relationships, we have also had to deal with occasional snowfalls and have sustained frost-blackened leaves. Unwittingly and often we seem to inflict assaults on those we love. Forgiveness, a core of the Gospel, is core also to my marriage and all my long-term friendships. Being willing to let go of the injury, being willing to give someone another chance. Being willing to say sorry and believe in being given another chance, in grace and lengthening days ahead.

Kaaren Mathias lives on the outskirts of a busy bazaar, on steep forested hills above the Gangetic plains of North India. She is a parent, adventurer, public health doctor and follower of Jesus of Galilee.

Bless us
with tendrils of growth
that strengthen and blossom
into insight, gratitude and
commitment
ripening and again becoming
new tendrils
Creating God

From the Tui Motu team