



# TUI MOTU

InterIslands

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## BE INCLUSIVE Huri Noa

PETER CULLINANE, TUI CADIGAN & CECILY McNEILL  
on engaging with Te Tiriti

CHRISTOPHER LONGHURST & ROBERT MICKENS  
on praying together



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#### Cover Photo:

*Neither Controlling Nor Dominating  
Just Sharing*  
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## EDITORIAL

### Being Inclusive

I find that practising inclusion is a life-long adventure. Inclusion is one of the relationship ingredients for building communities and creating communion. Some people around me are good at it — they hone their sense of hospitality not just for issuing invitations but for seeing and accepting opportunities to become more inclusive. They don't let self-consciousness limit them. It can be encouraging and exhausting to live in their proximity because their goodness in this area creates a swirl which sweeps those on the edges into the eddy of relationships. Therein we face those who are "different from us" and if we're at all self-reflective, our judgement is called into question. We're encouraged to unpick our finely woven exclusionary opinions — many of them inherited, others our own work coloured by influences from our religion, culture and media.

Sometimes the process is a wake-up call. Several years ago a reader asked why we italicised words in te reo Māori in the magazine — the convention for words from other languages. Didn't we realise that te reo is an official language in Aotearoa? That question opened our eyes and there-and-then we stopped treating te reo as "foreign". That change was an incremental step — we acknowledge it was taken long after time — in our structural inclusiveness. That's an example of how those who are aware and brave enough to ask the questions, like our reader, help us identify and change our exclusionary attitudes and practices.

Other times becoming more inclusive is like a painful unpicking of knot after knot. We've been challenging the patriarchal and misogynistic underpinnings of some Church traditions for years. These are the traditions that keep power and authority in the hands of men as a Divine right. The call for Church to change tradition to include women and children in a more authentic relationship as images of God has come up again lately in Aotearoa and around the world in conversations directed to the Synod on Synodality.

In his exclusively-named but inclusively-intentioned encyclical on social friendship, *Fratelli Tutti* (Brothers All), Pope Francis meditated on the parable of the Good Samaritan as an example for community building in our pandemic affected world. He wrote: "Love is more than a series of benevolent acts ... It impels us towards universal communion ... It calls for growth in openness and the ability to accept others as part of a continuing adventure that makes every periphery converge in a greater sense of belonging."

Among the articles in this issue, some writers offer reflections on how the peripheries might converge through inclusive relationships. We thank all those who contributed their faith, research and writing, artistry and craft to make this an interesting and thoughtful magazine.

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



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# A Wide Sky for Writing Dreams

**D**riving into Ōtūrēhua on a Saturday afternoon last month I slowly exhaled. I had a whole week to focus on myself. The more than 40 year-old housetruck was immediately apparent in the small camping ground of the higgledy-piggledy Crows Nest accommodation. It served as my home for the next seven days and nights. And it was where I wrote at a tiny wooden table crammed between an old dresser and the gas stove, gazing through the window at the still snow-capped peaks of the Hawkdun Range. This is the area painted repeatedly by Grahame Sydney. And the ranges which depict a canine shadow in Jane Campion's film *The Power of the Dog*.

So far, the Rough Ridge Writers' Retreat programme has supported 28 existing and aspiring writers of memoirs, poetry, non-fiction, crime fiction and even an international thriller! It was originally organised by Mike Riddell, Ōtūrēhua resident and frequent contributor to *Tui Motu*, who died in March. His presence was keenly missed at the 2022 Writers' Retreat, as it is elsewhere, but his legacy lives on in the willingness of this extraordinary community in the Maniototo to press ahead with providing an oasis of creativity in the midst of busy lives and tumultuous world events.

Mike Riddell described the Maniototo as a place where the sky is big enough to contain and cherish all dreams. Ōtūrēhua, or Rough Ridge as it was once known, lies in the Ida Valley on the western flank of the Maniototo. For those who are unaware of one of the best-kept-secret places in Aotearoa, the Maniototo is a high-altitude plain in Central Otago surrounded by mountain ranges and divided by rivers and creeks. Ōtūrēhua, population 36, has been a Māori food-gathering and quarrying area, a gold rush site, sheep and cattle farming hub and a home to various creative people. They include: Rosemary Riddell, writer, speaker, actor, film director and previously district court judge; Jillian Sullivan, novelist, poet and essayist; Brian Turner, former NZ poet laureate; Bridget Auchmuty, poet and writer; and Paula Wagemaker, editor, author and publisher.

These talented and generous people created a week-

long programme of workshops, panel discussions and speakers, largely focused on the theme of the environment. We heard from renowned author Philip Temple about his lifelong quest to understand, write about and save the kea, our increasingly endangered alpine parrot, natural history specialist Neville Peat on tuning into our native environment and Dunedin-based poet Diane Brown on the four ways of meaning: solar (surface), lunar (underlying), how it sounds and how it looks on the page.

For me, a budding crime writer, this may have seemed remote from an urban world of grim murderous deeds and the pursuit of a perpetrator by the intrepid protagonist. Not so.

An afternoon spent outside alone, asked to look, listen, smell, taste and feel the environment and then to utilise those experiences to layer landscape and weather into writing was a transformative experience. As was another afternoon spent discussing the voice used in our writing and the difference between the "I" and the "eye".

So much of our lives is spent with our heads down, scurrying from task to task. Now and then we stop to rest or to holiday in a pre-planned treat. The weeks, months and years flow and occasionally we ask ourselves: "Is this it?"

My week in Ōtūrēhua was a rare opportunity to think, look about me, to imagine and then to begin writing. As my second book continues to take shape I am grateful for the time allowed and time taken. And Mike Riddell's words resonate in me: "A writer is someone who writes."

This experience is a reminder to take time for our passions. For if not now, then when? 📖

Photo by Janice Chen/Shutterstock.com

**Clare Curran**, former MP, is a committed advocate and representative on social justice issues and now writer of novels.





The Church in our country is greatly indebted to the Religious Orders to whom the “Māori Mission” was entrusted. These were mainly the Society of Mary, the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, the Mill Hill Missionaries and the Congregation of Our Lady of the Missions. Their work continues to bear fruit, and any alterations to pastoral practices need to safeguard the right of Māori to continue to experience life and worship in the Church in ways that are natural to them.

Nevertheless, a Māori Mission running in parallel with parishes had serious unintended side-effects: the parishes became European-monocultural, and diocesan priests received little or no training for ministry to Māori. These factors ensured that most Māori would not feel “at home” in our parish church celebrations of Eucharist.

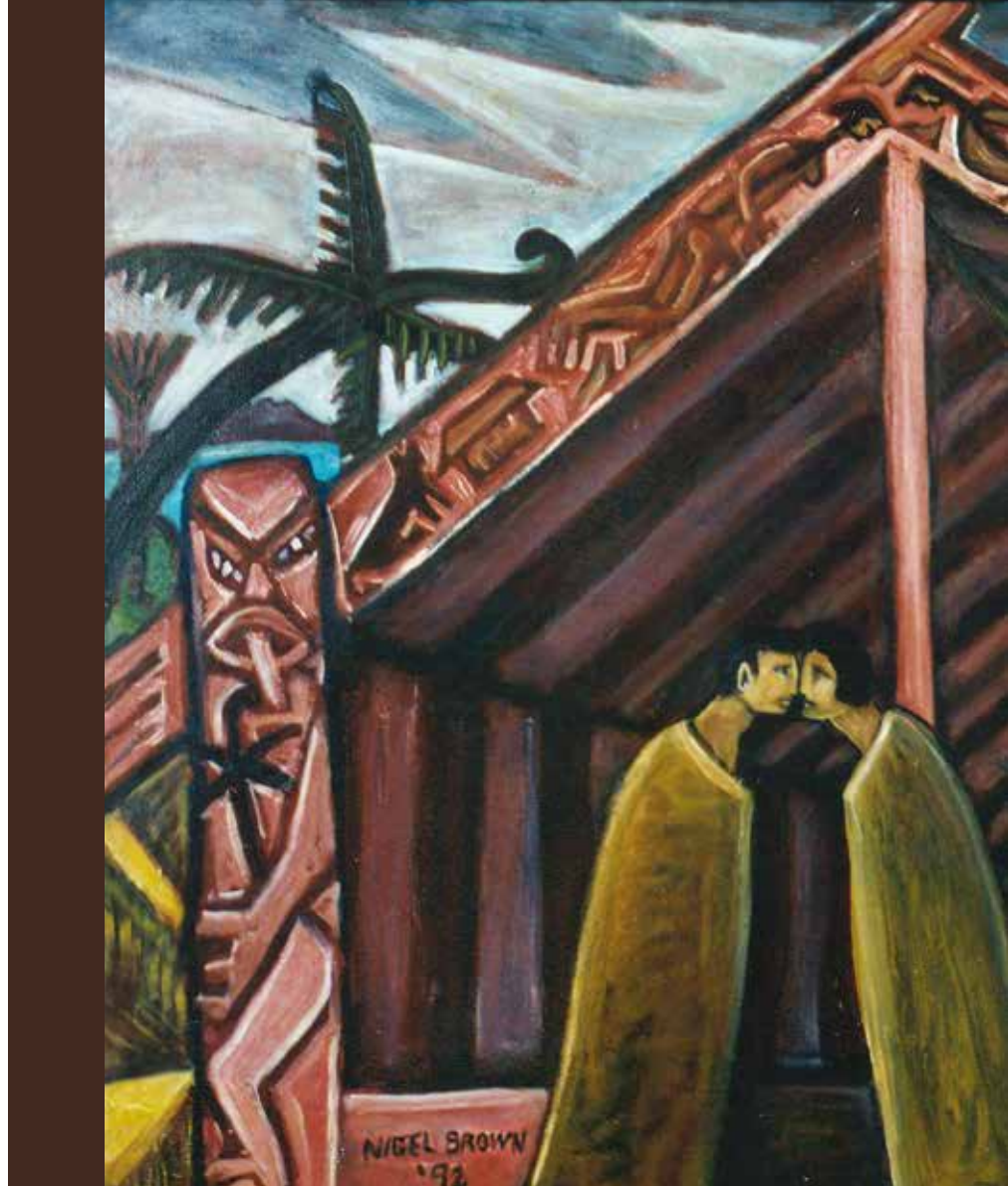
### Focus on Inclusion

Against that background, our more concerted efforts in recent years to introduce te reo into parish Eucharists seems a tiny gesture, but it has to do with recognition of tangata whenua, inclusion and belonging. Of course it would be mere tokenism if it were not to follow through in all the ways required by respect for the rights of Māori in wider society, and for Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Eucharistic life involves the rejection of racial prejudice and discrimination wherever these occur.

### Awareness of Prejudice

Prejudice is mainly unconscious, which is why it is often denied. But it can also be mischievous. Affirmative action has long since been accepted as an important way of off-setting serious disadvantages experienced by various groups within society, and of meeting “special needs”. It is about creating equality of opportunity and is sometimes called “levelling the playing field”.

But when affirmative action of various kinds is proposed as an offset to disadvantages experienced by Māori, it somehow turns out to be “privilege based on race”. Familiar examples follow, but the point here is that “land settlements” on their own do not undo the downstream social and economic



## EUCHARIST AND TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

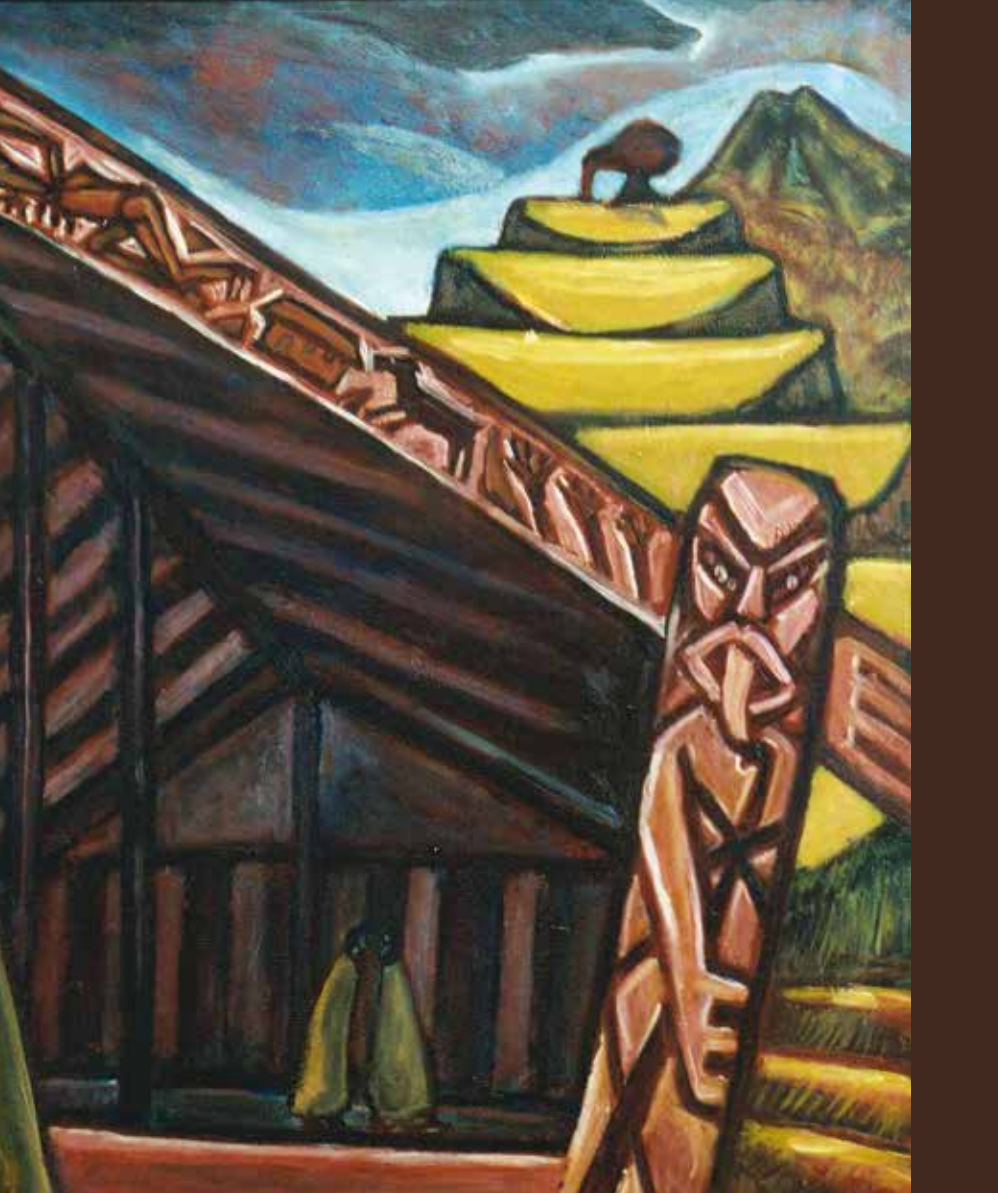
PETER CULLINANE writes that actions such as using te reo during Eucharist help us become more inclusive in our daily lives.

consequences of the land confiscations, and other losses that cannot be measured in monetary terms. This has particular application in the areas of health and education. Redressing harmful imbalances is a matter of natural justice and would have been so even if there had been no Treaty.

“Co-governance” is a way of accepting cultural diversity, as well as a form of affirmative action. The inclusion of Māori wards on local councils, for example, is intended to offset the disadvantage of people whose cultural perspectives can be excluded when “one person one vote” ensures domination by a majority’s cultural perspectives. It does not involve

separatism, as some falsely claim; it is a way of *working with* each other. Other openings for representation and participation, based on subsidiarity, power sharing and partnerships, help to ensure that “one person one vote” does not become a tyranny. Importantly, it allows different cultural perspectives, like those relating to the management of water and conservation practices generally, to be included in decision-making.

The refrain “one law for all” is also discriminatory because it is based on the assumption that people are “equal” only if they are all treated “the same”. This is naïve because people’s basic needs can be different



— whether they result from personal circumstances, cultural differences, historical injustices or social and economic deprivation.

Similarly, bland references to us being “one people” contradict the very idea of a treaty which is an exchange between two peoples (tangata whenua and tauīwi), entered into at the time of their coming together to form one nation. The obligations accepted in the articles of the Treaty must carry over into the future, or the Treaty will have no meaning at all. Even in our multicultural society there are still tangata whenua and those who came more recently.

Legal arguments about the status or the interpretation of the Treaty do not excuse from responsibility. There is still a moral obligation to ask what was the reason for entering a treaty, and what the parties hoped to achieve.

### Reason for Treaty

When the Colonial Secretary asked Captain Hobson to seek out a Treaty

with the “Natives”, he gave this explanation: “I have already stated that we acknowledge N.Z. as a sovereign and independent State... Admission of their [Māori] rights is binding on the faith of the British Crown. The Queen disclaims for herself, and for her subjects, every pretence to seize on the islands of N.Z., or to govern them as part of the Dominion of Great Britain, unless the free and intelligent consent of the Natives shall first be obtained.” (Note that this explanation of British intentions does not reflect the so-called Doctrine of Discovery.)

The preamble to the articles of the Treaty shows that the need for effective government was the principal reason for the Treaty.


In Article One of the Māori text, the term kāwanatanga was coined to indicate governance which was being ceded to the Crown, and in Article Two the term tino rangatiratanga was used to indicate Māori’s continuing chieftainship over their lands, customs

and all else that was important to them. Bishop Pompallier, who had participated in the proceedings, noted in his diary what he understood by this: “Their [the Māori] idea is that N.Z. is like a ship, the ownership of which should remain with the N.Zers [Māori], and the helm in the hands of the Colonial authorities.”

### Eucharist Influences Inclusivity

Our celebrations of Eucharist are meant to feed into our daily lives. In this way, the use of te reo in parish Eucharists should whet our appetites for the kind of hospitality, listening, sense of community and inclusiveness that we have been talking about on the synodal journey. Perhaps a next step is to experience Eucharist on a marae and to recognise Māori’s warm and welcoming ways, and how these properly belong to the gathering stage of coming together for Eucharist.

Respect for the rights of the home people can be only a first step in our reaching out to the many others in our society who suffer from inequalities which derive from social and economic policies, or from “special needs”. It also involves our support for other ethnic groups who can be victims of racial prejudice. Anything less than a prophetic stand for all these is less than Eucharistic.

Failure to address racial and cultural prejudice as well as failure to redress disadvantages deriving from personal, social or economic conditions affecting any groups in society, can be evidence of the Second Vatican Council’s claim that “the split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age” (*Gaudium et Spes* par 43). 

Painting: *The Meeting House* by Nigel Brown © 1992 oil on board 840 x 1240 Used courtesy of Nigel Brown and Susan McLaughlin [www.nigelbrown.co.nz](http://www.nigelbrown.co.nz)

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# Māori and Church

TUI CADIGAN asks if Māori katorika have given up on the Church or has the Church given up on Catholic Māori.

**H**ow easy is it to identify Māori in your local Catholic parish or diocesan organisation? Even being a baptised Catholic for more than 70 years and with 30 years of continuous involvement with Te Rūnanga o te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa, I find the search like doing a "Where's Wally?" puzzle. I know Māori are there somewhere but I find no obvious signs of their presence, and I am hugely concerned by our invisibility as a people in the Catholic Church. Am I the only person left wondering where have all the Māori gone?

There have been historic signs of hope. I think of the place of Pihopa Pompallier at the 1840 signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and his insistence on the inclusion of the fourth article

protecting all faiths. And the ordination of the first Māori priest, Wiremu Te Āwhitu in 1944, and the appointment of Pihopa Takuira Mariu as Assistant Bishop to Hamilton in 1988.

I think, too, of the establishing of Te Rūnanga as an advisory body for the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) and the development of a Māori theological perspective led by Pā Henare Tate in the 1990s and taught through the University of Auckland. The work of Te Rūnanga in producing *Te Kaupapa o te Iwi Māori* (The Māori Pastoral Care Plan) meant Māori expectations were high!

When Pihopa Takuira passed away in 2005, Pā Tate was the face of the Church for Māori until his death on 1 April 2017.

Today, there are a number of Māori deacons, but their place in the hierarchical structure means the mana and voice of Tangata Whenua is diminished.

## Church Lags in Māori Leadership

It is disturbing to see the Church lagging behind other sectors of society in establishing Māori leadership roles.

Māori women and men hold positions in governance, education, health, the arts, on local bodies and community boards. Yet I wonder how many Māori are in paid employment across the six Catholic dioceses? Other cultures are represented, even new migrants with minimal English. Why are Māori absent?

Two dioceses have an appointed

Vicar for Māori and another has a person who is seen to act in the role. Currently the NZCBC is restructuring Te Rūnanga o Te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa to trial a new model with a number of Māori sitting at the NZCBC table to contribute a Māori perspective to discussions. Those who will begin the process are of similar age, mainly academically qualified and all from Northern Iwi. Time alone will show the impact.

However, where I want to see a shift is in parishes, Catholic Education offices, theological institutions, school boards and the Nathaniel Centre. These organisations have a powerful voice in Catholic communities and society generally. These are the places that can change the face of the Church.

### **Māori Need to Be Visible**

I don't see the value in one Māori on a board or merely changing a group's letterhead and name into te reo. Those are superficial gestures that call for no actual change in their functioning. Change has to be at a deeper level.

Only when the controlling group in the Church begins to feel less comfortable, less controlling and less certain the norm is set by them, will we begin to have a real relationship. Our proportionately young Māori population has the potential to shift this balance.

As a University student in the 1990s I wrote a paper that asked questions about what I saw happening in the education sector. Māori could study from Te Kōhanga Reo/pre-school to Māori Studies at University level and yet there was no parallel faith-based strand being developed by the Church to accompany it.

Now, 30 years later, there is real growth in academia and across society more generally – Māori achievement is evident everywhere. Why not in the Church?

Māori are a deeply spiritual people but their faith aspirations have not been developed within the Catholic Church. Younger Māori are walking away because they see no place in the Church for them.

Parishes seem to lack relationship

with mana whenua, and te reo in liturgy rarely happens except in a few unique parishes who have made a commitment to honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi by using te reo at Eucharist.

It is not impossible to get Māori to engage but it requires energy and the presence of a Māori face to draw them in.

### **Pandemic Created Opportunities**

The pandemic provided opportunities for meaningful engagement. I found it uplifting during Lockdown to see many online karakia (prayer), regular evenings with hīmene (hymns) and Scripture reflections from an iwi perspective were shared to nourish the spirit and provide whakawhānaungatanga to the whānau.



**Māori women and men hold positions in governance, education, health, the arts . . . Yet I wonder how many Māori are in paid employment across the six Catholic dioceses? Other cultures are represented . . . Why are Māori absent?**

It was surprising how many different groups across the motu (country) led or participated in online worship. I learned new hīmene led by pakeke (adults), rangatahi (young people) and tamariki (children).

Online activity like this reaches not only our people here but many overseas also. Why isn't this medium being used by the Church to draw in those who crave support and to identify those individuals with talents that might link in others?

Some groups said the Rosary, often with very young people taking the lead. One husband and wife from the Far North led karakia with hīmene morning and evening for weeks which was ideal for busy people. The use of te reo and hīmene were the drawcards that kept people tuning in. But then the restrictions were over and these online activities ceased.

I would like to think all people are engaged in their local faith communities again, but I doubt it. Māori katorika need to do some serious soul-searching as to what the responsibilities and rights demand of them as baptised Catholics. New Zealanders, including Māori, have

become very vocal about their rights but are not as loud when it comes to responsibilities.

### **Church to Hui with Māori**

The Church definitely has issues to face as an institution. These include: the huge issue of abuse and the need to actively seek a just response to the Royal Commission's findings; appropriate support of an ageing clergy; and embracing the aspirations of Vatican II through activating the role of the lay faithful.

It is not an acceptable solution to reduce the number of parishes, sell off surplus properties and import clergy from overseas who have scant knowledge of the Aotearoa context, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, or relationship with mana whenua. Pope Francis has

spoken and written against clericalism in the Church yet I still hear clergy defending it.

I am aware that the experiences of Māori in the Synod on Synodality are missing. That there is no mention of the feedback from Māori in the New Zealand National Synod synthesis document shows that the voice of Māori was absorbed and then lost.

There is no benefit to Māori from apologies, wonderfully crafted statements on Te Tiriti principles, or more pilgrimages. How should the Church progress Katorika Māori/Catholic Māori concerns? Our process is hui, and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* offers a lead to the brave and the just. 📖

Photo: Altar Carving in St Joseph's Church, Hiruhārama (Jerusalem), Whanganui River







# EVOLVING in Partnership

CECILY McNEILL shows how understanding Te Tiriti o Waitangi can help Aotearoa recover from racism.

**T**he director of the choir to which I belong recently decided against programming a much-loved Christmas hymn, *Te Harinui*. New Zealand singer/songwriter Willow Macky wrote this song in the late 1950s and it was recorded by Kiwi Pacific in 1964. It was then presented to the direct descendant of Samuel Marsden.

Our choir has sung it at Christmas many times but this time the words “the Māori people heard / the great and glorious word” and later “...heard the preacher say, / ‘I bring to you this day’...” struck the ear with their paternalism. They seemed to express the very heart of colonisation — the belief that the colonisers were

bringing something better, uplifting even, to the “savages”.

## Colonial Beginnings Revisited

Gordon McLauchlan in *A Short History of the New Zealand Wars* describes the confusion of soldiers when they saw “Māori demonstrations of tactical and psychological superiority . . . especially the colonists for whom it was essential to believe that . . . they were bringing enlightenment and civilisation to a backward people.”

Pākehā New Zealanders are slowly realising that they are not the superior race but descendants of a migrant people who must now learn to share the land with those who were here centuries earlier.

Not many years ago te reo was rarely heard outside the marae. But, today, there has been a swing towards learning the language and the Government has a goal of one million basic speakers by 2040. But is learning te reo enough to right the wrongs a colonising nation has visited on tangata whenua? To what extent do te reo classes give an understanding of te ao Māori? How many of those rushing to learn te reo understand Te Tiriti o Waitangi — that it was an agreement or partnership between the British Crown and tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand when a degree of lawlessness reigned over the land, courtesy of marauding whalers?



## Twists in Framing Te Tiriti

Dame Anne Salmond has written extensively on the Treaty's context and how, until 1986, Te Tiriti was understood as a partnership between two peoples. It was only when the Court of Appeal heard a New Zealand Māori Council case to test a Government plan to transfer some 10 million hectares of land and other assets owned by the Crown to State Owned Enterprises that the Treaty changed. Bearing in mind that this was happening during the neoliberal experiment we came to know as "Rogernomics", when privatisation was in vogue, the Council feared that once this transfer had been achieved, the land would no longer be available for Treaty settlements. Was this plan consistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi?

The Appeal Court practically rewrote the Treaty as a "partnership between races", "between Pākehā and Māori" or "between the Crown and the Māori race", one that creates responsibilities analogous to fiduciary duties" and "requires the Pākehā and Māori Treaty partners to act towards each other reasonably and in the utmost good faith", to find a "true path to progress for both races." There was no mention of race or ethnicity in the original Treaty. Yet here the two partners are reduced to cultural differences.

Analysts have attributed the growth of racism in this country to the 1986 judgement of the Court of Appeal led by Lord Cooke of Thorndon. As well as the dichotomy of Māori/Pākehā, it introduces white/black, civilised/savage, the West/the rest, science/superstition and Kiwi/iwi which are at the heart of racist thinking in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Challenge to Our Racism

As Christians, called to see everyone as equal — "no longer Jew nor Greek, no longer slave nor free, no longer male and female for all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28) — this poses a challenge. How can Aotearoa undo some 35 years of overtly racist thinking on top of the land confiscations, wars and wrongful treatment that arrived with settlers

from Britain in the early 1900s?

We have seen how Māori were regarded as uncivilised in the ways of "wiser" colonisers. A Christian response might be a complete reversal of this. As our country undergoes increasingly catastrophic storms with escalating global warming, we could start a partner's honouring of Te Tiriti by listening to the connection Māori show with te whenua. How does the land tell us of its suffering? How can we be sensitive to the pain of the whenua? How can we evolve from the Christian thinking manifest in the Catholic Church of Aotearoa New Zealand which promotes, in practice at least, the racism inherent in the country's cultural as well as economic and political systems?

**Pākehā New Zealanders are slowly realising that they are not the superior race but descendants of a migrant people who must now learn to share the land with those who were here centuries earlier.**

## New Ways Open to Us

We need to leave the old ways in the past and seek a new way of being Christ to others in our country. American theologian Ilia Delio in *The Emergent Christ* writes of a new expansive consciousness, attuned to science and ecologically oriented. "A new way of being Christian in the world that includes shared power between women and men ... recognition and respect of indigenous people ... and development of needed reforms in the Church initiated by Vatican II." In short, Christianity needs to evolve.

In a partnership between tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti, we tangata Tiriti need to practise listening compassionately to the whenua and its tangata. We need to reinvent ourselves as beings of the universe, halting long-distance travel to stay local and preserve our environment — listening, quietening, watching

with awesome respect our planetary space. This new attitude is one that evolves to meet the demands of the environment and the call of Māori into te ao Māori.

I am part of a small group devising a series of online workshops for 2023 and growing a movement where we explore the concept of two peoples living relationally with each other and with the environment. Our thinking is based on the whāriki or woven mat which is open-ended to encompass change in every direction. The three main themes are — mana motuhake/ending colonisation, papatūānuku/care for Earth and whakawhanaungatanga/working relationally to mesh with ko wai a tātou/our identity, he aha to tātou pono/beliefs and he aha te kaupapa/our mission.

We will focus on informing ourselves politically, economically and culturally. We aim to support each other to end colonisation in Aotearoa, transform ourselves in our humanity to become fully integrated within the natural world and to encourage action from our shared reflection, working for environmental justice at all levels.

We aim to create a safe space where we can learn to understand the crises that face us — a space of connection between tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti and between humanity and the environment. From there we can encourage action, always taking care to question who holds power, who makes decisions, who stands to benefit and what the long-term consequences will be — for those on the margins and for our world. 📖

Painting: *The Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, February 6th, 1840* by Marcus King (1891-1983) Ref: G-821-2. Used with permission Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand

**Cecily McNeill** is a Wellington journalist who has a 37-year-old passion for social justice which she delights in finding new ways to communicate.





# FROM POLAND TO OTAGO

PETER MATHESON shares the story of the emigration of a group of Polish people to Otago in the late 1800s.

With Syria, Ukraine and Myanmar in mind we could think of refugees as a modern problem, but unfortunately, it is not new at all. The so-called “Barbarian Invasions” broke up the Roman Empire and helped to create what we know as Europe. And the 19th century saw the mass migrations of famine-stricken Irish and persecuted Jews. Aotearoa has been impacted by the push and pull dynamics of emigration. One significant but largely unknown aspect of this was the decision of Polish families to set sail for New Zealand. We are about to celebrate the 150th anniversary of their arrival on the *Palmerston*, landing in Port Chalmers, Dunedin, on 6 December 1872.

## Entering a Foreign Culture

The extent of the challenge for these young families can

be inconceivable to us now. In language, culture and lifestyle Poland and colonial New Zealand could hardly have been more different. There was little in the Polish experience to parallel the bicultural reality of Aotearoa. Most Pākehā around Dunedin spoke only English, unlike the Poles, for whom French, Russian and German were part of their cultural repertoire. The terrible suffering of Poland over the centuries, torn between Russia and Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was alien to many in New Zealand — although not to Māori who had been dispossessed of much of their land in the New Zealand wars. The passionate Catholic faith and piety of Poland, likewise, had little to correspond with it in largely Presbyterian Otago.

These early Polish emigrants were labourers and small farmers, with limited knowledge of the

world beyond their villages. There were some tradesmen, too: tailors, cobblers, bakers. They had left precious family links and relationships, the communities and churches where they had been baptised and married, where their ancestors were buried. They left with little hope of being able to return. Mickiewicz sums it up: “*Bywaj zdrow, kraju kochany / My native land — Good Night.*”

Like all settlers from Europe they endured a three-month voyage in the cramped conditions of a sailing ship manned often by a brusque German captain and his crew. The illustrations of ships, like the *Palmerston*, remind us how diminutive they were. The passengers were tossed about by storms, endured sea-sickness, suffered from the heat, illnesses and the disgusting food. Women gave birth in these awful conditions. And all the adults lived with the uncertainty about what awaited them.



## Making New Homes

The first generation had it tough. They were torn between two worlds. They had had to leave Poland, pushed by fear of conscription into the Russian armies, by poverty or by the pressures of Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. But when they arrived in New Zealand, they were classified as German.

They settled south of Dunedin in Allanton and Waiholā and found work draining the swamps on the Taieri plain to convert into farmland. Survival and assuring the future of their children was their priority. Despite already speaking other languages, learning English was difficult, defeating some of them, at least for a while.

And yet with time and effort they carved out a new future. They found that they were valued in their communities. Within a decade or so many were able to raise a deposit on some land. Little nucleated settlements began to appear with their own sod cottages in places like Allanton. They practised their faith and on feast days, particularly, joined with fellow Catholics in their new land.

The men and children learnt English because of their opportunities – the men through their work and the children, rubbing shoulders with other children at school, were soon fluent. Families kept up Polish or German at home.

After a decade or so the families applied and were accepted for citizenship. Surviving photos show them posed in their best outfits, the men in suits, the women in flowing black dresses.

Settling in New Zealand was never easy, of course. We read of the deaths of mothers in childbirth, of an infant drowned in the Clutha River, of a man falling from his bicycle under the wheels of a traction engine. Yet these new settlers were of robust stock. Most lived well into their 70s or 80s. So the gamble to escape the politically and culturally oppressive Russian, Prussian and Austro-Hungarian regimes, had paid off.

It may not have been the promised land flowing with milk and honey, but they were relieved of fear and had adequate food and shelter –

peace and hope. Gradually, little Polish communities bonded together, and they found a centre in the local Catholic church. Sometimes they helped build the church. The women kept the show going, cooked Polish food, put up with their occasionally boozed-up husbands and preserved their customs. The records show that these women were among the first to push for women's suffrage.

## New Wave after WWII

This first wave of Polish emigration in the 1870s came to an end, and there was a gap until a new wave arrived after the Second World War. Again their country had been invaded by the Russian and German armies.



**It may not have been the promised land flowing with milk and honey, but they were relieved of fear and had adequate food and shelter — peace and hope. Gradually little Polish communities bonded together, and they found a centre in the local Catholic church.**

The profile of the new immigrants was different from their predecessors. First there were the children. This was the initiative of Prime Minister Peter Fraser, prompted by his wife, to welcome 755 children to Pahiātua. Many of these children were orphans who had been housed in Siberia before coming to Aotearoa.

There were also “displaced” people – they had endured Nazi forced labour or concentration camps.

And there were the Polish officers and men who had fought for Britain or in the Polish army, and wanted no truck with the Communist régime that had overtaken Poland after the War.

The immigrants set about imbibing the culture as well as adding to the diversity of New Zealand.

The Polish orphans found a home and education in Pahiātua, mainly through the agency of the Catholic Church, and when they had grown up moved into the wider community. Some Catholic priests, like Tom Fahey of Dunedin, seem to have had a particular empathy with their Polish parishioners.

Esmond Klimeck was the first

man of Kociewian-Polish descent to be ordained a Catholic priest in New Zealand in 1920. Then in his 40s he joined the Dominican friars and ministered overseas as well as in Aotearoa.

His sister Rosalie and her husband Thomas Prescott gave the land at Kopua for the Cistercian monks to build the Southern Star Abbey.

Halina Ogonowska-Coates's memoir *Krystyna's Story* is one of many accounts of Polish immigrants making New Zealand their new home.

## Celebrating Polish Ancestry

Polish Associations set up in major centres have been important in nurturing Polish traditions while

easing families into New Zealand society. Inevitably facility with the Polish language waned among later generations. On the other hand, a steady trickle of new immigrants has helped to maintain Polish language and culture.

The contribution to New Zealand society of those of Polish descent has steadily become more varied and valuable. One reminder is the little church Mary Queen of Peace built by Polish families in Waiholā in 1899 and moved to Broad Bay, Dunedin in 1948. It continues to symbolise the faith and hope of these Polish people seeking a refuge from war and dislocation and contributing to the history of Aotearoa. 📖

Painting: *Mercator at Sea* by Yasmina. Used with Creative Commons Attribution

Note: New book *Poles Down South* by Paul Klemick coming in 2023.

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# Pope Francis and Doctrine Development

**MASSIMO FAGGIOLI discusses why Church leaders need courage for the *aggiornamento* of the Church in this time.**

**T**he two-day meeting in August which Pope Francis held with all the world's cardinals, was something truly extraordinary for this pontificate — and not just because it was held, contrary to custom, in the sweltering heat of the late Roman summer. It was only the second time

that Francis has convened the entire College of Cardinals for a discussion on a specific topic.

The first gathering was in February 2014 at which Cardinal Walter Kasper delivered the opening presentation. It was part of preparations for the Synod of Bishops' extraordinary

general assembly on family and marriage (October 2014) and the ordinary general assembly on the same topic that was held a year later (October 2015). Cardinal Kasper's thesis, which advocated some changes in the way the Church deals with divorced and remarried Catholics, did not go unchallenged.

A good number of cardinals harshly criticised his position, and indirectly the pope's as well.

## Topic Was Roman Curia Reform

This is one of the reasons Francis waited eight years before again calling together all the members of the College of Cardinals. The topic of the August gathering was quite different from that of 2014. It was the reform of the Roman Curia, which Francis unveiled on 19 March with the publication of the apostolic constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*.

More than a consultation, which should have happened before the promulgation of the constitution, the meeting was meant to prepare the cardinals for what is already codified in law.

Nonetheless, some further modifications are still possible, given the pope's incremental way of implementing reforms.

But there was no high drama at this meeting as there was at the extraordinary consistory of 2014. There are three reasons why.

## Curia Reform Is Complex

The first is that the reform of the Roman Curia is something quite technical and juridically complex. Its results are yet to be seen and will largely depend on the top personnel Francis appoints, especially the new prefects of the dicasteries. The cardinals discussed the separation of the power of governance from that of Holy Orders (and so lay people being given senior positions in the Roman Curia), as well as the question of what it means to be a synodal and hierarchical Church. They also focused on the issue of Vatican finances.

These are all important topics, but they were always unlikely to stir strong emotions in many cardinals



(and in some quarters of the Catholic Church especially in the United States) in the same way family and marriage did eight years before.

### Outdistancing the Opposition

The second reason there was little drama is that, after nine-and-a-half years as pope, Francis has outlived and overcome many of his opponents. Some of them have died, while many others have marginalised themselves by expressing embarrassingly extreme views on certain political and ecclesial issues. Since 2014, Francis has created many new cardinals who lead dioceses around the world, and this also influenced the mood of the August meeting.

### Not Perceived as Doctrinal Change

But there is also a third and more important reason that there were no real fireworks this time — the dreaded "paradigm shift" in doctrine did not take place and those in opposition to Francis have since become convinced that anything the pope has done can be quickly reversed.

The thesis put forth by Cardinal Kasper (not a liberal by any means, judging by his recent criticisms of the German "Synodal Path") was that doctrine is not set in stone. In his opening presentation at the 2014 extraordinary consistory there was this passage, for example: "The doctrine of the Church is not a stagnant lagoon, but a torrent that flows from the source of the Gospel, into which the faith experience of the people of God of all centuries has flowed. It's a living tradition that today, like many other times throughout history, has reached a critical point and which, in given the 'signs of the times', it needs to be continued and deepened."

### Pastoral Practice Versus Doctrine

Eight years after the 2014 Synod assembly on family and marriage, it's fair to ask whether there has been a recalculation in Francis's roadmap, or what that roadmap was in the first place, or if there has been a lack of the theological backing of Francis's pontificate.

Whenever the pope touched some

critical issues for a certain kind of reactionary Catholicism in the West, the pushback from some influential cardinals, bishops and the Catholic media system has been substantial. They have essentially argued that "no one can change doctrine, not even the pope".

And they have even levelled the subtle, yet unmistakable, accusation that the Jesuit pope is bordering on heresy. Is it enough to change the pastoral approach without changing doctrine?

This pushback continues every time someone, even from one of the Pontifical Academies in Rome, tries to say something that might be seen as a crack in the doctrinal dam for the post-Vatican II Church — such as revisiting the meaning of *Humanae Vitae*. On the other side of the spectrum, there are some overzealous defenders of Pope Francis who have fallen into that same trap.

**The question now is whether the much-needed change, on those issues where the tradition and the magisterium clearly need *aggiornamento*, will be supported by the courage to refuse the false alternative between pastoral practice and doctrine.**

For instance, there are those who retreat to the last line of defense in their uncoupling of pastoral and doctrinal change and deny that a Church more welcoming of LGBTQ Catholics implies changes in previous theological and magisterial statements. The unaddressed — and therefore unanswered — question remains whether it is possible to be a more welcoming Church without a doctrine that leaves no doubt about such acceptance.

We have seen that Francis is not afraid to defend Vatican II from neo-traditionalists, on not just liturgical reform. But the overall message has become, indeed, defensive. Hence the temptation has been to reduce what Francis does as pastoral, but not doctrinal, especially on intra-ecclesial

issues dealing with ministry. Some of the changes he has made, such as in his decision in January 2021 to open the stable and institutionalised ministries of lector and acolyte to women, are not being implemented enthusiastically throughout the Church — not even in Rome.

### A False Dichotomy

Historians know that it takes a long time for change to come about in the Church.

Francis's pontificate is far from over, and in some sense we are only now beginning to see more support for him in the College of Cardinals, from its members in Rome and those around the world. This was evident from the August meeting.

But the question now is whether the much-needed change, on those issues where the tradition and the magisterium clearly need *aggiornamento*, will be supported by the courage to refuse the false alternative between pastoral practice and doctrine.

The temptation is to do with Francis's pontificate what has already been done many times with Vatican II — neutralise him by opposing pastoral practice to doctrine. The problem is that, during this pontificate, those who strongly disagree with Francis — and even those who support him — have repeated this slogan: "Pastoral change, yes; doctrinal development, no". But no one can explain precisely what this means because it is a false dichotomy.

In the history of the Church, pastoral change has always implied and caused doctrinal development and vice-versa. 📖

Painting: *Strength in Unity* by Samuel Prophask Asamoah © Used with permission  
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Read the full article at: <https://international-la-croix.com/news/signs-of-the-times/doctrine-and-pastoral-practice-in-the-pontificate-of-pope-francis/16559>

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# CONSPIRACY UNDERMINING TRUTH

**BERNARD DOHERTY** discusses how conspiracies developed in the Church to resist change by focusing blame on mostly innocent groups for the events of the times.

**T**he term “conspirituality” has been used by scholars as a broad designation for the clear overlap which exists between various New Age, alternative and esoteric spiritual milieus and conspiracy theory. This sounds relatively modern, but “conspirituality” has deeper historical roots, and is linked to older spiritual traditions and religious institutions. The Catholic Church in particular has a longstanding culture of conspiracy, from the period of the French Revolution to the present day.

## **CATHOLIC ORIGINS OF MODERN CONSPIRACY THEORY**

In the aftermath of the Revolution of 1789, many clergy began to depict the Freemasons and other secret or quasi-secret societies as responsible. Pamphleteers catalogued a vast and genealogical link between various sects and secret societies, with all modern secret societies seen as having their roots with the Knights Templar and culminating in the declaration of the French First Republic in 1792.

Chief among these figures was the Abbé Augustin de Barruel, a former Jesuit and one-time Freemason, who escaped France following the September 1792 massacres and sought sanctuary in Britain. Over the period between 1797–1798, Barruel penned his monumental *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du jacobinisme* ('Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism'), a work that sought to demonstrate in excruciating detail how the Revolution was the by-product of a deep historical triple-conspiracy against the Church, the crown and society.

Following Barruel, paranoid tendencies were developed

and refined — often alongside the burgeoning of an increasingly belligerent Catholic press. Over the 19th century and into the 20th century, Catholic conspiracy culture developed from these French roots into what I suggest are five interwoven contours which are still identifiable today and currently undergoing something of a resurgence in sectors of the Church.

## **■ ANTI-MASONRY**

While Catholic beliefs about Masonic hostility and machinations against the Church were not entirely baseless, most of the writings cited by Catholic conspiracy theorists about the Masons are almost certainly crude forgeries and only tangentially linked to Masonry.

The papacy fed the growing anti-Masonic ferment with a series of encyclicals denouncing Freemasonry in various regions across Europe. In 1873, Pius IX issued *Etsi Multa*, speaking of a wide-ranging “war against the Catholic Church”, waged by “sects, whether called Mason or some other name”, who together formed “the synagogue of Satan.”

Pope Leo XIII, in *Humanum genus* (1884), spoke of the “studious endeavour of the Freemasons to destroy the chief foundations of justice and honesty” and work for “the ignominious and disgraceful ruin of the human race” (24).

In 1958, Pope Pius XII informed an international congress that Freemasonry was the “common parent” of “scientific atheism, dialectic materialism, rationalism and secularism” and thus responsible for “the modern decline of religious faith”. And the Congregation for the Doctrine



of the Faith's *Declaration on Masonic Associations* (1983) confirmed that "the Church's negative judgement in regard to Masonic associations remains unchanged since their principles have always been considered irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Church".

### ■ ANTI-SEMITISM

While the Roman Catholic attitude toward the Jews has shifted considerably over recent decades, particularly post-Vatican II, Roman Catholic reactionary circles and individual writers have been responsible for some of the most egregious antisemitic documents of the late 19th and 20th centuries.

Throughout the 20th century the so-called Judaeo-Masonic complot became the key plank of Catholic conspiracy culture and continues to have its advocates into the present—particularly amongst what have been labelled as Radical Traditionalists (or "Rad Trads").

### ■ ANTI-COMMUNISM

Catholic anticommunism became particularly acute in the Anglosphere during the Cold War with claims by writers like the ex-communist Bella Dodd (1904–1969) before the US House Un-American Activities Committee in 1953 that the communists had infiltrated the Catholic priesthood.

Much Catholic anti-communist writing was informed less by actual political events and more by a type of cultural exegesis which identified communism behind every piece of outside hostility or internal dissent within the Church. These ideas were bolstered as numerous papal encyclicals appeared condemning communism and highlighting its incompatibility with Catholicism — for example Pius XI's *Divini Redemptoris* (1937) which utilised familiar denunciatory language like "[the] all too imminent danger... is bolshevistic and atheistic Communism, which aims at upsetting the social order and at undermining the very foundations of Christian civilization." During the Cold War, and across the globe, Catholics were often at the forefront of anti-communist campaigns and these could on occasion take on a very conspiracist hue.

### ■ ANTI-SATANISM

Catholic anti-Satanic (or anti-occult) conspiracy theories emerged out of both Catholic reactions to the occult revival during the French Third Republic and from earlier tropes in antisemitic and anti-Masonic lore — both the Masons and the Jews have been seen at various times as fundamentally "Satanic". Pius IX, beginning with *Etsi Multa* (1873), referred in an increasingly literal way to the Freemasons as the "synagogue of Satan", and hinted at a much darker and more primordial agenda lurking behind the doors of the Lodge. These speculations about the Satanic nature of Freemasonry (and by implication its Jewish allies) continued under Pope Leo XIII (see *Humanum Genus*) and reached their culmination in the Taxil hoax of the 1890s.

This literary "mystification" saw anticlerical former Freemason Gabriel Jogand-Pagès (1854–1907), better known as Léo Taxil, feign conversion to Catholicism and perpetrate a vast hoax regarding wild satanic happenings linked with the Masonic Lodge, ultimately fooling no less

a figure than Pope Leo XIII. Ever since, a kind of Catholic paranoia about the existence of allegedly host-stealing and infant-sacrificing Satanists has persisted. More recently the idea of a "Satanic conspiracy of evil" has become a staple in the popularity of exorcism films, and Catholics have become one of the many groups proving particularly susceptible to the ideas of QAnon.

### ■ ANTI-MODERNISM

In Catholic anti-Modernism, one can trace a clear line from early 20th-century opposition to so-called "Modernism" to the reaction amongst Catholic traditionalists to what they saw as the "modernist" tendencies of theological experts at Vatican II — a conspiracy which they see encompassing basically every major Catholic theologian of the 20th century including Karl Rahner, Henri de Lubac, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Hans Küng and Edward Schillebeeckx. In its more extreme forms, it also includes every pope going back to Pope John XXIII (1881–1963).

Traditionalist conspiracy theories claim that these theologians have systematically undermined the Catholic Church and have proven influential in how conservative sectors of the Church have interpreted the history and influence of Vatican II. To get a feel for this, one simply needs to read anything emerging out of the Society of St Pius X — though perhaps the fullest statement of it is found in the French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre's collected seminary conferences published under the title *They Have Uncrowned Him* (1988), where in one fell swoop he manages to bring together almost every strand of Catholic conspiracism (without explicit anti-Satanism) into one breathless narrative.

### CONCLUSION

What each of these five major targets of Catholic culture of conspiracy had in common — with perhaps the exception of the largely imaginary Satanists — was their support of the emergence of liberal democracy in the face of an authoritarian papacy resistant to change.

While one may have predicted that this kind of thought would have been swept away in the enthusiasm of the *aggiornamento* envisioned by Vatican II, quite the opposite has occurred, and there has been a recent resurgence under Pope Francis of Catholic conspiracist tropes.

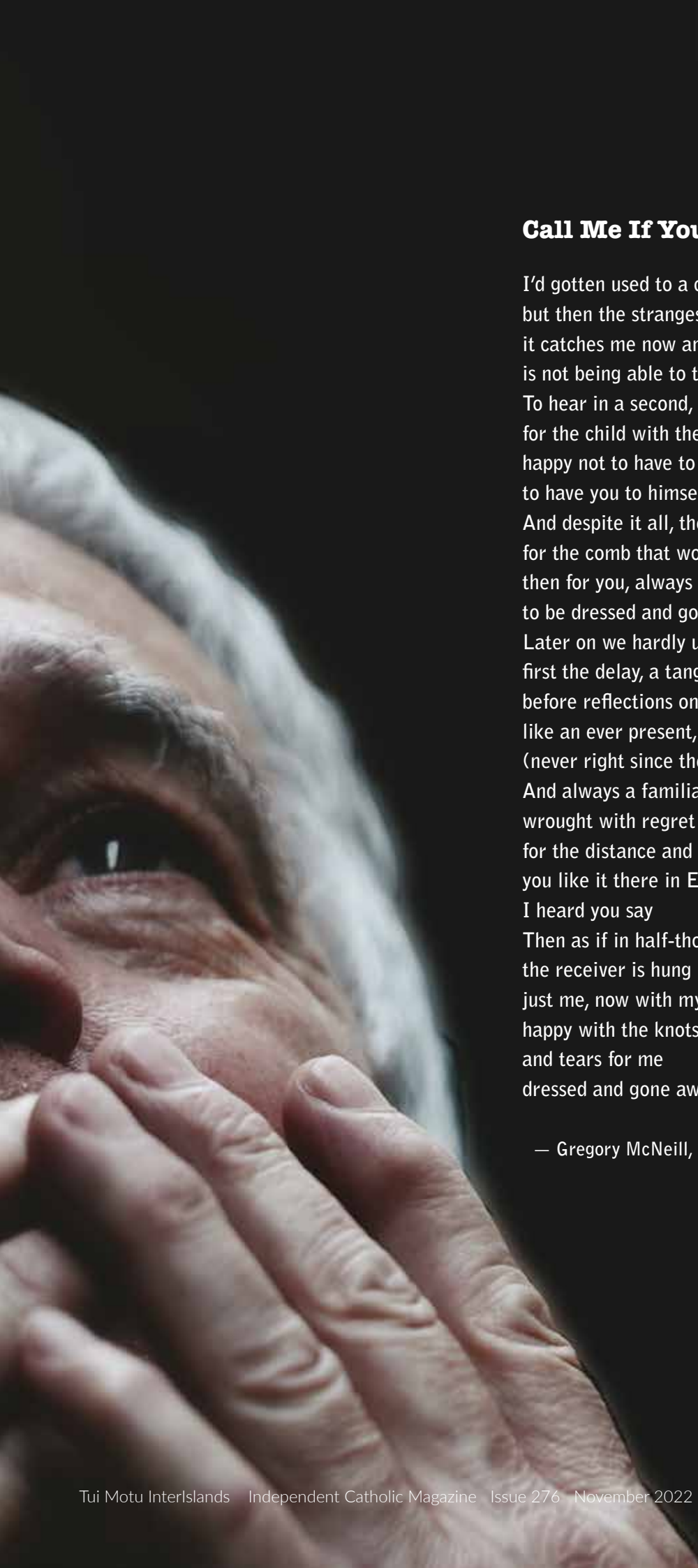
Pope Francis's recent *Motu Proprio Traditionis Custodes* (2021), placing renewed restrictions on the Latin Mass, will likely only work to encourage the persistence of conspiracist narratives among the already radicalised traditionalist online (and indeed offline) subculture. All this suggests that the Catholic culture of conspiracy is far from spent and requires further study. 📖

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## Call Me If You Get This Message

I'd gotten used to a casual kind of grieving  
but then the strangest lack –  
it catches me now and then  
is not being able to telephone  
To hear in a second, the joy in your voice  
for the child with the knots in his hair  
happy not to have to share you  
to have you to himself  
And despite it all, the tears  
for the comb that wouldn't free the knots  
then for you, always in a hurry  
to be dressed and gone away  
Later on we hardly used the phone  
first the delay, a tangle on the line somewhere  
before reflections on the weather –  
like an ever present, long ill aunt  
(never right since the fall)  
And always a familiar weight to your voice  
wrought with regret  
for the distance and the time away –  
you like it there in England  
I heard you say  
Then as if in half-thought  
the receiver is hung up, telephone put away  
just me, now with my own  
happy with the knots in their hair  
and tears for me  
dressed and gone away

— Gregory McNeill, 2016

Photo by Bricolage/Shutterstock.com



# PRAYING TOGETHER

CHRISTOPHER LONGHURST says that interfaith prayer is a way of bringing us into communion.

Bringing unity among a divided humanity is the goal of all religions. One of the steps towards that unity is interreligious spirituality, a practice championed by Catholic lay monk Wayne Robert Teasdale. The keystone of interreligious spirituality is praying together. Prayer is the ultimate spiritual act as it initiates a rapport with God and other spiritual beings through intentional engagement. When people of different faiths pray together, they intimately unite in mind, heart, and soul. They are in spiritual communion.

Pope Francis showed how easy this was to do when he stood alongside Grand Mufti Rahmi Yaran of Istanbul inside Istanbul's Sultan Ahmed Mosque with his head bowed together with the Mufti in prayer facing Mecca. Yet for many religious people, this is not such an easy practice.

## INTERFAITH PRAYERS

Over 30 years ago, the following prayer was composed by Muslims, Christians and Jews and used at inter-religious meetings around the time of the 1991 Gulf War:

Eternal God, Creator of the universe, there is no God but You.  
Great and wonderful are Your works, wondrous are Your ways.  
Thank You for the splendoured variety of Your creation.  
Thank You for the many ways we affirm Your presence

and purpose,  
and the freedom to do so.  
Forgive our violation of Your creation.  
Forgive our violence towards each other.  
We stand in awe and gratitude for Your persistent love  
for each and all of Your children:  
Christian, Jew, Muslim,  
as well as those with other faiths.  
Grant to all and our leaders attributes of the strong;  
mutual respect in words and deed,  
restraint in the exercise of power, and  
the will for peace with justice, for all.

Similarly, the *Anglican Book of Common Worship* contains the following prayer:

Eternal God, you are the one God to be worshipped by all,  
the one called Allah by your Muslim children,  
descendants of Abraham as we are.  
Give us grace to hear your truth  
in the teachings of Mohammed, the prophet,  
and to show your love as disciples of Jesus Christ,  
that Christians and Muslims together  
may serve you in faith and friendship.



For religious persons of non-Abrahamic faiths, surely that “one God to be worshipped by all” is the supreme existence and absolute reality, despite all constructed theological descriptions.

### PRAY "WITH", NOT JUST "FOR"

Today, in the liturgy of Catholicism's Roman Rite, as well as praying “for the Jewish people, that they may continue to grow in the love of God's name and in faithfulness to God's covenant”, an interfaith spiritual approach would pray “with” the Jewish people, that together “we” may continue to grow in love and faithfulness. Spiritual inclusion when possible is key.

### MORE INCLUSIVE PRAYER

The universality of the Qur'ān's first surah, Al-Fātiha (The Opening), permits all believers of the Abrahamic faiths to pray together in the name of the “Entirely Merciful God”.

All praise be to You, the abundantly Merciful,  
Sovereign Lord of the Universe.  
It is You we worship  
and You we ask for help.  
Guide us to the straight path.

### PRAYING BRINGS US INTO COMMUNION

When religiously diverse people pray together, the long history of religious disunity is momentarily mended and the goal of religious unity is closer.

In practice, praying together goes beyond interreligious dialogue. It is the highest form of interfaith relations as it forms part of the realm of interspiritual communion which can trigger interior transformation.

According to Pā Henare Tate, “persons in communion are changed in the act of knowing and loving each other. They are mutually enhanced, restored and empowered.” This would bring about communal conversion towards the unity and harmony that must have existed before all human divisions.

At the heart of this relationship is the spiritual side of whanaungatanga, according to Pā Henare, “the overcoming of separation, and the enjoyment of the presence of the other, or others, in union.” Such union cannot be restricted to only one religious tradition. It must extend to all humankind because we are all members of te whānau o te Atua.

When people of different faiths pray together, they are expressing unity and practising mutual respect. And because unity and respect are the purpose and the function of interreligious prayer, there is neither desire nor need to debate theological points or to worry about compromising personal beliefs.

### PRAYING TOGETHER HELPS DIALOGUE

It is true that practice follows belief, but the practice of interreligious prayer would not alter the unique ways religiously diverse people understand God. In other words, interreligious prayer does not discard doctrinal differences. Instead, it momentarily sets them aside to be later explored. Dialogue allows for that exploration. It

gives priority to the cognitive side (*dia-logos*) of interfaith relations. Praying together prioritises the spiritual dimension of those relations.

When people of different faiths pray together, as Pope Francis demonstrated inside Istanbul's Sultan Ahmed Mosque, a space of spiritual common ground is created while maintaining our uniqueness across religious borders.

While knowing how and why we differ, in that space we supplicate God for the common and greater good. After all, the reality of religious unity in Earth must be greater than its heavenly idea when we will form part of that “great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” (Revelation 7:9).

Even when theologies differ, or are contradictory, common prayer forms the soul of the global interfaith movement. Which means it is an expression of interspiritual love and aroha noa, the undercurrent that gives life and adds vigour to spiritual unity.

### PRAYING TOGETHER DEEPENS UNITY

In this way, praying together becomes, as Pā Henare said: “the motive power by which persons yearn for (pūaroa), create, and renew communion.” It is as simple as intentionally saying the prayers (at the beginning of this article) with someone of another faith tradition. However, it is as difficult as gaining the courage and humility to do so.

When we pray together, we show aroha noa and thereby deepen our communion. This means that praying together is not the end of dialogue, but rather dialogue's prep-work leading to a more successful dialogue.

Even when the prayer is not offered for unity, praying together is an expression and confirmation of that unity. In other words, praying together, by virtue of what prayer is, will trigger a greater desire for unity.


Pope John Paul II said that “every authentic prayer is prompted by the divine Spirit, mysteriously present in every human heart.” If prayer is prompted by the divine Spirit, which is the source of unity, then praying together as a religiously diverse community tends towards that source, becoming more like it. This must be true because in the fellowship of prayer, the divine Spirit is “with us” and “in us”. That Spirit is capable of resolving any shortcomings in what is believed. Such a remarkable fix foreshadows that future moment when we all form part of the innumerable, intercultural, inter-iwi, translingual multitude described by John in the Book of Revelation (7:9). 

Photo supplied: Pope Francis praying with Faith Leaders

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# A HUMBLER MORE OPEN CHURCH

ROBERT MICKENS writes that Pope Francis is showing the Church that Catholicism is one among the world's many other religions.

Pope Francis's three-day visit to Kazakhstan in September seemed not to have been widely reported in the general media, including in Italy where there's news about him almost every day on TV and in the press. Most people around the world, including most Catholics, probably don't even know that the pope made the September 13-15 trip to the former Soviet republic in Central Asia. Or that he was there for a religion summit alongside more than 80 other faith leaders representing the various strains of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Hinduism.

But the Jesuit pope's visit may very well be remembered many years from now as one of the more significant of his pontificate, no matter how Catholicism develops or changes.

Francis has been helping his Church become much more welcoming and inclusive, less judgmental and doctrinaire, and more accepting, respectful and neighbourly towards people of other faiths, without trying to convert them.

If the Church continues evolving in this way as a humbler, less-sectarian community of believers over the coming decades, then his Kazakhstan trip will be seen as having played a supporting role in that effort.

But if his eventual successor as Bishop of Rome decides to halt the "ecclesiastical *perestroika*" Francis has set in motion and is able to successfully reverse directions, the 2022 papal visit to Kazakhstan will be remembered for

something else — the time when a pope signalled that Catholicism was just one more among the world's many other religions.

## **Bishop Opposes Pope's Participation in Congress**

"The Catholic Church was founded by God himself" is basically the charge that Athanasius Schneider, a German who serves as auxiliary bishop in the Kazakh capital of Nur-Sultan, levelled against Francis. "We're not one of the many religions," the extremely traditionalist bishop told the global Catholic television network EWTN. "There is only one true religion, which is the Catholic Church, founded by God himself. There is no other way to salvation," said the 61-year-old prelate, who has served as auxiliary bishop in two different dioceses in Kazakhstan since Benedict XVI promoted him (and Cardinal Angelo Sodano ordained him) to the episcopate in 2006.

Bishop Schneider, who is close to the Priestly Society of Pius X (Lefebvrist) and has said that certain texts from the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) are erroneous, was horrified that Pope Francis participated in the VII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Nur-Sultan. He said the pope risked confusing people, leading them to think that the Catholic Church belongs to "a supermarket of religions" where "everyone is there and you can choose what you want".



One of my colleagues has assured me that Bishop Schneider is a "very holy man", although it's not clear how he deduced this.

Certainly, the bishop demonstrates outward signs of piety and religiosity. And his devotion to liturgical ritualism is well-known, especially among his fellow adherents of the Old Latin Mass.

The bishop's ecclesiological/theological vision is definitely guided by the Tridentine paradigm, while Francis's is shaped by the still-unfolding paradigm of the post-Vatican II Church.

We must presume that Schneider and those Catholics who share his views are acting in good faith when they seek to protect the Church and its doctrines. But they do so by enforcing rules, rigid liturgical formulas and purity codes. Their type of Church is exclusionary, judgmental and sectarian. They sincerely believe Catholicism is the only true religion and, thus, it has no need of dialogue with other faiths, the false religions.

### We Need All Others

Pope Francis, however, disagrees. And he said so while in Kazakhstan. "We also need others, all others: our Christian sisters and brothers of other confessions, those who hold other religious beliefs than our own, all men and women of goodwill," the pope said during a meeting with the members of the country's tiny Catholic community — including Bishop Schneider.

"May we realise, in a spirit of humility, that only together, in dialogue and mutual acceptance, can we truly achieve something good for the benefit of all," Francis said.

### Without Dialogue there Is Ignorance or War

The pope was even more direct during the press conference he held during his flight back to Rome. Without actually naming Bishop Schneider, he noted that "someone criticised" him for attending the interreligious meeting, claiming that it was "fomenting" relativism. "There was no relativism!" Francis exclaimed. "Everyone had their say, everyone respected each other's position, but we dialogue as brothers and sisters. Because, if there is no dialogue, there is either ignorance or war."

The pope said it's important for people of different faiths to "talk a little and get to know one another" better, pointing out that "so many times these misunderstood 'religious' wars" we've seen throughout history were the result of people not knowing each other well enough.

"The path of interreligious dialogue is a shared path to peace and for peace; as such, it is necessary and irrevocable," Francis told the other faith leaders at the final session of the religion summit in Nur-Sultan.

### We Are All Children of Creator-God

"Interreligious dialogue," he said, "is no longer merely something expedient: it is an urgent-needed and incomparable service to humanity, to the praise and glory

of the Creator of all."

And he said the summit in Kazakhstan was a "providential" opportunity to "reaffirm the authentic and inalienable essence of religion" at a time of widespread "pseudo-religious terrorism, extremism, radicalism and nationalism, dressed up in religious garb."

The bottom line, for Francis, is that differences — even differences of religious belief — do not change the fact that we belong to one human family; that we are all brothers and sisters who are children of the same Creator-God.

This is the message he has been preaching since the beginning of his pontificate in 2013. And ever since the coronavirus pandemic broke out he's been doubling down on that message by pointing out that we share a common fate or destiny — that is, we are all in the same

boat. His two encyclicals — *Laudato Si'* in 2015 and *Fratelli Tutti* in 2020 — spell this out beautifully, demonstrating how this is not some New Age spiritual gobbledygook, but is actually rooted in the Scriptures and the perennial tradition.

**The bottom line, for Francis, is that differences — even differences of religious belief — do not change the fact that we belong to one human family; that we are all brothers and sisters who are children of the same Creator-God.**

### Brotherly and Sisterly Encounter and Dialogue Is Needed

At the start of the religion summit in Nur-Sultan the pope said that each person has the "right" to believe and to "render public testimony to his or her own creed, proposing it without ever imposing it".

"To work for a society marked by the respectful coexistence of religious, (and) ethnic and cultural differences is the best way to enhance the distinctive features of each, to bring people together while respecting their diversity, and to promote their loftiest aspirations without compromising their vitality," he insisted. "May the Almighty set us free from the shadows of suspicion and insincerity and enable us to cultivate open and brotherly and sisterly friendships through frequent dialogue and luminous sincerity of purpose," the pope added.

And he concluded that particular address with words that his Catholic traditionalist critics like Bishop Schneider must not have heard. "May we never aim at artificial and conciliatory forms of syncretism, for these are useless, but instead firmly maintain our own identities, open to the courage of otherness and to brotherly and sisterly encounter," Francis said. "Only in this way, along this path, and in these dark times in which we live, will we be able to radiate the light of our Creator." 📖

Photo by Roman Yanushevsky/Shutterstock.com

Read more at: <https://international.la-croix.com/news/letter-from-rome/francis-continues-his-push-for-a-humbler-more-open-church/16613>

**Robert Mickens**, Editor in Chief at *La Croix International*, has lived in Rome for 30 years and contributed to *The Tablet* and *NCR*.





# THE COMING *CATASTROPHOCENE*

**JULIAN CRIBB** explains that we need to pay attention urgently to the threats that are moving us into a new geological age.

**T**he good news is that the Anthropocene is almost over. It will have been the shortest geological epoch in all of Earth history.

The bad news is that the Catastrophocene is just beginning.

This is a period marked by the interaction of 10 catastrophic risks which many scientists are now warning could precipitate the end of human civilisation — and potentially bring about the departure of our species from an uninhabitable Earth.

The Holocene, the climatically stable period which enabled humans to develop agriculture and cities, is now over. It lasted about 11,650 years, from the last Ice Age to the mid 20th century. And now it is gone and we are into a wholly different world, named in 2000 by Dutch Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen “the Anthropocene” — the epoch in which humans became a truly geological force,

reshaping and altering the entire planet, its atmosphere, oceans, the land and life itself. On present indications, the Anthropocene will last only a century or two.

The evidence is all about us that we’re into something altogether grimmer. Each day almost, brings fresh reports of colossal unintended consequences of human activity around the planet — vast floods, tens of thousands of fires raging, dust storms sweeping topsoil off our farms, heatwaves, dried-up rivers and lakes, melting glaciers, unimaginable losses of birds, animals, insects and other life, dwindling forests and fish, poisoned water, oceans, food and air, declining oxygen levels, hunger and starvation, the dissemination of new diseases, the mass migration of 350 million people a year, the advent of powerful new technologies whose effects are unknown and uncontrolled and the insidious worldwide seep of malicious lies about it all.

These phenomena are the physical manifestations of





what the Council for the Human Future has termed the “existential emergency” now confronting humanity — a crisis which now many scientists and individual citizens recognise as real, but which most governments, corporates and politicians seem loath to accept the evidence that is before their very eyes.

### TEN MEGA-THREATS

This crisis is comprised of 10 catastrophic risks, not just the one or two most commonly reported in the media. All these risks interact with one another, meaning they cannot be tackled separately or solved one by one. Collectively, they are driven by human overpopulation, overconsumption and over pollution. The risks are:

**Extinction and collapse:** This is currently proceeding 1,000-10,000 times faster than normal, eliminating the ecosystems that humans and wildlife need to survive. It is mainly caused by agriculture and land development.

**Overheating:** This is a climate approaching out-of-control as nine huge “feedbacks” from the Earth system itself make it even faster, hotter and more turbulent

than human-made factors (like fossil fuels and land clearing) alone.

**Global poisoning:** Which is five times larger and 10 times more deadly even than climate. Human chemical emissions are the largest and most underestimated threat to planetary health and survival. They poison every person on the planet, every day. They are a direct cause of many “lifestyle” diseases and a growing, unseen threat to our survival.

**Nuclear holocaust:** With 70 nations still committed to nuclear arms and conflict, scientists currently rate the threat at “100 seconds to midnight”, the worst level since Hiroshima. The world has 13,400 nuclear weapons; fewer than 100 could end civilization.

**Resource scarcity:** A world water crisis is already a reality for half the population. Loss of topsoil, forests, fish stocks and scarcity of other key resources threaten to unleash fresh conflicts. We are emptying the oceans and using up Earth's resources 50 per cent faster than they regenerate.

**Pandemics:** There have been seven pandemics since 2000, with a new one striking every 2-3 years. With some 90 wild animal diseases having already crossed into humans, more are on the way.

**Overpopulation:** We are due to hit 8 billion people in

Earth in this month (November) and 10 billion by 2060, human numbers are estimated by some researchers to be now four times what the Earth can carry in the long run. Though not a threat in itself, population pressure drives all the other threats and must be brought under control.

**Famine and hunger:** They are already rising due to loss of soil, water and a stable climate. World food chains are increasingly vulnerable to disruption from shortages, conflict and big events, putting megacities at risk.

**Ultratechnologies:** The uncontrolled development and release of powerful new technologies — like Artificial Intelligence, Killer Robots, Universal Surveillance, Nanotechnology and novel man-made lifeforms — without thought for the consequences will unlock fresh threats for humanity, just as fossil fuels and chemistry already have.

**Misinformation:** The world is drowning in lies, half-truths and disinformation, mainly spread by the fossil fuels lobby, certain media, politicians and other malicious actors. These are disabling government, breeding mistrust of science and making the task of saving civilisation ever harder.

It is the interaction of these 10 mega-threats which now constitutes the new age — The Catastrophocene. This will be a period in which most human lives will be consumed in attempting merely to survive and find workable collective solutions to these threats, to repair our damaged planet and salvage all that is good and decent of our civilisation.

Take heart, solutions do exist. There are global answers and steps individuals can take to save themselves. However, as the Council for the Human Future has noted: no government in Earth yet has a policy for human survival. They simply do not grasp the magnitude or the reality of what is unfolding. Or they don't care. Nor do the giant corporations who now rule the world economically.

If humans have become a geological force reshaping the Earth in the Anthropocene, then we need to become a geological force to undo the damage we have caused, and correct the threats we are still causing. Part of that consists in reducing both our numbers and our material demands to what the planet can safely bear in the long term. If we do not undertake this task, then nature will surely do it for us. Doing nothing, or doing too little too late, will destroy us.

In other words, controlling the catastrophic risks we now face will save countless lives, help avoid total collapse or even extinction, restore Earth and preserve what is best about the human endeavour. It is the greatest, noblest and most urgent cause in all our million-year journey. 📖

Photo by Alena Veasey/Shutterstock.com

For more information: The Council for the Human Future: [www.humanfuture.org](http://www.humanfuture.org) *A Matter of Survival* [www.juliancribb.net](http://www.juliancribb.net)

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# YOU WILL BE WITH ME

KATHLEEN RUSHTON connects Jesus's announcement of his ministry at the beginning of Luke's Gospel with his last words before he died in Luke 23:35-42.

Luke writes that at the beginning of his public ministry Jesus came to his home town of Nazareth. There he entered the synagogue and read from the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, who has appointed me to bring good news to the poor, who has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free" (Lk 4:18).

These words summarised Jesus's entire focus — to preach the good news of the reign of God, bringing "good news to the poor" (Lk 4:43). The phrase "the reign (*basileia*) of God" appears 38 times in Luke. This reign Jesus proclaims is about the unlimited love and mercy of God especially for the despised and disenfranchised poor, among them women, outsiders, sinners and Samaritans. Jesus preaches the good news until his last breath on the cross.

## Hope and Forgiveness

Luke reshapes Mark's execution scene, where Jesus dies in abandonment and rejection, into a scene of hope and forgiveness. He inserts the



prayer: "Father, forgive them . . ." (Lk 23:34). He distinguishes the onlookers from the scoffing religious leaders, soldiers and one bandit who mock Jesus with variations of "save yourself". In contrast, "the other" victim owns his wrongdoing and admits the justice of his punishment. He is the fourth to acknowledge that Jesus dying beside him is innocent (23:40; 23:14, 15, 22).

### Ancient Context

Many ancient people, including the Romans, used crucifixion as a punishment. The most detailed accounts of this form of execution are found in the gospel passion narratives. Crucifixion was meted out to both men and women — 22 cases of women have been found in records. In the time of Jesus the punishment of offenders was not controlled by regulations. Crucifixion aimed to shame and publicly humiliate the victims and executioners had no rein on caprice or sadism. Christians can spiritualise Jesus's death and miss the horror of crucifixion as way of controlling an oppressed people, or by particularising it to Jesus alone.

Luke uses a generic term to describe the victims crucified with Jesus. It means bandit, evildoer or criminal — a term with a decidedly criminal sense. It's used three times in the story: for the two who are led away to be crucified (Lk 23:32); to name the one on his right and the one on his left (Lk 23:33) and for the one who derides Jesus (Lk 23:39). Luke, also, used this term earlier in the Gospel — when Jesus protested at his arrest: "Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit?"; when the Samaritan fell among bandits; and when he cleansed the temple, Jesus accused the sellers of making God's house into a den of bandits.

### "Jesus, Remember Me"

The bandit who asked Jesus to "remember me when you come into your kingdom" received the response: "Truly I tell you, today you will be *with me* in Paradise." These are the last words spoken to Jesus

in Luke's Gospel and the last words Jesus spoke to a person in his pre-resurrection life.

Biblical scholar Raymond Brown says that the bandit's way of addressing Jesus is "stunning in its intimacy" for nowhere else in any Gospel does a person address Jesus simply by his name: "Jesus." Elsewhere, Jesus's name is qualified to suggest reverence, for example: "Jesus Son of God" (Mk 5:7; Lk 8:28)) or "Jesus Son of David" (Mk 10:47; Lk 18:38). Only demoniacs or others seeking healing use Jesus's name (Lk 4:34; 8:28; 17:13; 18:38).

first declared in the Nazareth synagogue to the good news for this poor one — a captive is released and an oppressed one goes free. Jesus's emphatic "today" — "*today* you will be *with me*" — points to *now* and links this incident with moments of salvation or revelation described throughout the whole gospel story (Lk 2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 13:32-33; 19:9; 22:34, 61).

### For Us

We are invited to discover the reign of God now among us — to be hope and love and mercy in our world.

**The bandit who asked Jesus to "remember me when you come into your kingdom" received the response: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." These are the last words spoken to Jesus in Luke's gospel and the last words Jesus spoke to a person in his pre-resurrection life.**

The bandit has the spontaneity of a disciple — one distinguished by their willingness to accept Jesus's invitation and follow him spontaneously. However, the bandit does not wait for an invitation. He anticipates the words of Jesus to disciples: "Ask and it will be given to you" (Lk 11:9).


### "With Me"

When Jesus's dying companion asked him to remember him, Jesus offers more — the intimacy of discipleship. At the last supper Jesus had said to the Twelve: "You are those who have stood *with me* in my trials" and that they shall eat and drink at his table in his kingdom (Lk 22:28-30).

Now on the cross Jesus promises the bandit that he "will be *with me*." Being *with* Jesus suggests not only being in the company of Jesus in paradise but, like the Twelve, he will share in the resurrection. Jesus began this promise with "Truly (Greek *amen*) I tell . . ." which gives solemnity to his words. Nothing can separate these dying companions from God's loving mercy.

Even as death approaches Jesus completes a final act of liberation of the bandit, connecting his ministry

Salvation is not in the remote future or even tomorrow but "today" in our present. We are "with Jesus" — companions developing a fuller relationship with others, with Divine love and with life in our world.

We can take the words attributed to Teresa of Avila as our own: "Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on Earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which Christ walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which Christ blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are Christ's body. Christ has no body now in Earth but yours." 

Painting: *Crucifixion*, 1430 by Hans von Tübingen  
Master of the Saint Lambrecht Votive Altarpiece

20 November  
RL Jesus Christ King of the Universe: Lk 23:35-43  
RCL Reign of Christ: Lk 23:33-43

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





# COURAGE TO ACT

It feels warm to me. I'm writing in the early spring sunshine with my skin toasting in the heat; a pleasant but sweaty enough experience. In the garden the weeds are flourishing. This winter has been one of the wettest recorded and the summer is predicted to be hot. Wetter winters, hotter summers — these are the changes we're noticing.

It's hard to make sense of climate change except by thinking of it in terms of human experience. Who will have to leave their homes as the sea level rises? Which people will be more vulnerable to the risk of heatstroke? Who will be flooded by high rainfall and melting snowpacks?

But this crisis doesn't just touch humans. As citizens in Nelson and the West Coast endured devastating floods this year, a marine heatwave cooked thousands of fish, or forced them to migrate further south. As people shivered in cold houses damp with mould, spores have grown in the lungs of our precious

manu/birds, including kakapo, and killed their chicks.

I am never going to know what it feels like to be a fish or a bird or a tree. But we live in webs of relationship: their life builds my life. And my crisis is their crisis. It's difficult to think about the enormity of damage and loss that has been caused by anthropogenic global heating: my head swims, my eyes prick with tears and I feel helpless, terribly lost. And then I pack my lunch and go to work, simulate an ordinary life amid the despair.

It's not possible for me to contain

the fear and anxiety of an imperilled future in my body and mind, especially as politicians, corporations and individuals keep making selfish choices and as the sky gets wetter and species run out of land north or south to migrate to. But I've been thinking about trust in this moment, too, as I read newsletters about climate-aware psychotherapy and advances in carbon-capture and storage.

Can I trust that the world is good as the climate is in crisis? Can I trust that redemption is possible — of our high-carbon society and for me as a participant in it? Can I trust that I can do the small things within my power, and demand change for the big things that aren't? Usually, the answer is yes.

I cannot experience the world like any other being, only as myself. I can't absorb carbon like a tree, or swim south to colder currents like a hoiho. I can think and pray and cry and act; I can trust that building communities that are resilient to change means something even though doom and despair are an easier, lazy response. And if I believe that the world is good, then I know it can be better: that writing submissions to Parliament and voting with my dollar, eating less dairy and listening to the voices and solutions of marginalised communities is leading somewhere where the climate might have changed. It's vital that we hold on to our courage to act, even when we know the reality and severity of the threats we face. 📖



**Shanti Mathias**, a 20-something living in Tamaki Makaurau, is a journalist for *Stuff*. She loves dangly earrings, listening to podcasts and is always learning to pray.



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# REVIEWS

## Bordered Bodies, Bothered Voices Native and Migrant Theologies

Edited by Jione Havea

Published by Pickwick Publications, 2022. (Kindle USD 11.49; Paperback USD 27.95)

Reviewed by Rocío Figueroa

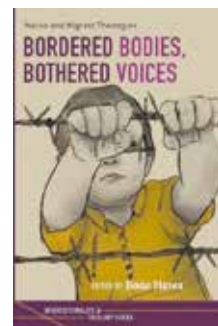
Jione Havea, editor of this collection of theological voices, uses the image of theologies as “veins” which carry nutrition and life through a body but also can carry toxins or viruses if they are not treated properly. The articles map these theological “veins” as the authors draw on their experiences as immigrants and natives and express their identities through stories, craft, history, dance and song.

Every chapter plays with the idea of borders in their physical or symbolic dimensions and bodies whether physical, religious, cultural or political. Each tells a story of how personal theologies and bodies were built and

the borders that shaped them. This book offers theological and cultural observations from the intersections of bodies, voices and borders.

*Bordered Bodies* is composed of four “groups” each exploring different boundaries: the first about noble borders which, because they are noble, are not viewed as restrictive; the second about how borders are continually being negotiated and moved by bodies; the third about troubling voices that cannot be suppressed or muted; and finally, about riotous bodies that embrace the wisdom found in rejected bodies.

This book is a rich example of native and migrant contextual theologies and presents a move to those liminal spaces of marginality that must be normative for the people of God. 📖



## Hard Questions Born of Love

by John Warhurst

Published by Garratt Publishing, 2022. (AUD 34.95)

Reviewed by Jim McAloon

John Warhurst is a political scientist and a significant voice for reform in the Australian Catholic Church. This book is his second on the Australian Catholic Church's Plenary Council — a nationwide assembly called in 2018 which became absorbed into the process for the 2023 Synod of Bishops, on synodality. It consists of short opinion pieces reprinted from the mainstream and religious press, as well as the author's blog posts.

I wished for a brief outline at the beginning of the whole Plenary Council process — this book appeared before the Second Assembly, discussed in *TM* August 2022. Although parts of the book are of specifically

Australian interest, there are important reflections on synodality and on the Church that will appeal to anyone interested in the synodical process.

I have worried that the line “a synod is not a parliament” could all too easily mean little will change. Warhurst has valuable reflections on democratic process within the Church: it is serious, it requires sustained dialogue, but if there is a consensus for change it must not be obstructed.

In Australia, as in Aotearoa and elsewhere, Council and synod discussions have made clear the wish for a more open, more inclusive Church. Warhurst suggests that if inertia takes over, the result will be possibly fatal disillusionment and disengagement. 📖



## Bible Blindspots Dispersion and Othering

Edited by Jione Havea and Monica Jyotsna Melanchthon

Published Pickwick Publications, 2021. (Kindle USD 11.49; Paperback USD 30)

Reviewed by Kevin Waldie

*Bible Blindspots* challenged my idea of how we might read and interpret the Sacred Text. Its 15 chapters (by various authors from different ethnic and national backgrounds) will appeal to a wide audience because of their varied subject matter and mixed methodologies.

Unfortunately, the chapters are not of uniform quality. One contribution (“Samaritans and Empires”) I assume was poorly translated and so should have been removed by the editors.

Because of the methodology adopted some chapters

succeeded while others proved less satisfactory. The solidly exegetical ones produced great insight and demonstrated ongoing import for the 21st-century world. Three chapters (on reading Mark in an Asian-American context; reading Revelation 12:1-17 in a Samoan context; and on Mothering in 1 Timothy 2:8-15) were stimulating and worthy of genuine consideration. These were standout contributions.

Overall, I found this a thought-provoking read and a welcome collection. It offers every reader a chance to pause and reflect on a variety of biblical books. It also exposes us to trends in biblical studies, especially in light of awakening sensitivities and how we might read an inspired text differently. 📖





# MILLIE LIES LOW

Directed by Michelle Savill

Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

**T**his very watchable New Zealand comedy-drama brings to the big screen a satisfying balance of serious issues, laugh-out-loud craziness, emotional attachment and a few truly cringe-making moments. I say cringe-making, rather than cringeworthy, as *Millie Lies Low* is a mature local production, competently scripted, well-paced and beautifully acted by the whole cast, especially Ana Scotney as Millie, whose turns of speech and facial language are never less than pitch-perfect.

If the film has a serious side, it's about the expectations placed on young people — especially career expectations — and how we deal with apparent failure.

A young Māori woman and talented architectural student from Wellington, Millie has got her big break — an internship at a prestigious New York architecture firm. But a panic attack at Auckland airport puts paid to her golden plans and the rest of the film charts her attempts — full of humour and pathos in equal measure — to fake it. Millie's feelings of unworthiness and determination not to disappoint her backers are only exacerbated by the magazine hoardings and online posters featuring her face and touting her as hometown girl made good.

A digital native, Millie manages to pull off the deception through a combination of Instagram posts, video chats and some clever photoshopping that shows her apparently happily ensconced in her scholarship flat in the Big Apple. Back home, we see her hiding behind dumpsters, breaking into flats, camping in the bush beside her mum's house and — hilariously — infiltrating a fancy-dress party in her honour clad in a plastic bin liner and an oversized motorcycle helmet with tinted visor. But, inevitably, her efforts at concealment become increasingly complex and compromised as she strives to keep one step ahead of her ex-boyfriend Henry, sassy academic rival Carolyn, lustful lecturer Scott and her well-meaning but distracted mother Marlene.

The well-paced action culminates in a scene in Henry's bedroom, where Millie has secreted herself, that is both hilarious and excruciating. And also original in its humour — here an eye-watering Kiwi twist on French farce — a welcome feature of this inventive film by Michelle Savill, directing her first feature.

By the end of the movie, Millie is coming to see that the people who love her — the ones that count — accept her for herself, whether she's making a big splash in New York City or hanging out with family and friends in downtown Wellington. 📺

## PEACE that the World Cannot Give Silent Retreat 16-19 January 2023



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# Cross Currents

by Jane Higgins



**T**he 2022 Women's Rugby World Cup culminated in the final at Eden Park on 12 November.

Back in the 1990s, when women playing rugby was met with disapproval from the game's officialdom, women's teams organised the tournament without official sanction. A World Rugby Festival for Women was held here in Aotearoa in 1990 and the first Women's Rugby World Cup was held in Wales in 1991. Our team had to fundraise to get there. It wasn't until 1999 that the tournament was recognised by the International Rugby Board.

A lot has changed. Who wouldn't cheer Portia Woodman or Ruby Tui or any of those other amazing wāhine charging down the field to score? There is huge, and deserved, respect for the Black Ferns and all that they have achieved. This can't only be measured in victories, although there have been many, including five World Cup titles. The mana they have brought to championing women's sport has been transformative.

This year and next, Aotearoa is an epicentre for women's sport. We hosted the Women's Cricket World Cup in March and April, and will co-host (with Australia) the FIFA Women's World Cup next year. The global audience for that tournament will number over one billion.

As well, the 8th World Conference on Women and Sport is being held here this month, organised by Women in Sport Aotearoa, Ngā Wāhine Hākinakina o Aotearoa. This is the

world's largest gathering to advance gender equity and equality in sport and physical activity. It involves sport and recreation leaders from over 300 organisations and 60 countries. It is consciously aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Through participation in sport women advance their own wellbeing, and challenge patriarchal structures. For example, the International Cricket Board has brought pressure to bear on the Taliban with the threat to ban the Afghanistan men's cricket team from international fixtures unless the women's team is also able to play.

On the domestic front, sport can be a hugely important factor in the wellbeing of our young people,

their families and communities. On any Saturday morning, our parks are brimming with young people playing sport and with parents and other supporters cheering their tamariki.

But not everyone is able to participate as much as they would like. Sport NZ surveys indicate that barriers to adult involvement include time pressure from paid work and family commitments, and resourcing. The deprivations of poverty affect participation by both adults and children. Access is a matter of social justice.

There is concern, too, about the physical toll of collision sports. Significant new research from Scotland shows that rugby players may have twice the risk of dementia as the general population. This is not an isolated finding: other research supports it. Collision sports are dangerous, and we must find ways to protect players from long term-harm. Those ways do exist, certainly at the amateur level, with no loss of enjoyment. Just watch the speed and agility of touch rugby players, and the sheer joy, and deafening delight, of the little ones playing non-contact rippa rugby.

Sport can teach us how to win, how to lose and how to play in a team. In our sport-loving nation, let's work for access, equity and safety for everyone who wants to play. 🏉



**TUI MOTU InterIslands**  
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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: Māori, Pākehā, 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.

Opinions in letters are not necessarily those of the Magazine.

## EUCHARIST THAT UNITES US

In my imagination I enter the home of Martha and Mary. The housework is finished and Jesus is talking with Martha. I am interested to know how would he appease the apparent dualistic nature of the previous conversation reported in Scripture. How does “either — or” become “both — and”? Contemporary “listening” — like that which Mary did (read “contemplation”) — is closely linked to action so I have no difficulty hearing Jesus telling Martha that “action” is not divorced from prayer. To the Cistercian, for example, both are one. The word “both” therefore is easy for me to accept as a possibility of being a part of Jesus’s conversation.

“And,” however is something else — the non-dualistic approach. When fully entered it promises something greater than the sum of the two parts of this story — the busy houseworker and the disciple sitting still at Jesus’s feet.

Two women host Jesus, have a meal with him, and no doubt take vivid memories of him into each subsequent meal. (I would if I were them!) Have they (as women) done something to take, eat and remember him by? Is this the first record of “Eucharist?” I like to think so. Their hospitality is very ordinary, uncluttered, without clericalism, life-giving, blessed as sacred and available for all of us to imitate. When I “host” Jesus present in my guests in this manner — we all receive graces which cannot be taken away.

**Dave McCann, Feilding Aorangi**

# REVIEWS

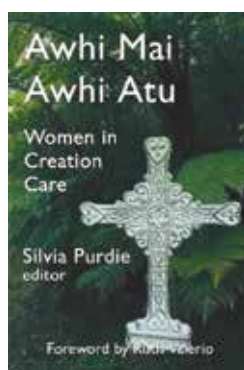
## Awhi Mai Awhi Atu Women in Creation Care

Edited by Silvia Purdie  
Published by Philip Garside  
Publishing, 2020. (NZD 35)  
Reviewed by Moeawa Callaghan

**S**ilvia Purdie describes this book as “narrative eco-missiology”. Narrative

because it is based on human experience as a place from which truth is spoken. Eco stands for ecology and care of creation.

Missiology represents the emerging mission movement in Aotearoa. The book is a collaborative project incorporating the stories of 30 women from diverse backgrounds, ages and experiences who have in common a commitment to faith-based work. Each story, each chapter, concludes with a karakia, poem or waiata followed by action-based recommendations for Churches and readers. The last chapter presents a theology in conversation with several contributors. The use of the image of kahikatea trees, introduced by Hirini Melbourne’s song “E Tū Kahikatea”, perfectly symbolises this project of women supporting one another in their work for the environment. The book provides an up-to-date picture of eco-missiology in Aotearoa with guidelines for those interested in learning more and take steps to contribute to caring for God’s creation. And for people like me, it provides a rare insight into eco-happenings in this country and women’s involvement in the movement. 📖



## Fresh Thinking

### The Magazine of the Center of Theological Inquiry

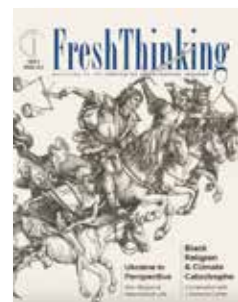
Published by Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton. (Free)  
Reviewed by Peter Matheson

**T**he online magazine *Fresh Thinking* from the Princeton Center for Theological Inquiry offers theological perspectives of scholars from around the world including Aotearoa. The 2022/2023 issue shows how theology can offer insight and hope on global warming.

William Barbierr highlights Pope Francis’s concept of “integral ecology”, the nexus between social justice, sexual morality, peacemaking and Earth ethics. This is the central insight: political and technological solutions need to be complemented by a paradigm shift in our relationship to nature.

For Maina Tallia, of Tuvalu, the theological understanding of tuakoi (neighbour) embraces the whole global community, human and non-human. James Miller traces how Daoist thought links landscape with the bones, fluids, energies within us. We need “ecological metanoia” because human exceptionalism — king of the universe stuff — “disembods” us from the land and animal life. Our individualism is poisoning the environment as much as are fossil fuels.

The artist and poet Elaine Rutherford talks of the “break space”, the threshold between us and creation: “the unbounded space / Of the in-between.” Lisa Sideris says: “COVID 19 has revealed our bankrupt concepts of freedom and our impoverished sense of community. Let’s recover the Gospel of hope!” 📖



Read *Fresh Thinking*: <https://www.ctinquiry.org/magazine>  
Sign up for the Center’s illustrated newsletter, *Insights*: <https://www.ctinquiry.org>



## Looking OUT and IN

I live my life in growing orbits  
which move out over the things of the world.  
Perhaps I can never achieve the last,  
but that will be my attempt.

I am circling around God, around the ancient tower,  
and have been circling for a thousand years,  
and I still do not know if I am a falcon, a storm,  
or a great song.

— Rainer Maria Rilke

**T**his beloved poem captures a longing for meaning and connection to God and some of why I have written each month in *Tui Motu* over the past 18 years. The writing practice has pushed me to pay attention to the ancient tower. I have been orbiting themes such as the practice of gratefulness, creating (or not) a still pond of attentiveness from the flotsam of pending chores, noticing God's hand in wild landscapes; my slow-witted surprise when I notice the image of God in people around me.

It all started when Trish, my spiritual director two decades ago, noted my complaints that most Christian authors of spiritual journeys are celibate white men in North America. They never seemed to have rowdy children or a permanently crumb-covered kitchen floor. "Why don't you write something then about your practice of faith as a mother?" So I sent an email to *Tui Motu* editor Michael Hill on 25 July 2005:

"I am a 35-year-old woman and Christian living in ChCh. I enjoy *Tui Motu* lots. I wonder if you're interested in an article — either a one-off or regular or bridging a

couple of issues of a "mother's journal/reflections". I've attached a sample of the sort of things it could include — 2 pages attached. If you were interested but had suggestions of preferable formats I'm fairly novice at this writing thing and very open to suggestions! Thanks for your consideration of this idea."

In the early days, with three (and soon four) little ones, a frequent theme was wresting away time to pray or sit still:

"Sharhira woke me with coughing and now I can't sleep. In the stillness and darkness of this pre-dawn, I will pause, write and pray. Time to set aside my thoughts swirling with activity, planning and lists. This room is cold and my fingers are quickly numb. Weeks roll by, busy, full, mostly happy — what is my prayer for this new week? God,

Ever present and dependable in our rhythms of life

Like night and day

Like breathing

Like seasons

Here is another Sunday, another week, another chance to invite you in  
Walk with me, run with me, sit with me

Keep my soul-heart-mind-body attuned, alert, aware, listening,  
responding. Amen."

During our 15 years in India, my columns would often circle the intense season of monsoon. A fierce, wet motorbike ride through sluicing monsoon rain. The moss, ferns, mould and monkeys. The dripping juice of mangos. The migrant Nepali woman drying nappies on a heater in the misty morning. September 2010 read:

"My seasonal devotion book includes only summer, autumn, winter and spring. Monsoon is her own season, pulling me along a sodden and overgrown path to The Creator . . . With shawls of mist, she stomps inside, muddy boots and all, sprawls with cheerful tales over a second and third steaming chai. Then in mid-September gathers up her billowing skirts, and with not even a farewell "Namaste!" flounces back to the Indian Ocean. What a woman!"

This year my regular contribution to *Tui Motu* will end. I spend too many hours on a laptop. I hope this means more time outside with the wind on my face. But I will still be here writing for the Advent issue of *Looking Out and In* next month! 📖

**Kaaren Mathias** lives in Ōtautahi. She cooks naan on a barbeque, forages for free fruit, mentors public health doctor trainees and talks to friends in India.



May we feel included  
reaching to the edges  
to see and unite with all our neighbours  
in the spirit of whanaungatanga

Divine Love

From the *Tui Motu* Team