TUI MOTU

InterIslands

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Pilgrims & Refugees

Nga tangata haerenga

MIKE RIDDELL, NEIL DARRAGH & ANNE TUOHY on journeying

GEREMY HEMA on adapting to new circumstances

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Cover Photo:
Frightened Girl with Ukrainian Flag Asks for Peace
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EDITORIAL

People on the Move

We started the issue with the theme of a pilgrim people in mind — people walking relationally in Earth energised by the resurrection in this Easter season. Then the Russian Kremlin began shelling Ukraine and rivers of refugees erupted. "People on the move" was no longer a symbolic idea — it was real, with desperate people escaping death.

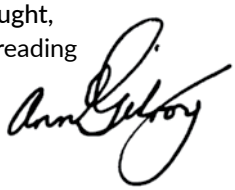
Both pilgrim and refugee people are travellers. For pilgrims with a spiritual motivation, the journey itself is as important as the destination. Their journey can be physical — from Cape Reinga to Bluff, from Tāmaki Makaurau to the home marae, from Aotearoa to Gallipoli. Or pilgrimage can be understood as life's journey — the Church as a pilgrim people. The motivation, the pace, the companionship along the way, the highlights and difficulties pilgrims encounter — these become compost for growing to appreciate the Earth family and God's mission. Pilgrims return home changed to further integrate their new perspectives.

In contrast, refugees escape. They endure their travel as the price of safety. Theirs is a life-or-death option to leave home — an escape which is forced, lacking comfort, anxiety-riddled, exhausting. We see women, men and children on foot or stuffed into trains, cars, lorries and boats pouring remnants of energy into reaching a haven. Most often they'll have no option to return home – it's been snatched from them. They'll journey on from pillar to post. Some will resettle and make a home away from organised makeshift camps, but too often the camps become permanently impermanent.

Whether we are pilgrims or refugees we are not worlds apart or unrelated to one another. We're all neighbours. And Easter is the season for pilgrims to resist death-dealing and demand peacemaking; to enter into the passion of refugees and, without spiritualising or sentimentalising it, to steep ourselves in the energy and commitment of Christ. As pilgrims we have the power to realise the hope of refugees. We've seen that in the Polish people opening their homes to the refugees. We witness it in the courage of women and men opposing the dissemination of propaganda and misinformation. We find it among leaders insisting that warring parties meet around the negotiation table. We join in promoting this hope when, overcoming our personal powerlessness to stop the war, we engage in prayer with our neighbours in their millions around the world believing the Risen Christ's promise that the peacemaking Spirit is active among us. This crystallises our commitment to do whatever we can to stop war and to support refugees.

We thank all our contributors to this April issue — our writers, artists and craftspeople — whose thought, expertise and generosity give us a thoughtful reading and reflection in this Easter season.

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



Acts of Love in a Pandemic

There is an element of my day job that could be described as "thanker-in-chief". It is no easy task in a pandemic to get in front of people you want to thank, to shake them by the hand and to convey with your eyes and your voice through a mask-covered face that you really think they are great. I try to do that every day at the District Health Board I chair. It's because something extraordinary is happening here in Aotearoa, the significance of which we, as a community, have yet to process.

Everywhere in the health system there is stress and love, risk and expertise, danger and suppressed panic, fear and exhaustion but above all, stoicism and commitment to the common good. This is Aotearoa in microcosm. The health system is responding to our population's health needs with a massive outpouring of love, discipline and clinical competence.

Our system has not collapsed under the weight of Omicron. Every day, health workers show up, look the risk square in the eye and say: "This is my job and I am committed to the people I serve." They might not say it just like that but that is what they are doing. These people are national heroes. When this is all passed we need to honour them as a nation.

As I write, my DHB is down to minimum viable service. Our wards are full of patients with COVID-related conditions. In layperson terms this means we are avoiding doing anything that is not absolutely necessary. We are doing everything that is life-saving. It means we are staffing wards with non-clinical staff from other parts of the hospital who are applying their skills in unfamiliar roles because we need them as bodies on the ground to help, not to diagnose or to intervene but to be of assistance so the wards can run, beds can be made and patients can be assisted.

On any one day we have nearly a quarter of our 12,000 staff isolating at home with COVID or as a close contact. So we need any backup we can get.

We know this level of stress will pass. We are confident that the epidemiological modelling we have relied on is still serving us well and that we are reaching the peak of this difficulty. But for those who have been working long shifts any relief still feels distant. Yet they persevere. The Public Service Association (PSA) had a strike planned during this period of peak COVID but pulled the notice back. They had every right to strike but they recognised the great negative effect such action would have on health risks for the population and so they stopped it, to our great relief. Their cause remains live without resolution as yet but they will push their legitimate issues at a later date.

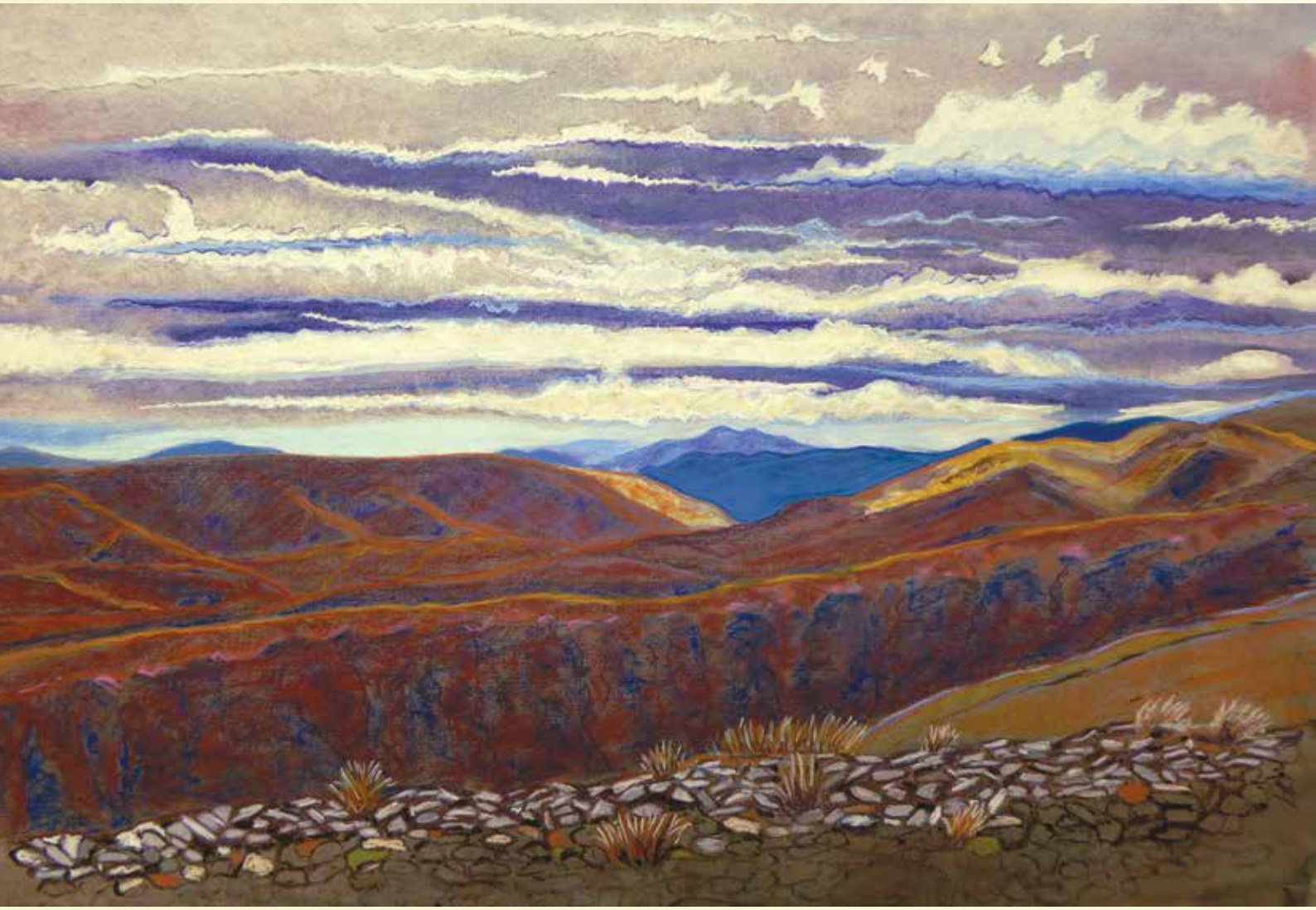
The heroism we see in the health system is mirrored in our schools. Parents are as anxious as they can be about their kids being exposed to Omicron at school. In a low-decile cluster in Tāmaki where I chair the Manaiakalani Eduation Trust, many schools are only at half their pre-pandemic rolls — parents are keeping their own kids at home. In response, the schools are doing everything they can to restore that precious element, confidence, to the whānau and aiga who have struggled with the virus.

Yet many parents remain unconvinced that it is safe for their kids to return to school. So the schools are sending out door-knockers, trusted community members, to talk with the parents and coax the kids to return. These are extraordinary efforts in a difficult and challenging time. Their principals and staff are going way beyond the normal call of duty to serve their communities.

These are all acts of love poured out in community. We are fortunate to be in Aotearoa.

Photo by Ricardo Barata/Shutterstock.com

Patrick Snedden is Chair of Auckland District Health Board and Manaiakalani Education Trust. He is the author of *Pākehā and the Treaty.*



Beauty, Light & Joy

MIKE RIDDELL writes that as people of the way we have a responsibility to shed light, beauty and joy as we navigate whatever comes to us.

The time of Easter is a celebration of transformation. In the midst of darkness, loss and disillusionment comes the resurrection — the shining light of hope sidelining death and despair. Through Christ, we look backwards on history from the other side of all that would distort life and joy.

As I write, there is ample cause for despair. The Russian invasion of Ukraine haunts us with nightmares of 1939. Whatever the situation might be by the time you read this, many innocent people will have lost their lives in the crucible of power politics driven by insatiable narcissism.

A virus runs rampant through our society, and our Parliament has recently been occupied by disaffected citizens — a disturbing though sometimes amusing sideshow.

Choosing Beauty over Negativity

It would be easy to feel bleak and powerless. But that would be to give too much weight to forces we have no hope of controlling. My own strategy has been to focus on beauty.

Both the awareness of all that is good in life, and the choosing to spend time creating frivilous and gratituitous artistry. Were nuclear war to break out, would it be better to be living in fear or joy?

People and Land

I find myself saturated with reasons not to succumb to negativity. I wake each morning to a stunning Central Otago landscape, with light dancing on the hills in unending constellations of splendour.

My gorgeous wife Rosemary fills our small home with melody as she plays the baby grand piano that occupies a corner. In between times she learns Spanish because our grandson speaks Spanish, but also because it is pleasurable learning.

Her smile and infantile humour lights up the local universe. Last winter she sat by the fire doing crochet and planning the launch of

the book she'd recently written. In the summer she haunts our little wildflower garden, and makes arrangements of intricacy and delight for us all to enjoy. During the nights she has wild dreams, including the experience of flying, which she likes to recount to us in the morning.

Next door to us lives Rosemary's mother Lorna, 93 years of age. She stares down the indignities of getting older with great style and panache. Lorna has lived through a world war, and known the deprivation of it. The shortage of sugar in her native Scotland has resulted in an innocent fascination with lollies ("sweeties" in her dialect), which she consumes with decadent defiance. And she always dresses with great style.

The house she is living in was built on a gravel carpark some three years ago. She has directed the transformation of the property into a resplendent garden since she moved next to us in 2020. It is a cacophony of colour in a climate that can be bleak. Lorna was the one who designed a memorial garden for our daughter Polly, who died in 2018. In the middle of it stands a metal sculpture which she commissioned.

Our daughter Katherine lives a few hundred metres along the road. She comes to bless us with her presence over coffee each morning. Ambling along with her are her two dogs, Lola and Bella — both black mostly Labradors. These generous animals teach us the meaning of unconditional love and are unfailing in their affection.

These canine friends are a special form of grace for which we are constantly grateful. And of course having our wonderful daughter so close to us is a special blessing that we didn't anticipate. As a family therapist, she travels the roads of Central Otago bringing love, light and transformation to families that are struggling to find hope or purpose during testing times.

Choosing to Live Well

Living well is a strategy rather than the result of luck. Rosemary and I have experienced our share of suffering and loss in our years together. However, rather than feel aggrieved, we have made a choice to live as generously as we can. In doing so we've found delight and wonder that encroaches on our daily existence. But mostly because Christ rose from the dead, and we are enfolded in Christ.

Richard Rohr says: "Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is, rather, a life stance. It's a way of living the Presence, living in *awareness* of the Presence, and even of enjoying the Presence."

I suspect many of us live in our heads, pursuing insular lives as a form of self-protection. The fact of the resurrection shines eternal light into the darkness, and is reason enough for daily celebration.

Creating Beauty

This summer I've made a conscious choice to create beauty. The rear of our property was a simple slope down to an open drain, and previously my major engagement with it was mowing the lawn. A year ago I transformed the drain into a schist lined creek with burbling water. But in the last few months I've been inspired by a wider vision.

I levelled a section of the back yard and planted eight different trees there to form a mini orchard. Using massive pieces of schist from the local environment we created two rock terraces and dotted them with various plants that seem to be thriving. I paved our courtyard, making a pathway extending from the courtyard under two sets of pergolas toward the rear of the property.

Then, getting a feel for it all, I constructed a set of steps down to the flat and paved them with even more schist.

To crown it all, I've built six sets of pergolas on which we will grow climbing roses. Under them, next year hopefully, we'll host an Italian "long lunch" for all our village's inhabitants.

Today I've come in from building a deck. When it's finished we'll be able to sit there under the weeping willow tree and listen to the burbling stream.

Oh, and in between time I've edited a small collection of my Central Otago poetry which is now being printed.

I tell you all this not to boast, but to echo the thoughts of Harry Emerson Fosdick: "Nothing in human life, least of all in religion, is ever right until it is beautiful."

As people of the way we have a responsibility to shed light, beauty and joy along our path as we navigate what comes to us.

Show Beauty through Our Lives

Too often I suspect we regard the resurrection as some sort of magic trick to be applauded from the sidelines. It is so much more than that. It is the recognition that the whole of the universe has shifted in the favour of humanity, and that whatever may befall any of us along the path, all will be well. The challenge becomes to live as if this is true, rather than drowning under the stormy swells of doom and gloom.

Of course, one of the ironies of my attempt to make beauty where there was none, is that I've already outlived my prognosis and may never get to enjoy the garden I'm creating. That has nothing to do with it. Our mission, should we choose to accept it, is to show forth in our lives the beauty with which God has touched us. May Easter resonate in our hearts. ☀

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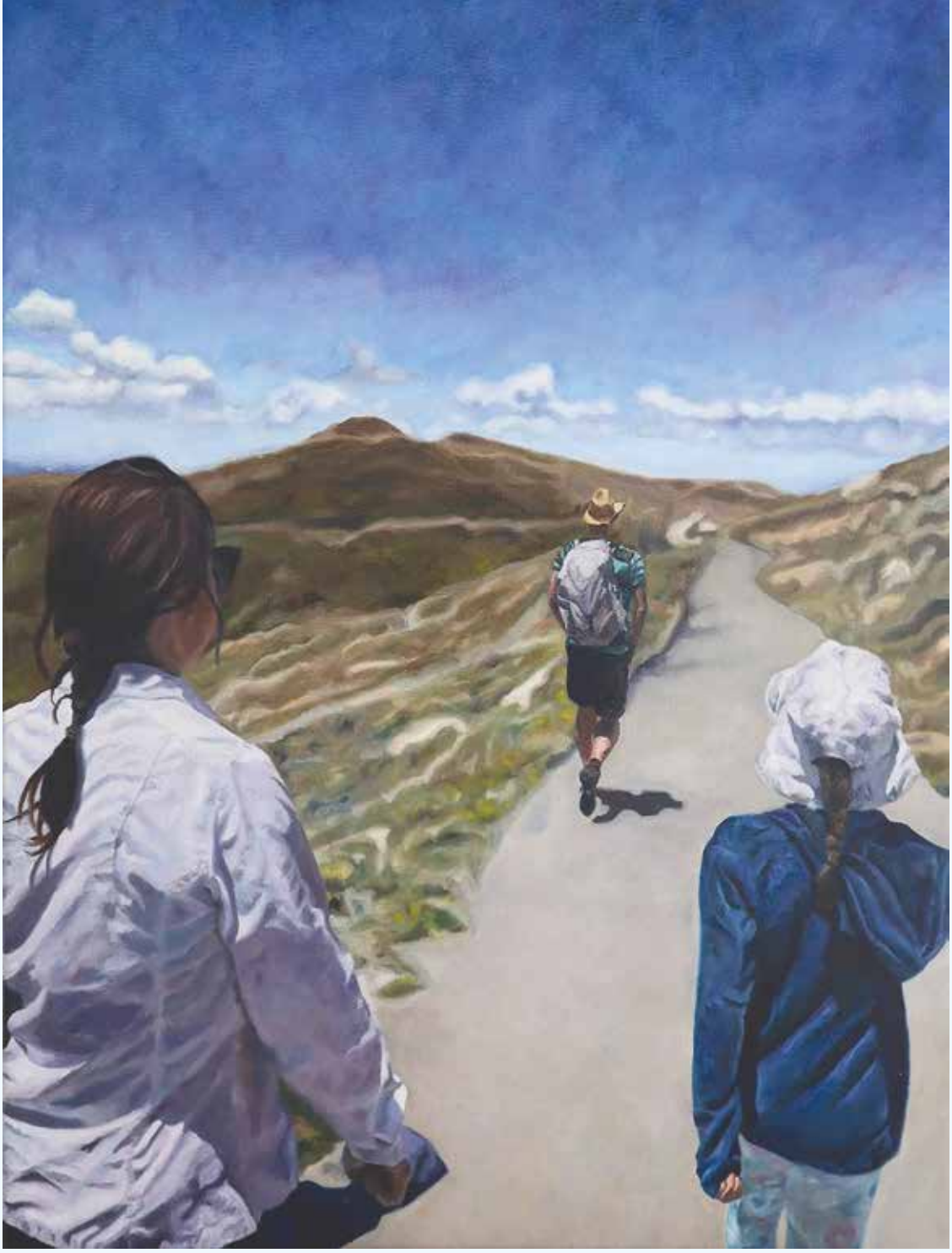
Painting: *From the Tops — Mt Ida Looking North* by Jane Whitaker © Used with permission www.nasebyartist.co.nz

Mike Riddell writes novels, plays, films and apology notes. He cooks when he can and breathes intentionally on a daily basis.



A PILGRIM PEOPLE

NEIL DARRAGH describes journeying as a reality and a symbol of a pilgrim people — a synodal way of Church.

The spiritual life is often represented as a journey, a search for God with its own stages and stopping places, with its own twists and reversals, and its alternation of commonplace and insight. Many well-known spiritual writers, such as Dante, Bonaventure, Teresa of Avila, and Bellarmine have used the metaphor of the journey to represent the search for God at the heart of the Christian life.

Yet the experience of journey is not just something that affects individuals. The Christian community is itself on a journey as a community of people with a common bond and a common hope. During the season of Easter, the idea of "journey" is particularly sharp. The liturgies of Easter from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday are rites of passage, a participation in a ritual journey *through* death *into* new life. The resurrection of Christ is not just a *return* to life but the same person *transformed* into a "life-giving spirit" (I Cor 15:45).

IMAGES OF THE CHURCH

We use images and metaphors like the "journey" to understand the deeper realities of life. The image of the journey helps us understand what the Christian community, the Church, is like and, more importantly, what

that Church *should be* like even if it isn't quite like that yet.

The image of the Church as people on a journey is one that has come into prominence in recent decades. One of the images common in the Catholic Church in the 20th century was that of the Church as the *mystical body of Christ*. This is an image originating in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. It focuses our attention on the Church as an organic unity with many parts all of which need to cooperate for the good of the whole.

Another prominent image at that time was the Church as a *hierarchically structured institution* which was focused on teaching authority and a pyramid-like management style.

The rather different image that came into prominence during the course of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was that of the *people of God* which put emphasis on the human and communal rather than the institutional and hierarchical side of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*, par 9-17). Here the emphasis is on the whole people, though with its own internal diversity, on a journey towards the fullness of the realm (kingdom) of God in which all people play a part. This people of God is a *pilgrim* people.

PILGRIMS ON THE WAY

The image of a "pilgrim people", has a sense of journey and change. It is a rather ragged image, moving along without very clear boundaries about who belongs and who doesn't, with trust in God's leadership, on a journey towards a future goal (the future realm of God as Jesus described it) but not yet quite sure how to get there or what will be encountered on the way.

This imagery has substantial roots in Hebrew and Christian history. Abraham and Sarah left their own country and travelled to an unknown place that God would show them (Gen 12:1-5).

The apostle Paul uses this journey as the great example of faith (Rom 4:1-25).

The two books of Luke (the *Gospel of Luke* and the *Acts of the Apostles*) are concerned with two great journeys: the journey of Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem with its culmination in his death-resurrection, and the journey of the early Church taking the message of Christ from Jerusalem to the "ends of the earth".

These early disciples were not then called Christians but "followers of the Way" (Acts 9:2).

Stories of journeys are deeply embedded also in the identity of nearly all New Zealanders whose ancestors, long ago and more recently, journeyed here in the hope of finding a better future.

KINDS OF JOURNEY

We are familiar today with the journeys of *migrants*. Some of these are deliberate and planned. Others are forced journeys, refugees and asylum seekers fleeing from desperate political or economic conditions.

Then there are other journeys — those made by tourists, people relocating for work and careers, adventurers and missionaries.

PILGRIMAGE JOURNEY

The journeys that most interest us here, though, are the journeys that are undertaken for a spiritual purpose. They are journeys for personal or community renewal, searches for spiritual identity, searches for meaning, or searches for God.

The people making these searches we call "pilgrims". A pilgrimage is not just a tourist journey for distraction and entertainment. Nor is it a purely practical journey by which we get from one place to another.

Usually, pilgrimage means a geographical journey intertwined with an inner personal journey. Sometimes we journey not in a geographical sense but in the same place — an interior search for a different way of being alive. In any case, as a pilgrimage it is a search for the divine, or for fulfilment, or enlightenment, or identity, or simply a personal and communal place called home.

Sometimes the pilgrimage may not be so much a human-centred journey as one where we immerse ourselves in the already existing journey of a particular place, becoming absorbed in the journey of the place itself — the land, the trees, the grasses, the wind, the animals, the birds and insects, the human house, the living ecosystem— in its own search for its Creator.

A pilgrimage needs a spiritual openness to the unexpected, the unwanted, or the undreamed-of. It involves living with some degree of anxiety as the familiar and the manageable recede from us.

It is often uncomfortable. It awaits a change of heart, like the call of Christ to the first disciples. Most importantly perhaps, a pilgrimage rests on a deep hope that in the end there is God all-compassionate who awaits the pilgrim with profound patience.

A CHURCH IN PROCESS AND WILLING TO LEARN

The Catholic Church worldwide is currently engaged in efforts to implement what Pope Francis has called the "synodal way", that is, people journeying together. Underneath and supporting this synodal way is the image of the Church as a pilgrim people.

There is a sense here of people listening and learning from one another because we are not quite sure yet of what we might encounter on the way. And a sense of reliance on one another to notice opportunities and dangers ahead.

It requires a trust in one another and in trustworthy leaders, but it allows the leaders to be wrong sometimes without catastrophic consequences for everyone else.

We are, or we could hope to be, a Church in process and willing to learn. The final document of the Amazon Synod of bishops, the most recent of these synods, is entitled *The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology* (www.sinodo.amazonica.va). In our part of the world, we could also hope to be a pilgrim Church seeking new paths together.

Painting: ***Cherie 2019*** by Joanna Poulson © Used with permission www.joannapoulson.com.au

Neil Darragh is a pastor, writer and theologian with a long-term interest in the impact of the Christian Gospel in New Zealand society.

DYING AND RISING

GEREMY HEMA reflects on the adaptations Māori have made in traditional celebrations during Lent and Easter during the COVID years.

As a young university student fresh out of Hato Pētera College I kept an eye out for the latest issue of *Tui Motu*. It was usually available at the university chapel library, or the Newman Hall library on the University of Auckland campus. My uncle, Pā Henare Tate, had given the magazine its name in 1997.

So it is a delight to contribute some kōrero, like being reacquainted with an old friend.

Many Māori communities at Easter observe the regular Easter liturgies, but this is also a time when we remember the dead.

It is when we visit the graves of loved ones, organise cemetery clean-ups and hold hurakōhatu (unveiling services).

As well as being a time of reflection, renewal, and hohourongo (reconciliation with God and with other people), Easter is also a time for whakawhanaungatanga (strengthening of relationships).

It's a chance to catch up with relatives, particularly during faith festivities and hurakōhatu.

In the weekends leading up to Easter, many marae will host working bees, where whānau will return from the cities to pull out weeds, mow lawns, repaint facilities and clean the bird droppings off the whakairo (carvings). Certain whānau might volunteer for particular tasks: one whānau might volunteer to mow the lawns at the urupā (cemetery), another to clean the Whare Karakia (church).

Wherever hurakōhatu are to be held, the close relatives will be busy laying cement foundations for the beautiful headstones which will stand as glistening memorials to loved ones, to be admired and visited in perpetuity.

Usually manuhiri (visitors) come from far and wide for hurakōhatu. They may, or may not, have a whakapapa (genealogical) connection to the particular iwi (tribe), hapū (sub-tribe), whānau and marae hosting the hurakōhatu.

Therefore it is important to make sure that the setting is impressive and the hospitality of a high standard for the manuhiri.

This year again, things are very different for many Māori communities,

as for other ethnic communities, as we navigate COVID restrictions. Many of our traditional Easter faith festivals, gatherings, retreats and wānanga are postponed, restricted or converted to Zoom events. It is something we've become quite used to over the last couple of years.

Hurakōhatu have been postponed or limited to immediate whānau as marae either remain closed or are restricting gatherings to 100 vaccinated attendees.

Many whānau have decided to delay their events until after the COVID restrictions lift.

Events at Motuti

The little settlement of Motuti in North Hokianga is observing two events on 23 April.

Our day will begin at 4am with a dawn karakia to bless and open the Raiātea Māori Catholic Museum and Resource Centre. Raiātea was the dream of the late Pā Henare Tate. It takes its name from the schooner in which Pīhopa Pomapārie (Bishop Pompallier) arrived in Aotearoa.

Then at 10am we will celebrate Eucharist in Hāta Maria Church where the remains of Pīhopa Pomapārie rest. We will then unveil the headstone of our beloved Māori priest, scholar and tribal leader, Pā Henare.

The Motuti people decided, at the request of senior kaumatua (elders), to stick with the April date as it has already been postponed twice. Unfortunately this means that only 100 people can attend — very different from "the normal" more than 1,000 whānau and manuhiri from across Aotearoa, the Pacific and possibly even overseas.

There is pragmatism in this decision and a spirit of aroha for those who are advancing in their years. We hope to have a gathering later in the year to celebrate our two events with greater numbers.

Throughout Aotearoa and the world, peoples and cultures have had to create safe ways to express culture and spirituality during the pandemic.

In Hokianga we have adapted, knowing that our tūpuna (ancestors) also adapted during the 1918 influenza pandemic. Then, marae were closed and some were converted into makeshift hospitals and even mortuaries. They reopened as the pandemic subsided.

Mourning Our Losses

The COVID experience has brought sadness to many.

We have had to mourn loved ones within the restrictions. Many of us have viewed unveilings and funeral services via Zoom and other online platforms.

Many of our great leaders have been deprived of a proper tangi (rites for the dead, funeral — shortened form of tangihanga). Some have gone to the grave with no tangi at all but with the necessary karakia (prayers and rites).

"E pai ana, i roto i te whakapono, kāhore he raruraru — because of our faith, we don't need to worry about these things. All is made well in the faith."

Many Māori Catholics mourned the loss of three great religious. Marist Sister Rose Harris of Motukaraka in the Hokianga passed away in August 2021. COVID conditions restricted her tangihanga to immediate whānau at her marae, Ngāi Tupoto.

Josephite Louise O'Kane died in late January this year, and was returned to her beloved people of Panguru with COVID restrictions in place.

Mill Hill Pā Mikaere Ryan, the great te reo Māori scholar, passed a few weeks later.

Pā lay for two nights at his beloved Te Unga Waka Marae in Tāmaki Makaurau before returning to his first parish, Te Ngākau Tapu o Hehu, Kahukuraariki Marae, Waitāruke, Whangaroa Harbour in Northland.

Also during this time, a number of senior Māori leaders of other hāhi (church denominations) have passed in similar circumstances.

With each of these wonderful missionaries, many of the people who loved them commented how sad it was that they passed during periods of COVID restriction.

Others said that being the humble and selfless people that they were, they possibly would have preferred things this way — less fuss and expense. One kaumātua told me that they would have said: "E pai ana, i roto i te whakapono, kāhore he raruraru — because of our faith, we don't need to worry about these things. All is made well in the faith."

Time Offered Opportunities

Despite the pandemic and its associated restrictions, this time has brought many whānau closer together — closer to their extended whānau within their hapū. Closer also to the faith and opportunities for spiritual expression.

Whānau have been joining Zoom karakia, church services, hui and marae meetings. Before, they may have not had the motivation, the resources, or felt the confidence to attend physically.

Beauty, Patience, Wisdom

Now, as we experience this significant, tapu, holy and solemn period, may we look to the lives of Henare, Rose, Louise and Mikaere and others for inspiration and strength.

Where hui, events and karakia are celebrated in smaller numbers, may we find beauty in those numbers and the efforts of those able to participate.

Where such occasions are postponed, may we be patient, as Lent requires us to be patient in the lead-up to the resurrection of our Lord.

And may we find comfort in the words of the wise kaumātua who said: "E pai ana, i roto i te whakapono, kāhore he raruraru — because of our faith, we don't need to worry about these things. All is made well in the faith."

Photos supplied by Pompallier Hokianga Trust

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Live More Simply

ANNE TUOHY discusses the urgency of our call to live a more sustainable lifestyle in Earth.

The world has been grappling with the challenges and uncertainties of a global pandemic for the last two years. The way we live and work, engage with our colleagues and neighbours, gather to worship and celebrate, even where and when we travel, has all significantly changed. Alongside the loss of life and livelihood caused by the current pandemic, we have also been facing the increasingly destructive effects of climate change. With alarming frequency, fires, floods, storms, and tornadoes are irrevocably changing lives and landscapes across the globe.

Although the desire for life to return to normal is strong, there is a growing awareness of the need to re-evaluate how we "used to live" and explore ways of "living differently". Out of the challenges of the last few years, exciting conversations around how we can live more simply and sustainably are starting to emerge. While lockdowns and workplace restrictions have caused much justifiable anxiety, a growing number of people are finding the re-set of their lives to a simpler rhythm unexpectedly satisfying.

Biblical Call for Shmita

For the Jewish and Christian traditions, Scripture offers some surprising insights into the contemporary search for a more sustainable life. The Jewish calendar is currently marking a time of *shmita* or year of suspension. Traditionally, *shmita* occurs every seven years and, like the sabbath, is a time of rest and reset. Land and livestock rest; indentured work and debts are suspended; produce and harvests are considered "ownerless" and freely available to all. After seven of these suspension or sabbatical years, Israel was commanded to "sound the trumpet throughout your land" and proclaim a *yōḇel* — a Jubilee year of restoration and "liberty … for all inhabitants … when each of you shall return to your own property, each of you to your own family" (Lev 25:9-10).

The rhythm of seven sabbatical years culminating in a year of Jubilee finds its source in the creation narratives in Genesis. This rhythm also echoes in the weekly thanksgiving celebrations of *Shabbat* and the Eucharist. The cycle of rest, reset, and restoration is not an individual concern but involves the whole community. It reflects a rhythm of sustainability that allows the land and the livestock to rest and acts to reset the sociopolitical and economic landscape.

The biblical practice of *shmita* and *yōḇel* are historical and focused on a more agrarian way of life than we in Aotearoa New Zealand experience today. However, the concepts behind them have much to teach us about sustainability in relation to both the

created environment and human communities.

Call for Right Relationships

There is an intimate link between *shmita* and *yōḇel* and the covenantal obligation to live within "right relationships". This link is grounded in two key theological concepts: those of divine sovereignty and divine justice. First, the notion of Jubilee affirms the sovereign nature of our creator God, not only in terms of land but also concerning time and the natural world. It reminds us that creation is graced. It is a gift from God and has been freely given to all, for all. Accordingly, creation belongs not to us, but to God.

Second, these traditions are developed around making the justice of God historically present and socially tangible. In the practice of *shmita* and *yōḇel*, the social justice principles of solidarity and stewardship, economic justice and the common good act to restore the covenantal balance of social and economic relationships.

Refocusing Our Thinking

For most Western societies, remembering the sovereignty of God requires a radical change of focus or *metanoia*. The centrality of God stands in stark contrast to the androcentric framework so prevalent in the contemporary world. The scientific and technological advances of the last few hundred years reflect the creative power of the human imagination. They have brought many benefits and enabled people to live fuller, healthier lives. Consequently, it can be hard to remember that we are not the centre of the world! However, these advances are not value free and not without problems. In many ways, the power of human science has replaced the sovereignty of God in the modern human consciousness. This has encouraged a disconnect in the relationships between humanity and God, which in turn, has fractured the relationship between humanity and creation.

Framing relationships anthropocentrically shifts the balance of right-relationships within the rhythm of creation. It places humanity above rather than within creation, fostering a sense of entitlement and control. The connection between an anthropocentric worldview and our current ecological crisis is examined in depth in *Laudato Si'*. Here Pope Francis notes that while the power and creativity of the human imagination results in "a fulfilment which is uniquely human" the damage that occurs when the rhythm and balance of creation is disordered presents a "serious detriment to the world around us." (*LS* par 101-103)

The impact of the current anthropocentric framework does not stop with creation or the natural world. It is carried through to the relationships between human communities, highlighting "the intimate relationship between the poor and the fragility of the planet" (LS par 16). This means that questions around sustainability are essentially questions about justice.

Organising for Relationships

The Christian and Jewish faith traditions affirm that justice belongs to God. Consequently, faith communities are charged with organising their social and religious structures in ways that reflect the covenantal obligations of justice, mercy, and holiness. This requires an evaluation of the social structures that either cause unjust situations to arise or maintain existing injustices. The call to justice is not an optional extra but a Gospel Imperative. It lies at the heart of our Christian faith and identity.

In line with the intergenerational solidarity explored by Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, the practice of *shmita* and *yōḇel* acts to restrain intergenerational social and economic inequality. It reminds us that we are called to safeguard, not control, the goods of creation and so breaks the cycle of the economic injustices that accompany rampant individual acquisition. It is no coincidence those committed to the eradication of global debt call themselves "Jubilee" debt campaigners!

Let's Live More Simply

While the challenge to live a simpler life is not new, it is more urgent, as our contemporary world faces the reality that our previous way of life is unsustainable. A sustainable lifestyle is no longer a personal choice but a global necessity. For Jewish and Christian communities, the rhythm of rest, reset, and restoration implicit in the practices of *shmita* and *yōḇel* offers a conceptual framework that can support the contemporary quest for a different, more sustainable lifestyle. In this quest, the global leadership of the younger generation has become a compelling and authoritative force. Their commitment to the regeneration of environmental and communal relationships makes the challenge to "live simply so that others may simply live" suddenly seem all the more achievable.

Painting: ***Beehives in Matukituki Valley*** by Kelvin McMillan © Used with permission www.kelvinmcmillan.art

Professor Anne Tuohy is a lecturer at Te Kupenga — Catholic Theological College (NZ) and at the Broken Bay Institute TAIT, Sydney.

Fasting *with* Compassion *in* Ramadan

ZAIN ALI shares how fasting during Ramadan develops gratitude and compassion, especially towards those in need.

For some time now my children have been asking for a pet — a kitten, a puppy, even a rabbit — anything cute and cuddly. I have been resisting their requests. Having a pet is a long-term commitment and I fear after the first couple of weeks I'll be left holding the kitten, puppy or rabbit. But about six months ago, our neighbour's cat started adopting our family. At a time of its choosing the cat will waltz into our home and promptly flop onto my prayer mat, our couch or my bed. It walks around our home as if it owns the place. My children are delighted with having the cat over.

However, I now face a series of dilemmas: "Dad, can the cat sleep in my bed tonight?", "Dad, can we get another cat so this cat will have a friend?" The most difficult dilemma has been whether to feed the cat: "It's looking at my food and holding up its paw, Dad." I tried acknowledging the cat's cuteness while warning that the cat might never go home if we fed it.

At this point, much to my chagrin, I remembered an anecdote where the prophet Muhammad advised his followers: "There is not a Muslim who plants trees or cultivates land of which a bird, man, or beast eats thereof except that is a charity on his behalf."

The prophet's advice is not to be hard-hearted. We should not begrudge those who benefit from the fruits of our labour — it is a form of charity to allow others to share in what we have. Even animals should be allowed a share.

Sharing So All Life Is Fed

This anecdote reminded me of

an elderly relative who spent much of her life in impoverished circumstances. When she saw us cover a grapevine to protect it from the birds, she promptly advised us that birds also have a right to eat! This particular relative was known to be deeply generous. If we visited her home, she would give us the best of what she had.

There is a story about a member of the early Muslim community who had a visitor arrive at dinner time. This host brought out food and served it to his guest, then he turned the lamps in his home low to save oil. It emerged later that he had only enough food for his guest and he had turned the lamps low so that the guest would not see that his plate was empty.

Our family is fortunate. We've always had food — and a wide variety of food. It came as a shock a couple of weeks ago when I noticed that shelf after shelf at my local supermarket was completely empty. The bread aisle was empty, the frozen food aisle, not to mention the toilet paper aisle. Ramadan, the fasting month, is around the corner so I was also keeping an eye on our supplies.

During Ramadan we have certain treats on hand for when we break our fast at the end of each day. Chocolate almonds are a must, as well as dates, mango juice and samosas. Although these treats are usually reserved for children, adults also find them hard to resist after a day of fasting.

During *Ramadan* I always gain a new appreciation of water: that first sip of water at the end of day has a special sweetness to it — it is deeply refreshing.

Three Forms of Fasting

Muslim scholars often talk about three forms of fasting.

The first is when a person abstains from food and water during the day. This is how most Muslims understand and practise fasting. In some Muslim countries, there is a reversal of daily routines during Ramadan, when folk spend much of the day at home then venture out in the evenings. There are cities that come alive after the fast is broken and restaurants and shops open late into the evening.

The second form of fasting involves abstaining from vice. For example, to stop bad language, to rein in anger, greed, envy, lust, pride or time spent scrolling and trolling on social media. This can be very challenging as it requires a significant degree of self-awareness. A friend in Egypt claims that the first day of *Ramadan* is the hardest because of so many heated exchanges on the street and traffic jams — all the result of caffeine withdrawal.

The third form of fasting is yet more challenging. This involves abstaining from all else except consciousness of God. God becomes the centre and focus — not work, family, Netflix or COVID. Our mind, body and soul are taken up with God to the exclusion of all else.

To be deeply connected with God opens us to a deep sense of compassion, especially for those in need. The very real burn of hunger and thirst adds to our gratitude for all that we have.

This may sound rather abstract, however there is practice known as *I'tikaf* which involves spending 10 days in seclusion in the Mosque. Every year there are a handful of people who spend *I'tikaf* there. They are assigned a special area and for the duration of their stay they focus on prayer, meditation and reading the Qur'an. They do not engage in conversation unless absolutely necessary.

My L'tikaf Experience

Curiosity got the better of me a few years ago and I decided to give *I'tikaf* a try at my local Mosque. Initially I was sceptical. How would disconnecting from family, work and the internet be good, when these things were such important aspects of my life?

The first few days of seclusion were challenging — I felt twitchy and bored. At a certain point, however, I began to experience a deep sense of peace. This came as a surprise. Disconnecting from my routine and leaving my comfort zone was good for my spiritual well-being. It was possible to direct my whole attention towards God and feel deeply connected with the Divine.

Toward the end of my 10-day stay, the twitchy bored feeling returned, but alongside that I also carried a sense of peace. I thought of Rumi reflecting on his own search for God:

"I searched for God among the Christians and on the Cross and therein I found Him not.

I went into the ancient temples of idolatry; no trace of Him was there.

Then I directed my search to the Kaaba, the resort of old and young; God was not there even.

Turning to philosophy I inquired about him from ibn Sina but found Him not within his range.

Finally, I looked into my own heart and there I saw Him; He was nowhere else."

God, for Rumi, is very much with us. The challenge is to clear ourselves from our routines and vices and allow ourselves the space just to be.

Compassion and Giving

Ramadan is also a month where charity is encouraged, and people donate to a number of local and international charitable organisations, many of whom help feed the poor. To be deeply connected with God opens us to a deep sense of compassion, especially for those in need.

When fasting we feel the very real burn of hunger and thirst, and this adds to our appreciation and gratitude for all that we have — even for our neighbour's hungry cat.

Photo by Karrrtinki/Shutterstock.com

Zain Ali is a scholar of Islamic studies and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Auckland. He lives in Auckland.

Sites of Memory

ALLAN DAVIDSON outlines the memorials, traditions and rituals we have around Anzac Day and reminds us of missing dimensions in our remembering.

In Hokitika, where I grew up, the iconic 1903 town clock commemorates both the 130 Westland men who served and the four troopers who died in the South African War, and the Coronation of Edward VII. Memorialisation of war and empire were closely related.

After the First World War, a foundation stone for the war memorial wing and administrative quarters at Westland Hospital was laid on Peace Day in 1919 when the signing of the Treaty of Versailles was celebrated. On the same day, the sod was turned for the building of St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church. Not completed until 1935, a marble plaque inside the church named 40 Presbyterians and Scots from Westland who died on active service. Under their names are the words: "Lest We Forget."

In the local recreation ground, an impressive marble cenotaph was unveiled in torrential rain on Armistice Day in 1922. The mayor spoke about how the memorial was a reminder "of the great sacrifice made to preserve the unity of Empire", a sentiment which should be "observed to the end of time." At the District High School, a marble obelisk was erected. Over time, this became the memorial for pupils who died in the South African and two World Wars.

Hokitika's WWII memorial favoured a pragmatic approach to memorialisation with a Memorial Hall. The names of those who died were listed on two brass plaques at the entrance porch.

Places for Remembering

War memorials are ubiquitous in New Zealand. The Australian historian, Ken Inglis, called them "Sacred Place". They are sites of memory. For grieving relatives of those killed, the naming served as a surrogate headstone for the grave they could not visit.

Early Anzac Day services at these memorial places were often funereal in tone, combining solemn religious observances and rhetoric, honouring the dead, encouraging patriotism and imperial loyalty. The memorials acted as community gathering places. Once a year, old soldiers could join together and honour their fallen comrades.

There was a very male, military construction to these services. The grieving widows and children were on the periphery. One place which did recognise the significance of their suffering was the centrepiece of the National War Memorial Hall of Memories. Lyndon Smith's statue, *Mother and Children*, conveys something of the anguish and grief brought by war.

Change in Attitudes to War

Over the years, our perception of history has been challenged. Many baby boomers (the generation born after 1945) had difficulty entering into their parents' and grandparents' worlds. This was reflected in the late 1960s and early 1970s in anti-war protests, stimulated by their opposition to the Vietnam War.

Younger demonstrators, laying wreaths for the Viet Cong and for peace, clashed with those for whom Anzac Day was a "holy day" of remembrance. Patriotism, national identity, rhetoric about sacrifice and the "glorious dead" were challenged by calls for peace.

The National Council of Churches sought to mediate, holding a consultation in 1972 on the observance of Anzac Day.

Other protests followed, with the campaign for a nuclear-free New Zealand prominent in the 1980s.

There was also a growing awareness that the civilian victims of war, through such things as bombings, genocide and rape, had largely been overlooked in public memorials.

By the end of the 20th century, a kind of memorial tourism was popular. Aging veterans and descendants of war dead visited the cemeteries and memorials at European battlegrounds. For a time, visits to Gallipoli around Anzac Day became almost a rite of passage for young New Zealanders. I think of the words of theologian Albert Schweitzer: "Soldiers' graves are the greatest preachers of peace."

The ambiguous alliance between memorialisation and national identity was seen in New Zealand's repatriation of the unknown warrior in 2004 and the development of Pukeahu National War Memorial Park. For the Returned Services Association members and the diminishing number of veterans from past conflicts, the resurgence of attendance at Anzac Dawn and civic services by soldiers' descendants, some wearing their forebears' medals, was a heartening response, giving new life to remembering past conflicts and their human cost.

Missing Dimensions

But there have been some missing dimensions to our war memorialisation and sites of memory. Two in particular stand out.

Remember Conscientious Objectors

First, the names of the dissenters, pacifists, conscientious objectors, remembered in a line from Shirley Murray's Anzac hymn as "the brave whose conscience was their call",

> "Lest We Forget" is not only a call to remember. It also questions what and how we remember, and how we are to live today and into the future.

were largely missing from our national naming. The National Memorial for Conscientious Objectors in the Archibald Baxter Peace Garden in Dunedin, opened in October 2021, gives visibility to the horrific treatment extended to some WWI objectors and reminds us of those who against all odds were willing to stand up for peace. The books, *Saints and Stirrers*, edited by Geoffrey Troughton and Philip Fountain (2017)* and *Pursuing Peace in Godzone*, edited by Geoffrey Troughton (2018)* provide wide-ranging accounts of Christianity and peacemaking and the peace tradition in New Zealand. The many Māori and Pākehā women and men named in these books are worth honouring and remembering.

Acknowledge New Zealand Wars

Second, we are only now beginning to challenge the loud silence and ignorance among Pākehā about the continuing legacy of the New Zealand Wars and land confiscation. The teaching of New Zealand history in schools will help. There are many battle and grave sites associated with these wars which are our country's own significant sites of memory.

The designation of Rā Maumahara National Day of Commemoration for the New Zealand Wars on 28 October offers the potential for learning about their significance and continuing impact. Vincent O'Malley's *The New Zealand Wars – Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa* (2019)* and Richard Shaw's powerful account, *The Forgotten Coast* (2021)* are good starting points for Pākehā readers.

It was not until 1975 when I read Dick Scott's *Ask That Mountain*, the story of Parihaka and the prophets Te Whiti and Tohu, that I learned about peaceful responses to colonial aggression. Among the Parihaka prisoners sent to the South Island, a group was sent in 1881 to the Hokitika jail at Seaview. I worked at Seaview Hospital in the early 1960s and passed the former jail site daily. I was stunned by my own ignorance when the Parihaka monument was erected there some decades later. The story of the incarceration of the Parihaka prisoners at Seaview was never talked about when I was growing up.

We will need to appreciate and learn our history if our sites of memory are to remain meaningful and relevant. War memorials and the dead they name can provoke us to pursue the ways of peace. "Lest We Forget" is not only a call to remember. It also questions what and how we remember, and how we are to live today and into the future.

Pallisade photo by Bejdova/Shutterstock.com

* Check out these books reviewed in *Tui Motu* magazine: https://hail.to/tui-motu-interislands-magazine/publication/KrJM98L

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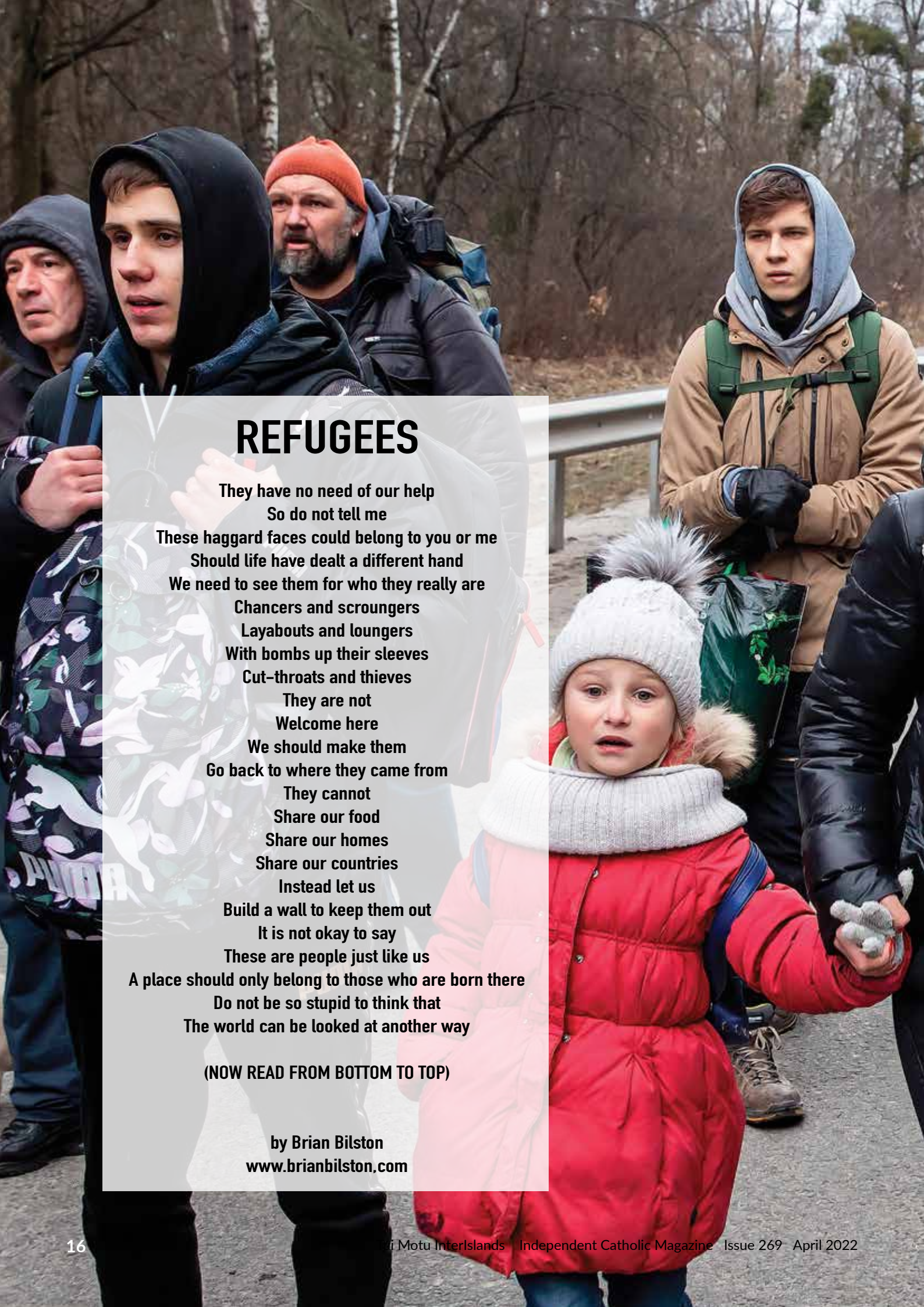


REFUGEES

They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way

(NOW READ FROM BOTTOM TO TOP)

by Brian Bilston
www.brianbilston.com

We first published this poem in March 2017. Brian Bilston wrote recently: "With everything that's happening in Ukraine, it's not easy to find new words right now. But here's an older poem, 'Refugees', that — sadly — remains as relevant as ever."

Peace to Overcome War

KEVIN CLEMENTS reminds us of the principles of non-violence that we can use in response to Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

As a peace researcher for over 40 years, it appals me that in 2022 we are trying to make sense of a an outmoded 20th-century invasion aimed at changing borders and seizing sovereignty.

This war is the most blatant act of cross-border aggression that I have seen since the Second World War and a major contravention of the UN Charter.

The war is an assault on the principle of non-interference and a clear act of international aggression. Its initiator President Putin keeps changing his mind about why he initiated it and is keeping the Russian public in the dark about its purpose. He has instructed his media that it not be called an invasion and is clamping down on Russian peace protesters and public intellectuals opposing the war. The war is the irrational act of a man desperate for global attention and a desire to reacquire the lost territories of Imperial Russia.

Kevin Clements is Director of the Toda Peace Institute. His lifelong involvement has been in academic analysis and practice in the areas of peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

War Is Not an Answer

My initial thoughts and prayers are with all those who have become refugees; all those who have chosen or have no choice but to remain at home and are now living in fear and existential despair. It is with all the millions of families plunged into grief at the loss of loved ones.

War is never the answer to anything. It will not address President Putin's anxieties about Ukrainian membership of NATO or his wider feelings of insecurity.

On the contrary, Putin's aggression and attempt to restore Imperial Russia will generate pain, grief, trauma and long-term insecurity. It contravenes all the basic principles of those who truly desire peace.

Strategy of Misinformation and Invasion

President Putin demonised the enemy by calling Ukrainian leaders Nazis and corrupt; he and his foreign minister were not interested in good faith negotiations and, far from looking for collaborative solutions, he chose the path of force and coercion.

There was no desire or will to pursue non-violent solutions to the ostensible problems at hand. Instead, the Russian invasion of Ukraine reactivated painful memories of the German invasion of Sudetenland and Poland at the beginning of WWII and for those living in Kyiv, the German Invasion of the Ukraine in 1942.

Using Non-Violent Principles

As we begin to comprehend what this all means for us as individuals and citizens it's critical to try and turn this into a teachable moment and apply non-violent values to the crisis.

Condemn Illegal Actions

First, it's important to join the

international community in condemning the illegal actions taken by the Russian leaders. There is never any excuse for blatant aggression.

Work for Ceasefire

Second, it is critical that we continue to urge President Putin and the Russian leaders to agree to an immediate ceasefire and withdraw all Russian forces from all parts of Ukraine as soon as possible. Somewhat surprisingly Putin mentioned that he would be happy to meet with the Ukrainian leadership in Minsk to explore a ceasefire.

We must adhere to the principles of respect, treating others (including our enemies) with dignity, searching for collaborative solutions and bridging divisions wherever we can see them.

Peacebuilders have to keep looking for opportunities to bring the warring parties to the table for diplomatic negotiations on the presenting and underlying problems. If there is no desire on the part of Russia to enter good faith negotiations we must look for some riper moment. We mustn't lose sight of our commitment to non-violent solutions even in the chaos of violence.

Stand in Solidarity

Third, as we struggle to understand what is driving the conflict, it's important to focus on the human beings on all sides. We must stand in solidarity with all those whose lives are being torn apart by war. Our driving motivation at this time must be the protection of human life, the diminution of suffering and the provision of humanitarian assistance to all sides of this bloody mess.

Use All Peaceful Means

Fourth, we need to remind ourselves of Johan Galtung's principle that the only way to peace is by peaceful means. This means trying to establish contact and communication with those we know in Russia and the Ukraine. We must stand with them, respond to their humanitarian needs and nurture the peacemakers among them especially in Russia where to ask for peace results in arrest.

It's vital that people we know in Russia and the Ukraine do not feel abandoned by the world. While the focus of attention at this time is on leaders, we shouldn't ignore all the millions of people in central Europe who are as shocked as we are by the war and who need our support as their lives are upended and destroyed.

At the decision-making level, it's imperative that we ensure high levels of communication between all warring parties so that another deep division and Iron Curtain doesn't come into existence in Europe.

While the West lines up to impose deep sanctions on Russia's leaders, we must not fall into the trap of demonising the Russian people. Our role is to be connectors when the world is intent on division.

Keep Relationships

Finally, we need to reach out to those around us and work with them on non-violent alternatives to war. We must keep calm and focused while others condemn. We must continue to focus on improving our personal and political relationships at home and in the countries that we live in. We must adhere to the principles of respect, treating others (including our enemies) with dignity, searching for collaborative solutions and bridging divisions wherever we can see them.

Respond with Care, Compassion and Love

Most of all we need to respond to this new round of suffering with care, compassion and love. It's a tragedy and we need to respond to it with courage and hope and by imagining a world where war is obsolete. We need to foster the better angels of our nature so that this disaster soon will pass.

Image: Tomas Ragina/Shutterstock.com

REVIEW

Grace-Filled Moments with Sr. Joan

365 Reflections on Life, Loss, Healing and Joy

by Joan Chittister
Published by Twenty-Third Publications, 2021. (NZD 24.95)
Reviewed by Julie Randall

Chittister's 365 reflections on life, loss, healing and joy certainly offers the reader "grace-filled moments". In early January I was looking for a resource to dip into for daily reflection and this little book arrived to serve that purpose.

The book is structured in months with an entry for each day on themes such as joy, prayer, protest and ecology. As well as her own reflections and observations, Joan also includes a sprinkling of quotes from sages and saints down through the ages. I found each page was packed with distilled wisdom.

The challenge of this book is to make that personal commitment each day to take up silence — to set aside quiet time for reflection and reconnection. Silence, Joan insists, is the antidote to the chaos and busyness of modern life — in the words of Thomas Merton: "A way of resting in the One whom we have found, who loves us, who is near to us, who comes to us."

This book is full of hope, inspiration, good advice and it will appeal to a wide range of people. On a practical note I found the smaller size of the book and larger-than-usual text very helpful.

I've Been Thinking...

Students of St Mary's College Wellington share their experience of the protests outside Parliament.

My experience with the Wellington anti-mandate protest has been negative. As a student of St Mary's College, I have been directly affected by the actions of those "protesting" at Parliament.

On my commute from the Wellington Station to school, the protest was unavoidable. There was no dependable path to travel without fear and the risk of being harassed or abused. My question for those who occupied Parliament grounds: How can you preach freedom while infringing on the freedoms of others? Why should businesses and schools close because to prove your point you rely on violence?

I became strikingly aware of the shared sense of entitlement when I saw protestors comparing themselves to #BlackLivesMatter, the injustices towards the LGBTQIA+ community, the Holocaust, victims of the war in Ukraine. As much as I understand COVID mandates have been difficult due to restrictions on employment, those groups mentioned above have been denied necessities and have been killed for something they're unable to control. It pains me to see people ignore their privilege and instead cause panic within the community due to a temporary hindrance put in place to protect our country.

Erin Webb, Year 12

It's plain to see in reviewing events in Aotearoa the effect misinformation and ignorance can have on people in a society. When I think back to 2020, I see a country, in fact a world, fighting a pandemic together. However, the recent protests occurring next to our school make me wonder what happened to that unity. Our unity crumbled by the varying opinions about the vaccine mandate, but also by multiple tellings of false news. It's obvious that rumours spread, misinformation forms and initiates various opposing opinions. But what was surprising was for such an uproar of aggressive protesting to occur within our country — known to be quite tame. Whether or not the protesters were justified in their ways, it was clear for me to see the intense divide created — almost everyone was fighting against a side and they didn't know the entire story. I believe a way we can help to conquer this division is to take the time to inform ourselves of the other side of the argument. The first step to compromise will always be understanding.

Maria John, Year 12

I personally had a very negative experience of the anti-mandate protests at Parliament. I am a student at St Mary's College and I live metres away from the Beehive, so I felt greatly affected. Once the protests had properly started, we had protesters parked up our driveway, urinating in our garden and camping in close proximity to our house. Our family struggled to sleep at night because of the noise — constant throughout the day and on occasions into the early hours of morning.

Then, my school had to be shut and we switched to online school because of the danger to students. The fact that students felt threatened by what is constantly labelled as a "peaceful protest" is disgusting. The right to protest does not amount to the right to disrupt local schools and businesses. I eventually went to stay with a friend outside of Wellington, because neither myself nor my parents felt comfortable with me being so close to what was going on. I am very grateful to the police who helped in every way to keep my friends and family safe, and hope that as a country we can move forward and prevent things from getting this out of hand again.

Poppy Grace Lawrence, Year 12

I have always been grateful to live in New Zealand, a place where we are free to protest. It is a privilege that many do not have and we should not take lightly. The anti-mandate protest took that privilege, stamped on it and set fire to it. I cannot even imagine how it must feel to live in a place where people cannot protest safely, and have to watch people in New Zealand completely abuse their rights.

Protestors, you claimed to care about children, yet you harassed us, ripped our masks off and closed our school. You took young children, some just four or five, into a place of violence, uncleanliness and drugs. You were yelling into the early hours of the morning. I watched my friend who lives near Parliament come to school tired — with bloodshot eyes and dark circles.

You say that COVID is simply a cold, that it won't affect you. You're right. It won't. But ask yourself: Was this mandate ever about you in the first place? Or was it about the doctors who have to turn down dangerously ill patients in favour of someone who could've easily prevented their situation? Or, the immunocompromised people who, even now, cannot leave their homes without fear? You are right, COVID does not badly affect you. That's why this is not about you.

Anna Comesky, Year 12

I cannot remember a time without the internet, but I doubt that without the large platform social media provides, the fear and aggression I witnessed in the anti-mandate protest would have found a way to resonate with so many.

This protest gave us a clear image of the potential magnitude of damage possible when individuals choose to act on the anger and misinformation cultivated on the internet.

I support sharing beliefs, worries and objections with the government. However, hurting or threatening others deeply undermines a protest's validity. When violence or hostility become a driving force within a movement the message gets lost. Before the anti-mandate protest, I never felt unsafe journeying to school. I had never heard of any students who faced harassment walking through the city. Furthermore, the general uncertainty, cancellation of classes and stream of disruptions unsettled us all.

Although this experience was not pleasant, it provided me with a valuable moment of self-refection: Do I dehumanise those I disagree with?

I realised that self-righteousness can easily lead me to display the traits I despise in others. As a community, it is crucial to recognise the individuality and importance of everyone and endeavour to listen without already planning our rebuttal.

Ana Ayora, Year 13

I've Been Thinking...

St Mary's College Wellington students write about the invasion of Ukraine.

There are two stories about the war in Ukraine — that of President Zelensky and the Ukrainains and of President Putin and the Kremlin. From Ukraine we hear the painful situations of people getting hurt, dying, forced to escape, violence and fear. Ukraine as an independent, democratic country thinks that joining hands with NATO is in their best interests. The Kremlin does not respect their choice.

Putin cannot because of fear. As a dictator he thrives on power and if Ukraine joins NATO, then it's almost as if Ukraine has betrayed Russia. Putin believes Ukraine is part of Russia, culturally, linguistically and politically. While some Russian-speaking Ukrainians might agree, the majority of the Ukrainian parliament voted to change its constitution to make joining NATO a possibility.

Putin doesn't have to use violence — he could try love instead. Jesus had power, but he used it for good. Putin thinks that violence is the only way. He talks about Russia and Ukraine being "one people", but his violent way of making this happen is unacceptable.

Sahana Bahradwaj, Year 11

I don't think the situation in Ukraine is being talked about enough — at least not by teenagers in Wellington. I've seen the few "Prayers for Ukraine" posts on my Instagram page and some "Donate here to help" buttons, but a few days after the invasion, even those stopped appearing. No one is talking about the fact that this has caused the fastest-growing refugee crisis since WWII with families torn apart and people having to leave everything they know behind. No one is talking about the hundreds of people who have already died or that Ukraine and Russia are on the verge of a cyberwar that would badly affect people's lives, especially in hospitals and transport.

It further communicates to me the privilege we have to be able to just not keep up with what's happening, simply to push it to the back of our minds while millions of Ukrainians have no certainty about their next day. It saddens me to know that our response as a generation is to just post about it for a few days then move on. We need to keep talking about this situation, not give it an "out of mind" expiration date. We need to keep finding ways to actively help.

Eden Bacani, Year 13

We know about the devastating war between Ukraine and Russia. Even though we may feel far away or helpless and unaffected, we must understand that this is our problem too. Innocent Ukrainians are having to move from their homes to find safety from attacks on buildings, causing whole cities to fall apart. They've had to leave everything behind and their families are torn apart because men stayed behind to fight for their country's freedom while the children and women fled to somewhere safer. I feel completely helpless watching news and interviews hearing about what is happening to Ukraine. I feel deeply sorry for all families and people affected. I wonder what it would be like to have everything taken away from me, just like that. I also feel angry that some people think that this war is the best way to solve a problem. The Ukrainians don't deserve to have to flee their beloved homes because of the Kremlin's hunger for power and greed for more land. I hope that people that call Ukraine their home can find safety in the kindness of other countries and hopefully one day return.

Evie Wright, Year 12

Thinking about Anzac Day

On 25 April I think about the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought bravely on behalf of our countries in wars and conflicts and of the generous servicemen and women. I remember their families who waited day after day, month after month, for their relatives or friends to come back home. I think of the many people who did not get to see that day. The injuries, the suffering, the trauma and the death experienced by the soldiers comes to my mind. Although I can never fully understand the pain and struggle they went through, I try to imagine it through the stories told, through the bugle call "The Last Post", through the collective silence filling the air in memory of the fallen soldiers. I think of the soldiers' courage, their heroism in defending our country, and their valour in the face of battle carnage. Pride blooms in my heart for the people of my country, for the soldiers both past and present, for the servicemen and women, for their families and friends and for everyone who commemorates them on this holiday.

Lest we forget.

Michelle Harach, Year 13

Saving People's Sight

River blindness is caused by parasites under the skin that feed on a person's optic nerve, slowly stealing their vision and eventually making them blind.

This is the reality for millions of people living in sub-Saharan Africa who are affected by a Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) called onchocerciasis, commonly known as river blindness. Onchocerciasis is found in tropical regions and thrives in areas with poor sanitation, unsafe drinking water, disease-spreading insects and limited access to health services and support.

River blindness results from the bites of the black river flies that infest sub-Saharan Africa. 99 per cent of all cases of river blindness are found in this region. Worldwide, 36 million people are blind, yet 75 per cent of blindness, particularly river blindness, is preventable or treatable.

In Nigeria, an estimated 31 million people are at risk of blindness and the debilitating and disfiguring skin conditions which are caused by river blindness. This is because black river flies are rife in the region.

The flies are infested with the larvae of parasitic roundworms. These larvae are passed to humans when the fly bites the skin, where the larvae then develop into hundreds of thousands of little worms. They knot into lumps just under the skin and feed on the nerves there. Such is the pain, that those infected tend to rub and rip at their skin causing it to become thick and rough. Sufferers call this "elephant skin".

Worse is "leopard skin", caused by the person cutting themselves with knives and sharp objects in an effort to dig out the parasites and so relieve their suffering. This leaves mottled, blotchy scars — so the name leopard skin. The parasites get into a person's eyeballs and begin destroying the optic nerves. The person's eyesight dims at first and then fades. The resulting blindness cannot be reversed.

But approximately 90 per cent of NTDs can be treated with medications. For example, the pharmaceutical company Merck donates the worm-killing antibiotic Mectizan. It kills the black fly larvae before they develop into worms. But the medication kills only the young larvae. This means that it is crucial that people take the tablets on time, at least once a year. If they don't get the medication, the worms in their body may become mature enough to resist the drug and so continue to cause unbearable pain, destruction of the optic nerves and blindness.

This is where the work of the Christian Blind Mission comes in. We have a large-scale project in Nigeria aimed at protecting people's sight. Through the generosity of supporters we are able to fund field workers to deliver the medication regularly to those at risk of being bitten by the black river fly and so contracting river blindness.

Christian Blind Mission (cbm) is an international Christian development organisation whose work includes delivering life-changing medication, support and surgeries to those disadvantaged by poverty and disability. Our work is inspired by the gospel mandate: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself" (Luke 10:27). To find out more about our work visit: www.cbmnz.org.nz

Photo by cbm: Wajir and her great-aunt Mairige. Wajir's eyes are safe from river blindness but Mairige has been blinded

Murray Sheard has worked in international development for over 15 years and is the Chief Executive Officer of Christian Blind Mission New Zealand.

Our Turn to Engage and Change the World

Chapter 20 in the Gospel of John is shaped by the theological question: "Where is Jesus?" It is about how the earthly Jesus relates to the risen Jesus. Mary Magdalene speaks for the community: "We do not know " (Jn 20:2). The scene with Thomas suggests this is an ongoing question for disciples (Jn 20:19-29). Thomas did not experience the resurrection of Jesus like the other disciples because he was not with them at the time. Like Thomas we have come to believe through the testimony of the People of God, the Church.

This Easter we're entering the mystery of the crucifixion-resurrection of Jesus while we're experiencing dark times in our world. COVID has changed our ways of connecting, divisions are cracking our former unity, we're shocked by the invasion of Ukraine and our powerlessness to stop it, and we

continue to hear dire news of Earth's struggle. It can feel bleak. We may feel as Mary did the morning after Jesus's death and burial: we approach this Easter just as she "came to the tomb while it was still dark."

God Reveals Godself

In the Old Testament God revealed Godself through intervening. God's self-revelation is reaction to the suffering inflicted by humankind on humankind. An example is the Exodus from the Empire of Egypt: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Deut 5:6). God reacts to the suffering of victims with compassion, mercy and justice.

In the days of Jesus, the hope of resurrection did not mean immortality for *all* believers as we are inclined to believe today. Hope in resurrection had emerged among the Jews in the centuries preceeding Jesus's life in response to the many Jews who had been persecuted and killed because they chose to stay faithful to God. We find this in Maccabees where seven brothers were killed when Palestine was under the Seleucid Syrian Empire (2 Maccabees 7). Another example is described in Wisdom 2-3. This hope of resurrection was about a hunger and thirst for God's liberating justice on behalf of innocent victims. It was not about everyone longing for immortality.

Resurrection as Liberation from Injustice

In this context we understand the resurrection of Jesus as above all God's liberating action. God vindicated Jesus for his life and death. God raised up Jesus who was a victim because of his faithfulness to mission — he was a crucified prophet. God is reacting to what humans did — they killed Jesus because of the way he lived. God raised Jesus for justice, to free him from the injustice and violence of the kind of death he was given. The cross in this understanding is not only an instrument of evil but a product of oppression.

God raised Jesus, the One who inaugurated the *basileia* of God in Galilee, offering God's compassion and love to the poor and despised. We can sometimes focus so much on Christ that we ignore this cause of Jesus — to spread the *basileia* of God.

To Engage and Change the Empire

Palestinian Mitri Raheb describes Jesus's life as actively engaged in dismantling the oppression of Roman occupation, not by reacting to Rome, but by spreading the vision of the *basileia* of God. The way of Jesus is to be seen in his context of living under Roman occupation. The challenge for us is to also spread the *basileia* — "to engage and change empire."

The coming of the Messiah in Jesus marks a pivotal change in our understanding and belief in the meaning of a faithful life. We no longer have to wait for direct divine intervention, because that intervention has already taken place. God has done God's part; Jesus the Messiah has come.

Now the "ball is in the court of humankind". We are transformed "to engage the world, to challenge the monopoly of power, and to live the life of an already liberated people." Belief in Jesus as the Messiah "replaced the idea of divine intervention with the direct intervention of the faithful." It is now ourselves, those who believe in Christ, who "have to step into this world to engage and change the empire" in our particular contexts.

Our Engagement in the Basileia

It is tempting to understand faith as a package of certitudes rather than a faithful relationship with the Risen Jesus. Especially now, when we are waiting at the tomb in darkness, we might wish for less mystery and more certainty — for revelation in the form of intervention. But the ball really is in our court: we will need to discern how to intervene, engage and change the empire.

Our "empire" has recently been changed in very real ways. The pandemic has changed our working, social and personal lives. Without our interventions, the most vulnerable in our society would have suffered unduly. But we have found ways to act with compassion, mercy and justice: we Zoom the lonely, work from home to protect our colleagues, deliver necessities to those isolating. We have made and followed rules put in place not for our benefit, but for that of our neighbour.

We can't let feelings of powerlessness paralyse our responses to evil. We are not alone, we are a liberated people. While the "empire" of Russia is seeking to crush Ukraine, our response is to join in peacemaking efforts at home and around the world, to encourage those with power to do the right thing, to support those Russians and Ukrainians who are seeking peace, to welcome refugees to settle in our country. And our attention and efforts need to be sustained for the long haul — until peace is restored. All along we need to resist the urge to meet violence with violence, to spread blame indiscriminately and so take up the tools of the oppressors. We are a resurrected people of hope.

Meanwhile, the threat to our common home intensifies. Caring for our brothers and sisters means caring for the home we share, calls us to "ecological conversion". We might participate in the seven *Laudato Si'* goals: Response to the cry of the earth; Response to the cry of the poor; Ecological economics; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; Ecological education; Ecological spirituality; and Community and resilience and empowerment (https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/).

The People of God are *resurrected* people graced with imagination and hope to live the vision of God in dark times as in the light. "New life starts in the dark," writes Barbara Brown Taylor. "Whether it is a seed in the ground, a baby in the womb, or Jesus in the tomb, it starts in the dark." ☀

Painting: ***Risen*** by Kume Bryant © Used with permission www.kumebryant.com

Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday:
Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18
Second Sunday of Easter: John 20:19-31

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

Becoming a Repairer

I'm hopping on one foot waiting for the lights and my boyfriend is obligingly looking at my sandals. They are desperately old, but beloved, and have newly been stitched together. Sick of not being able to wear these shoes all summer, I got an awl and some strong waxed thread, and stitched the leather together (somewhat ineptly) where the strap had snapped. The repair's not that noticeable, unless it's being waved in your face as Exhibit A in answer to the question: "What did you do today?"

Mending my sandal is the latest task I've ticked off my "to repair" list. For me, repairing my things means more than making them presentable: nobody else will notice the loose thread on my grey dress, nor its absence after I've fixed it.

Something about the act of repairing feels a little radical. I've been reading about Repair Cafes — evenings when experts help you fix appliances or tools. Of course, people have repaired their tools and clothing for millennia. Until recently, taking care of your possessions was the norm for everyone. But now, when the objects we desire are plentiful and cheap, we've become consumers. We've got into the habit of buying new — a $10 shirt or sharper knife, rather than sewing on a button or learning to use a whetstone.

I believe it's important to purchase ethically produced goods when that option is available. I sometimes feel a little glow when I read the stories on a brand's website about the people who produced my purchase. But I don't have this connection for much of the stuff I use every day. For instance, there's no way for me to trace where each of the hundreds of shiny components of my laptop were made, how, and by whom.

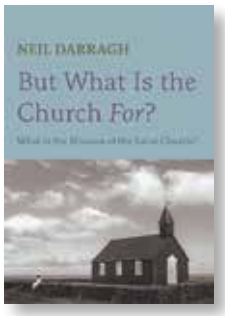
The global economic system is designed to obscure the origins of the goods it produces and on which our (at least, our middle-class urban) lives depend. For example, I don't know the people involved in producing my laptop — those who mined the aluminium, designed the keyboard, packed the computer into a container, unloaded it at the warehouse and printed my address on the package. All this labour is concealed — and that makes it hard for me to conceive of the people who made my things as full human beings like me, with boyfriends and bikes and sandals of their own. I'm seeing how wrong this is.

And the realisation that this is wrong makes me want to change how I relate to the natural world in which human life depends. I want to show that I value the human labour that shaped material into lithium-ion batteries and cotton-viscose fabric.

When I repair things, I feel closer to the people around the world who stitched my dress and welded together the components of my bike. I am grateful to the animal that died to give the leather of my sandal. Looking after my possessions turns me towards the future — I prolong their use and stop adding to rubbish piles in Earth. The act of mending also helps me respect the past — I value people's skill in producing the goods and the materials used.

Repairing is the beginning of a new way for me. By valuing and repairing what I have, I'm becoming more aware of the interconnection of creation. I know my labour is a luxury — I choose to repair my sandal; I don't do it to feed my family — but when I care for my things I'm reminded of how everything is reliant on care. So I'll keep ticking off items on my to repair list.

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



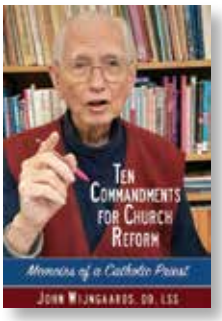
But What Is the Church *For*?

What Is the Mission of the Local Church?

by Neil Darragh
Published by Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2021. (NZD 46.97)
Reviewed by Susan Smith

Jesus rarely ventured outside of Palestine. He went to Decapolis, a Gentile region on the eastern border of Palestine perhaps twice. Paul, on the other hand, was an itinerant missionary *par excellence*. Although the Pauline model is usually prioritised in Western Christianity, Darragh offers another model for the baptised believer, aka the "citizen theologian", who lives in a liberal democratic, pluralistic, secular country. "Citizen theologians", all the baptised, are called to transformational action for the sake of the realm of God.

Mission is not about church numbers or institutional growth. Mission is about collaboration with other change agents, committed to similar goals. Darragh's missiology is grounded in a pneumatology that does not depend on the Spirit via her intermediaries — bishops or religious superiors — sending a chosen few to distant places. A local Church is to respond to the universal presence of the Spirit by engaging with others in transformational action. The local Church is the primary agent of mission, and in a secular and pluralistic society, mission requires the collaboration of the citizen theologian with others for the sake of the realm of God. This book is a "must read" for all parish councils in Aotearoa.



Ten Commandments for Church Reform

Memoirs of a Catholic Priest

by John Wijngaards
Published by Acadian House Publisher, 2022. (USD 22.95)
Reviewed by Anton Spelman

John Wijngaards is not a household name in Aotearoa but his life story covers many themes we understand well.

Ten Commandments for Church Reform is the memoirs of Wijngaards, a Dutch Mill Hill Missionary priest, who worked in India and across Europe for 39 years from 1959. While studying in Rome, he helped organise effective opposition to conservative Curia controls that threatened the direction of Vatican II before it had started.

Wijngaards' strong character and commitment to pastoral integrity shaped his advocacy work on *Humanae Vitae*, the ordination of women, the inclusion of homosexuals and the need to abolish compulsory celibacy for priests and religious.

Extensive work to educate priests led him to reflect critically on the isolation in the role of priest. In time his conscience led him to laicisation and marriage to Jackie Clackson in 2000.

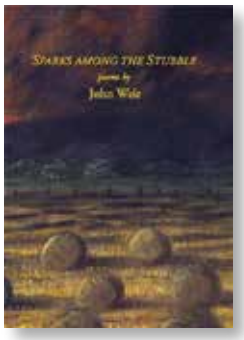
Then his role expanded — from adult catechesis to the reform of the Catholic Church worldwide. Through the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research, he coordinates international research on Catholic issues and their dissemination via the internet, eg, women priests — see www.womenpriests.org.

Ten Commandments for Church Reform is a worthwhile read in these synodal times.

Sparks among the Stubble

Poems

by John Weir
Published by Cold Hub Press, 2021. (NZD 28)
Reviewed by Michael Fitzsimons



John Weir, Marist priest and poet, is a highly accomplished writer. He has written five volumes of poetry — his latest, *Sparks among the Stubble*, is his first collection since 1983.

The dedication for this collection is taken from the *Book of Wisdom* which tells us that having been tested, they (the saints of God) will *"run to and fro like sparks among the stubble"*.

These poems explore themes of the incompleteness of life and the fallibility of our endeavours but it is also threaded with hope. Our journey towards death is a progression. We are tested and we shine before an immortal future. He concludes his lovely last poem, *In Due Time:*

"In due time everything will become something else
because things are born not to be but to become."

Sparks among the Stubble is a collection of great vitality and wisdom with broad scope. Some poems are personal, some more public. One memorable section contains witty, ironic observations on the lives of writers such as DH Lawrence, Ezra Pound and John Ruskin. The writing is always accessible and full of illuminations. Highly recommended.

The DIG

Directed by Simon Stone
Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

As a sometime scholar of Anglo-Saxon literature and *Beowulf* aficionado, I have long been fascinated by the Sutton Hoo hoard — an early-seventh-century ship burial in eastern England containing fabulous gold-and-garnet treasures made by local craftsmen, as well as objects from as far away as the Byzantine Empire.

Based on the novel by John Preston, *The Dig* tells the story of self-described excavator and amateur archaeologist Basil Brown (Ralph Fiennes), retained by English landowner Edith Pretty (Carey Mulligan) to excavate some ancient grave mounds on her property in rural Suffolk in 1939. While the film tells the complex story of the treasure's recovery, it also plots Brown's efforts to be recognised by the archaeological establishment and his developing friendship with Mrs Pretty — a young widow with a deteriorating heart condition — and her son Robert, an adventurous youngster whom Brown takes under his wing.

As more people turn up to help with the dig, the characters and their interactions multiply. One willing helper is Edith's cousin Rory Lomax, who is about to join the Royal Air Force as the prospect of a European war turns into reality. (The melodramatic scene where he pulls a drowning trainee pilot from his sinking aircraft provides the only dud note in the film.) Then there are the men from the local Ipswich Museum, who want to lure Brown back to work on an important project, and the British Museum team which takes over the dig and looks set to dispense with Brown's services altogether.

The British Museum contingent includes famous archaeologist Stuart Piggott (Ben Chaplin) and his wife, Peggy (Lily James), who throw themselves into the excavation work. Their story becomes a major subplot as the couple drift apart and the handsome Rory, dashing in his brand-new RAF uniform, enters the scene.

There's a lot to like about *The Dig*. Despite the big-name actors, the film has an understated ambiance, a subtle emotional current that runs through it, a quality mirrored in the flat but quietly beautiful Suffolk countryside. And while the filmmakers have been criticised for inventing some characters, taking liberties with others and changing people's ages (the real Mrs Pretty was approaching 60), there is a warmth and tenderness in the personal relationships depicted, especially between Basil Brown, Edith and Robert, that marks *The Dig* (available on Netflix) as a film that this reviewer, for one, will return to.

Cross Currents

by Jane Higgins

In the tumultuous days of the occupation of Parliament during February this year, one protester was heard to lament: "I just want it to be 2019 again." Many of us, yearning for "normality", probably feel this way. But it's safe to say that we aren't ever going to slot back into the 2019 version of "normal". The pandemic isn't the reason why, however. The pandemic will pass; the vaccine and mask mandates will end. But some things will not pass and there is every reason to build a new normal that understands this.

Climate change, for example, will not pass. The recent Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, *Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, finds that irreversible damage to the climate has already been done. The good news is that we can still adapt to lessen the impact for our children and grandchildren. The difficult news is that the window for doing this effectively is closing fast. We have a decade to make serious inroads into turning the situation around.

But here's the important thing: we know how to do it. The IPCC offers clear solutions. And, for a very readable account of the pragmatics of addressing climate change (at multiple levels, from community to government), do find, read, and pass on to as many people as possible, the brilliant book *Breaking Boundaries* by Johan Rockström and Owen Gaffney.

Both the IPCC report and this book offer a pathway forward and both argue that the solutions must be based in climate justice. So, we know how. What we need is courage from our leaders and from ourselves, to really look at what's happening and to embrace the change that's needed.

The challenge to embrace change in order to address a deep wrong that has caused irreversible damage lies before the Catholic Church as well. By the Church's own assessment, in research done by Te Rōpū Tautoko for the Royal Commission on Abuse in Care, the scale of offending and of damage to people is enormous (see *Tui Motu* March 2022 for a summary). Survivors' trauma is ongoing and irreversible insofar as individuals will never fully recover the lives they would have lived.

This abuse was not perpetrated by a few bad apples. Instead, the Church fostered an institutional culture in which abusers could abuse — a culture which venerated those in positions of power, which taught that clerics and religious are a group set apart and above, especially chosen by God and, in the case of clergy, representative of Christ on Earth.

The Church cannot "fix" the abuse by leaving in place structures that support this clericalism. "Safeguarding", for all that it's necessary, is nowhere near enough. (For a rich analysis of why this is so, see Dr Thomas Doyle's submission to the Royal Commission.) Profound structural and cultural change is needed.

We can't slot back into "normal", not in terms of climate, nor in terms of Church. Change is hard — but not as hard as is often suggested. Mainly it's hard for people who benefit from the current system. And a lot of people who are not benefiting are desperate for change.

Instead of longing for past times, let us turn our faces towards Jerusalem, take up our courage and our humility, and go forward.

Links:

Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability: www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-ii/

Dr Thomas P Doyle's Submission: www.abuseincare.org.nz/our-progress/library/v/219/statement-of-reverend-dr-thomas-p-doyle-for-the-faith-based-redress-hearing

TUI MOTU InterIslands
The Independent Catholic Magazine Limited

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

The magazine invites contributions from writers of Catholic and other Christian traditions or faith backgrounds, who can offer our readers insights which resonate with the Gospel as it affects us today. We value diversity and seek contributions which are representative of our church and our society: 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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INSPIRED TO CHANGE

John Weir (*TM* February 2022) heralded the change.

"In due time everything will
become something else
because things are born not to be
but to become."

It sounds prophetic. And then Jane Higgins speaks of Archbishop Desmond Tutu who spoke fearlessly always as "the essence of being human: that a person is a person only through other persons". We are inspired by example, and these two give heft to our courage; to be resolute, to move forward. As society changes so, too, the Church and all within it, laity and hierarchy.

Daphne Crampton

GERMAN SYNODAL WAY

The bishops of Germany, noting that church attendance had dropped to 6 per cent, began meeting with the Lay Committee of German Catholics to call a synod. This was underway before Pope Francis initiated his Church-wide synod.

Their "synodal way" will discuss specific and controversial issues — power, checks and balances, sexual morality, priestly lifestyle, women's place in the Church, blessings for homosexual partnerships, women priests, married priests and lay participation in the selection of bishops.

Their assembly will have an equal number of bishops and lay people, each having one vote. While this is unlikely to be the balance which Pope Francis chooses for his synod we, the people, would feel more included if the balance attending the final presentations were more evenly representative. "There is one body, one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift" (Eph 4:4-7).

Tom Lamb

NEED TO LISTEN

I am so concerned about the lack of listening that I have written a parable.

A king gained a reputation for being generous and encouraged his people to be likewise. Every winter many in his kingdom suffered from colds that led to some deaths among the elderly. One year there were more deaths than normal. The king offered a reward for curing these colds. After expending futile energy on the task a delegation of wise ones informed: "O King there is no cure for the common cold but if the people could be kept healthy all year round there would be fewer deaths in winter. We have devised a super-drink for keeping everyone in peak condition. A specially developed variety of soya bean is the main ingredient plus barley, peanuts, milk and glucose. The result is a super-health milkshake suitable for all ages." The king inquired about its safety and was assured there were no ill effects except perhaps for diabetics who could be exempt. "I will pay for it myself," declared the king. There was opposition by a few, mostly those allergic to dairy, gluten, soy, and peanuts. Their concerns weren't listened to. Instead, the majority urged these food-fadders to optimum health with extra portions of the super-drink.

Rosalie Sugrue (abridged)

Painting: ***Jesus Sent Them Out Two by Two*** by James Tissot. Brooklyn Museum.

Looking OUT and IN

Each week this Lent I have been meeting with a Zoom group thinking around the Beatitudes. So far we haven't moved from the first beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." This is phrased in a range of ways: *The Message* describes those who are poor in spirit as "at the end of your rope", while Sarah Hinlicky Wilson describes it as "forlorn, desperate and almost hopeless". Being poor in spirit somehow seems a prerequisite to being able to live out the other beatitudes. Without acknowledging our own lack of control and brokenness maybe we can't really welcome in God and God's grace in other spheres of life?

When I lived in Tāmaki Makaurau I often visited a home for elderly people with mental health problems. The challenges of institutional life and mental illness are a suffering we would not seek, yet I valued the willingness of residents to speak of their pain. My friend Shirley would tell me how she valued my visits: "I really like you having a cup of tea with me on Thursdays. The fact is I don't have any other friends. Can you come again tomorrow?" My university friends, well set up with many warm relationships, would rarely speak so openly of how my friendship mattered to them.

Another friend I'll call Jeremy has wrestled with addiction to alcohol for decades. He has now been dry for nearly 12 months with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous. At every meeting he acknowledges his lack of control: "I am Jeremy. I am an alcoholic." The Twelve Steps programme seems very beatitudinal. Maybe we each have a core flaw (or three) that we could speak out to ourselves or people we trust, to remind ourselves of our crumbliness and need for God.

It is perhaps through disruptions like health problems or plans that fall apart that we find we're not in control and recognise our spiritual poverty and powerlessness.

I'm struck by the recent words of Anglican minister Tish Harrison Warren in the *New York Times*: "Far from being a crushing blow of self-hatred, the realisation of my actual, non-theoretical sinfulness came with something like a recognition of grace. I saw that I was worse than I'd thought I was, and that truth knocked me off the eternal treadmill of trying to be better and do better and get it all right. It allowed me to slowly (and continually) learn to receive love, atonement, forgiveness and mercy. The British author Tom Holland called the Christian doctrine of sin a 'very democratic doctrine,' because it has a levelling quality. To paraphrase Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, it draws the line separating good and evil not between political parties, cliques, classes, religious groups or ideological tribes, but instead through every human heart. [...] After I kneel with my church each week, confessing that I have blown it, I am invited to stand and receive absolution and forgiveness. I'm then invited to 'pass the peace' to those around me and extend to them the same mercy and forgiveness that I've received."

I may not move past "blessed are the poor in spirit" this Lent.

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.

God, our hope,
accompany our sisters and brothers
desperate for safety.
Encourage us all in peacemaking,
hospitality and inclusiveness
so that as neighbours we overcome
violence and war.

From the *Tui Motu* team