Tui Motu
InterIslands

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The 14th Century was a golden age for Armenian religious art. The *Nativity* scene (right) belongs to a Bible produced in Cilicia in 1314. This miniature, shown here enlarged, centres on the recumbent figure of Mary with the crib and the child Jesus in a cave. Surrounding the cave are other Christmas scenes: the announcing of Jesus' birth to the shepherds, the adoration of the Magi, and the bathing of the Child, which the Armenian illuminators liked to include. The kneeling figures (bottom right), in meticulously depicted costumes, are the donors.

The article (10-12), on the Nativity according to *Matthew*, is also illustrated with 14th Century Armenian miniatures. The *Genealogy* (p 9) is by Avag, who also painted this *Nativity*.

Cover picture

Our Christmas cover was specially painted for us in oils by Dunedin artist, Donald Moorhead. The child is cradled in the loving hands of Mary and Joseph.

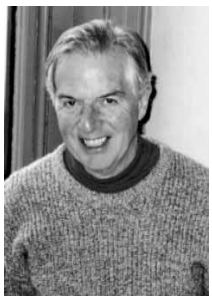
Joseph's attention is, however, slightly distracted by an external sign – the Star – and by the inner voice of an angelic messenger prompting him to his protective responsibility for the new-born Son of David.

a condition of absolute simplicity...

How many of us have watched with awe the amazing TV series on the *Human Body*. For me the most transfixing moments were the scenes on birth and early development. For a mother, perhaps no memory is more precious than the first holding of the newly born. For both parents that event is simply the beginning of a series of wonderful 'firsts' – the first smile, the first flashes of recognition, the first steps, the first word. Who would not believe in a loving Creator God, having experienced such moments of joy-filled transcendency?

The essence of Christmas is contained in those times of connection, of peace and joy – of worship. It is a wonderful truth that the Son of God went through all of those stages and that Mary and Joseph experienced all of those joys. Everyone knows that birth and childhood is not always like that. Everyone knows that for every shepherd who comes to kneel in awe there is also a Herod lurking. But such thoughts should never detract from the essence of Christmas: its simplicity, its beauty, its wholesomeness – its holiness.

This Christmas there will be little comfort and less in the way of festive extravagance for the tempest-shattered poor of Honduras and Nicaragua, to name but one outstanding example of the world's dispossessed. Perhaps the knowledge of their sufferings will prompt all of us to indulge ourselves a little less so as to give generously for their relief. Nevertheless, even the starkness of their deprivation will prompt many simple and unheralded epiphanies for them. Our prayer for them should be that that spark of divine love which made Bethlehem a splendid moment in the midst of poverty and squalor will also bring forth similar moments of transcendence and generosity for those poorest of the world's poor.



The wonder is that the helplessness of the newly-born babe was once God himself. If we seek evidence that the essence of God is indeed totally self-giving love, then it is all there for us to see and imagine in the Christmas moment. God's son becomes totally helpless, totally vulnerable in order to experience the equally selfless love of the mother who nurses him. This Christmas we must not stint ourselves those precious minutes when we too kneel like the Magi or the shepherds and briefly share the joy of Mary. It is worth more than all the partying and the toasts, the tinsel and the presents.

■ . *M.H*

...costing not less than everything

The Tui Motu team and Board members wish all our readers and well-wishers a truly blessed Christmas and Peace and prosperity for 1999

Christmas comes to Tui Motu

The season of grace and hope will soon be upon us and I am delighted to report that *Tui Motu* will share in the gifts of Christmas. One benefactor has decided to make a monthly donation, somewhat along the lines of planned giving: this development gives especial delight to our accountant who rightly observes that consistent income is the first step towards effective planning.

The other surprise comes from a personal conversation with a wellwisher who said that *Tui Motu* would figure in his will: when I tactfully suggested that if *TM* had to wait that long to share his good fortune it might be too late, i.e. we might die before him! He is now planning to make an annual gift for the next three years so that it will be available when *TM* most needs it.

These are windfalls which come to ventures heavily dependent upon the providence of God. To our promoters and to all those who have been kind enough to affiliate with this column, I offer the Christmas wish of Cardinal Newman: "May each Christmas as it comes to us make us more and more like Him who at his time became a Child for our sakes".

Tom Cloher

A Voice Crying

Contents

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Noam Chomski, quintessential guru of the Western world, caustic critic of US economic imperialism, made a meteoric visit to these islands last month. He came, he saw – did he conquer? We invited regular Tui Motu contributors, Nicola McCloy and Tom Cloher, to go and measure the prophet's message.

Even allowing that it was the annual media awards night for the Peace Foundation, the atmosphere was as exciting as an opening night at the opera, and the applause that greeted Noam Chomsky would have done a Malvina or a Kiri proud. Auckland Girls' Grammar auditorium (capacity 814) was so jam packed that your correspondent had some difficulty getting a seat at all despite having impeccable credentials (*Tui Motu*). A quick reference to Chomsky in our *Britannica* before leaving home prepared me for a crowded house (anyone rating a half-column while still alive deserves a full house). Less predictable was the generational mix of the audience. The late Frank Sinatra could scarcely have done better: mothers, sons and grandparents were all there.

Proceedings started with *karanga* from the *Ngati Whatua*, about 20 young women, presumably Grammar School students, at first plaintive and then almost as full-blooded as a *haka* – quite thrilling. On the big occasions we seem to have the sense to invite the Maori to step forward. There is something undeniably authentic and confident about Maori culture. Could Tau Henare be right? Why don't we formally admit that we need Maori language and song as our cultural lightning rod.

Noam was quite unassuming and businesslike. Ignoring the fulsome praise with which he was introduced, he got straight down to business: being fundamentally critical of the way democracy is practised (or malpractised) and the way in which the media – "the most visible part of our culture" – colludes with this. He focuses his formidable analytic and critical skills upon the conduct of his native land, the United States, although we should scarcely delude ourselves that other democracies are exempt. Politicians created by the democratic process practise it dishonestly by pursuing policies favourable to those who monopolise possessions and power. By extension he takes to task corporate leaders whose domain is sometimes larger than the countries and whose names are more durable and better known (witness Bill Gates and Rupert Murdoch). They successfully contrive to make their goals those of society. In this he believes that the media collude rather than challenge.

He exemplifies this by the conduct of the United States policy towards Palestine in the Middle East and towards Cuba,

Tui Motu welcomes discussion of spiritual, theological and social issues, in the light of gospel values and in the interest of a more peaceful and just society. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editoral commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

in the Wilderness

Chile and Nicaragua in Latin America, describing it a self-interested, belligerent and cloaked in a lexicon of deceit. He provided the following customary usage with accompanying translations: "counter-insurgency" (organised terrorism); "constructive engagement" (counter attack); "hemispheric defence" (national security); "soft targets" (barely defended civilian populations): "the peace process" (either manifest peace initiatives or whatever the US happens to be doing). Underlying all this, he believes, is a cardinal military principle which cannot be challenged: *no one has the right of self-defence against the United States*.

If all this were not sufficiently daunting Chomsky considers the media have been either unwilling or unable to be a countervailing force and, worse than that, too frequently the media adopt the lexicon of deceit, legitimating rather than debunking it. He did try to end optimistically: there is hope for a more free, a more just and a more decent society – *if* media participants maintain personal integrity, and there is a new commitment to representing the rights of minorities. Though agonisingly slow, progress is just discernible!

Chomsky did not emerge as an ideal companion for the *Hikoi of Hope*! His information was encyclopedic and his analysis crystal clear, but it was not marching material. I sensed his audience was enlightened but not energised. Our suspicions that international and corporate decision-making has some distinctly sinister and amoral features was confirmed, but this tends to generate feelings of impotence and cynicism.

His belated appeal for integrity felt like beating an elephant with a feather duster! A vision of a better world and strategies to achieve it, did not come through. Maybe he just did not have time to deal with this, perhaps he was having an off night, or – worst of all – had ceased believing it was feasible. It did seem though to be an opportunity missed. Large helpings of hope were needed but not delivered, on this occasion. Had that happened it could indeed have been a gala night. ■

Tom Cloher

Every now and then a real *cause célèbre* hits the international philosophy scene. In recent years two of the Western world's most touted 'new thinkers' have been Stephen Hawking and Noam Chomsky. Hawking and Chomsky have become trendy ideas men, providing grist for the conversation mill at the 'right kind' of dinner parties. As a bloody-minded individualist I have studiously avoided being drawn into such conversation by not knowing anything about either of them!

However, Chomsky's recent visit to New Zealand has been of such national interest I was unable to maintain my stance of glorious ignorance. Having a quiet beer on a balcony overlooking Courtenay Place, the evening of Chomsky's Wellington address, I was entertained by the spectacle taking place on the street below. Usually the preserve of flash suits and of overdressed Treasury officials, Courtenay Place was being transformed before my unbelieving eyes by a mass of Wellington's so-called 'alternative' scene – a wonderful sight to behold! – who were out in force to pay homage to one of their gurus.

In fact interest in Chomsky was so strong that people were queuing round the block to hear him. Not being endowed with the gift of great patience and knowing I had no show of getting a seat, I returned to my balcony, my beer and a little austere philosophising. I did, however, hear the edited version of Chomsky's address on radio the following weekend.

What he had to say both surprised and concerned me. The title of his address was *Whose World Order?* and it questioned the basis of international relations as we know them. Chomsky discussed the place of the United States in international politics. He questioned the motives, place and lack of ethics of successive American governments. Covering a wide sweep of topics Chomsky drew out a side of US politics that is often overlooked. He highlighted US control of the international political and economic orders, and discussed their absolute flouting of human rights.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of his speech was that he voiced – and backed up with facts and figures – concerns that have long been held by many people internationally. He spoke at length of US control of international trade – and consequently of many smaller, more vulnerable economies. It is rare that such an explicit critic of US policies has gained such widespread acceptance without being stuck with demeaning labels such as "communist" or "radical". His theories are well backed up with evidence and that heightens his credibility.

Regardless of his motives Chomsky forces people to stop and think again about the current world order and consider alternatives for the future: a future which one can only hope will not be dominated by a single, self-absorbed and highly unethical superpower.

After hearing Noam Chomsky's ideas on world order I for one will be renting his film *Manufacturing Consent*, and if I can also get my head round Hawking's *Brief History of Time*, perhaps my attendance at those dinner parties may become a little more regular and more intellectually productive. ■

Nicola McCloy

Withdrawal from CCANZ – 1
... more in sorrow than in anger

I was interested to read the comments of Sr Elizabeth Mackie in the November issue on the recent withdrawal of the Catholic Church from membership of the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand. An editorial in the same issue also takes the National Commission for Ecumenism to task.

In a letter dated 2 November 1998 Bishop John Cunneen confirmed the intention of the Catholic Church to withdraw from CCANZ, effective from the next AGM in September 1999. Bishop Cunneen and other members of the National Commission have served faithfully as members of the executive of the Conference of Churches or as participants in its programmes.

This is said to underline the point that our decision to withdraw from the Conference has been taken more in sorrow than in anger. It is the conscientious conviction of the bishops that the Conference of Churches does not seem to actually function as a Conference of *Churches*, formed by and accountable to those Churches, as distinct from a gathering of individuals with an ecumenical interest and enthusiasm.

This is the central issue... the Catholic Church rightly insists that its commitment to working for the unity of Christians is irreversible, but this cannot be understood to mean that the current ecumenical instruments (eg. CCANZ, bilateral dialogues etc) are the only way to proceed. In taking the decision to withdraw we believe that we have "spoken the truth in love", but others seem to suggest that our actions are neither truthful nor loving. Our considered view is that the Conference has shown that it is unable to effectively deliver "substantive change".

Our ecumenical energies are already engaged all over the country at the local parish level... our Church is also actively engaged in ongoing theological dialogue separately with the Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in this country. At the diocesan level our bishops regularly meet together with the local and national leadership of other Churches to act together where conscience does not require us to act separately.

In withdrawing, the Catholic Church is saying "no" to a particular model of ecumenical life which has just not engaged the core membership of our Churches, as is evidenced by an apparent lack of any real visibility among ordinary church-goers. Our Church is fully committed to acting with integrity where we can, in an ongoing relationship with the member Churches of the Conference. Our goal remains the "visible unity of the followers of Christ in one faith, one sacramental life, under one pastoral government."

(*abridged*)

Fr John Fitzmaurice, Secretary, National Commission on Ecumenism.

letters

Withdrawal from CCANZ – 2
... the shattering of a vision

For the last seven weeks I have suffered the seesawing emotions of deep grief – swinging between shock, disbelief, denial, anger, rage, depression, apathy, numbness and deep, deep sadness – as I have been an unwilling witness to, and participant in, the Catholic withdrawal from the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

As an appointed delegate (and invited guest speaker) to the October annual Forum; aware of the completion of a three-year review and overhaul resulting in a revised Constitution; and knowing too the difficulties such a restructuring causes, I was stunned to receive a letter four days before the Forum informing me of the Catholic Church's withdrawal from membership.

Throughout a very painful Forum and in the succeeding weeks I along with others, both Catholic and not, pleaded with the bishops to reconsider their decision. They did not, however, change their minds, giving as their reasons: "that the other Churches do not recognise a need for a change of attitude", and "that the Catholic Church did not see CCANZ operating as a Council of Churches, made up of members accredited by, and directly responsible to, their Churches, and intended to serve the Churches by working for the ecumenical aims of the Churches."

I lament in tears every night the shattering of a vision and the loss of a dream. A dream that after two years of consultation became a reality, when the old National Council of Churches disbanded in order for a new structure to arise: a Conference in which the goals of collaboration, partnership, inclusivity and prophetic courage were to be given equal emphasis alongside those of unity, evangelism and theological action. Catholics, Lutherans and Orthodox joined with the other Churches on this exciting ecumenical voyage – a voyage which has been beset by squalls and gear failure almost since the beginning. Slowly, over these last nine years, that ship with so many flags flying has weathered those stormy patches, but now it has lost its way and the Catholic crew has jumped ship, even though a major refit had just been completed and the future looked positive.

I know there are bilateral dialogues (double-sculled canoes) and heads of Churches (all the captains in a motorboat), and there are lots of dinghies full of ordinary fisherfolk. But nowhere else is there a national *Black Magic*, which all the Churches got together and supported, and had turns in sending crew, and which felt 'owned' by all the people. It also picked up people who had fallen overboard, and did not ask them who sent them but happily included them in the ship's complement and taught them the skills of collaboration.

By crewing together we got to know one another, learned to know how each one operated.

Somehow I just do not seem to be able to pack those 11 years of gospel-based effort, relationships and prayer into a box on my shelf marked FAILED.

(*abridged*)

Pat Lythe, Auckland
President CCANZ (1990 - 1993)

Married priests

It touches a raw nerve when I read about the warm welcome (sanctioned by the Pope) that married Anglican priests are given when they enter the priesthood of the Catholic Church. While giving this his full blessing the Pope steadfastly withholds permission for Catholic priests who have left for various reasons, to return to the priesthood if they have married. Good men unable to exercise ministry in a Church that is increasingly affected by a shortage of priests!

To add insult to injury we are forbidden even to discuss the possibility of a married clergy in our Church. I echo the feelings of many Catholics who think that it is time for the compulsory vow of celibacy to be dropped. How many men have been put off by this archaic condition of entry to the priesthood? What is approved for one group – the acceptance of married Anglican priests to the Catholic priesthood – should be the measure applied for all.

Des O'Kane, Dunedin

Full treasure of womanhood

May I congratulate you on your wide articles and fearless editorial pen. I especially found rewarding the September issue on *Women in the Church*, August issue on the economic reforms, and the October issue: *is ecumenism a broken dream?* The decision of the Catholic bishops to withdraw from membership of CCANZ just adds to the burden of those of us who live, work and worship in the world of many kinds of believers. I had high hopes of Vatican II and have served the Church at all lay levels. Now it seems that a mighty sledgehammer is emanating from the Roman Curia. My late mother who lived to 93, said throughout her long life: "one day the Church will realise the full treasure of womanhood". I pray it does not leave it too late.

Denis Power, Riverton

Keep up the good work!

I would like to congratulate you on your latest issue of *Tui Motu*. It was challenging and refreshing, and I found each article a pleasure to read. It is great to know I am not isolated in my thoughts on Church and community.

Our family of all different ages and stages of spirituality read *Tui Motu* and it certainly opens discussion at mealtimes.

Keep up the good work!

Mary Nankivell, Lower Hutt

Closing the Pastoral Centres

I cannot but agree with Dr Anna Holmes (*Postscript*, October issue) over the sorrow many of us feel with the closure of Futuna in Wellington and the Pastoral Centre in Palmerston North. For many of us our faith has been challenged, strengthened and nourished in both of these 'holy' environments. However, I must point out to Anna that her statement that "adult education will now be centred in Auckland" is, fortunately, not true. I cannot speak for other dioceses, but here in Wellington we are very enthusiastic about the opportunities available for learning theology and Scripture.

This has been a significant year because the Catholic Education Centre in Wellington has been registered as a private training establishment by the NZQA, our Diploma in Religious Studies with streams in Pastoral Ministry, Religious Education and Theological Studies has been approved, and the Centre accredited as the institution to teach this Diploma. This year we have had 395 student places occupied, including those doing the Catechetical Studies programme.

The Archdiocese recently held a Synod and one strong call from those who attended was the desire to be more involved and better educated so as to live out their baptismal call.

So, adult education is alive and well in Wellington and will continue to grow. While we mourn the passing of Futuna and the Pastoral Centre we rejoice at the energy, enthusiasm and gifts of God's people.(*abridged*)

Joan McFetridge, Director, Catholic Education Centre, Wellington

Catholics who do not live in metropolitan areas of Wellington and Auckland will, I suspect, mourn the closure of these two national resources even more – Ed

Catholic Institute of Theology
Welcome to your new home!

CIT (Auckland) moved their residence to Newman Hall, on the Auckland University campus, on November 25. The environs appear to be overawed! *(Photo Paul Freedman)*

I was once part of a baby's being born, in a bamboo hut, in a village, in another country. And it was the most marvellous gathering of women: women washing, women cooking, women telling stories, women giving advice, women laughing, eating, bringing gifts – while the father and men of the family watched from the next hut, sending young boys over from time to time with messages and inquiries. It could have been the gathering of women at the birth of Ruth's son, Obed, father of Jesse, father of David...
This has made me look again at the crib scene – this lone woman with her baby, surrounded by men – husband, shepherds, kings. Somehow I know there was another scene that night in Bethlehem..

Another Crib Scene

Sandra Winton

We were all just settling down to sleep, that night. I remember it well. The children were jumbled together on their mat, floppy as puppies and I was bone weary from grinding corn, making bread, feeding the family and all those travellers. The place was full of visitors. At least the census was doing us some good.

I was settling down to sleep. My husband was still down with the guests below. The voices in the street passed and faded. Someone trudged along the dusty stones. Just then I heard knocking and a man's voice rose from the street. "Missus – can you come? My wife... it's the baby."

I knew at once who it would be. That woman from Galilee. Looked near her time, and all on her own, poor thing. No mother, no sisters. I pulled myself up and called to the two oldest girls, "Go for old Deborah. Tell her there's a woman down below having a baby. I'll see her there." I looked round in the dark. Nothing of much use for a baby. I grabbed an old, clean shawl and went down. Deborah was not far behind me.

The birth was near and the young woman's face sweaty with effort and fright, yet alight with a kind of excitement. "It'll be different when it's her sixth," muttered Deborah. "Bringin' em into the world to starve, poor folks like these." We sent the man out to look for scraps to keep the fire going. It was a cold, clear night. The stars were fair burning into

the place. We hardly needed a lamp.

Not long till it was all over, and there she was, poor little soul, holding her baby as if he was the joy of her life, as if the Holy One had put him into her hands. While we went about cleaning up and getting some hot food into her.

By that time word had got round the village and the women started coming. Everyone felt sorry for this young stranger. No one to admire the baby, no one to be pleased for her. Old Sarah brought the little clothes of her last born. "After this time I'm not likely to have any more." They were well washed, well worn. Her calloused hands lingered on them a moment. Ruthie brought some of the things from her last little one. Not too long since we buried him. She still looked ill and half starved herself, even though the harvest had been a little better this year.

The other women came with a bit of bread, some sticks for the fire, water from the well, a few drops of oil. We were all laughing and talking, recalling other births and other babies. There was a sticky moment when I heard someone say, "Is that the father? My husband was saying he heard someone say he's not the father at all. Just married her out of pity." A hot blush passed over Miriam's face – for that was her name – and the man put his hand on her shoulder to steady her. Bitch! She'd had a few too many men herself.

But most people didn't notice that because in came Hannah, poor childless Hannah. She usually stayed away at times like this. And it was awful. She was carrying all these baby things, beautifully woven as only a woman without kids has the time to weave. She must have been collecting them for years. She didn't look at any of us. Nobody knew what to say. She put them down by the woman. "I've had these for years. But I've never conceived. I'd like you to have them."

Miriam met her eyes and they looked long at each other. "Would you like to hold him?" She just stood there with this little baby, her eyes full of tears. For a long time. Then gave him back. Then looked at us all with a calmer look on her face than any of us had seen in years. It was a kind of miracle. "I'll never forget you," she said. "I'll never forget you, any of you", said Miriam. It was a special night. I wonder what became of them... ■

New Year's Day

The New Year brings promise waiting to be fulfilled;
Bringing as it may, pain waiting to be accepted,
It is still a gift coming from the hand of God.

A canopy of blue is spread over the world
As the first day dawns clear and calm,
Holding within itself the imminent future.

Faith gives birth to hope; hope that love
Will finally overcome and bring to fulfilment
The Christmas promise of peace to the human race.

An agony of compassion had lain hidden within a child
As the shadow of a cross fell upon his lowly crib,
Darkening the moment of light
that had entered the universe.

In time, has come the knowledge that the infant grew to
Manhood, confronted the imperfection
within human nature
And yet made claim to the promise of a loving Father.

As man, the Son of God faced the cross and in dying
Wiped out the potency of sin; in rising, his Spirit
Proclaimed the healing power of love.

Pray that the force and energy of that love will be
Harnessed, so that in the expectant future, *all* people
May learn at last, to live in peace one with another.

C. Grant

A Psalm

Yahweh clothes Herself in the beauty of creation.
The power of warmth and rain unleash spring growth
Commanding praise and adoration
at the splendours of nature.

Blossom adorns Her hair
Monarchs settle on Her shoulders
Lush vegetation cushions Yahweh,
lavender, lilies and roses waft in the warm wind
to hide the decaying of those who ignore Her.

Yahweh, your enemies starve without your attention
As a garden starves without the gardener,
As a pond stagnates without fresh water.
So too your enemies lose life
falling into decay, bereft of sustenance.

Your people who worship You
walk with meadow flowers carpeting their way.
You fill their wells with fresh water and
gardens with luscious produce.
Your breath is the air of life and your cloak protects,
Yahweh, creator of all time.

Mary-Ann Bailey

I remember the excitement each Advent of untying the string around an old box that held our Nativity scene and the careful unwrapping of each item: Joseph, Mary, Jesus in his manger, singing angels, shepherds and sheep, the donkey and the oxen, three kings and a star. Each was placed around the stable in due time – as Advent progressed, at Christmas or on the Epiphany. The Christmas story was – and still is – enacted countless times over by children who ride donkeys to Bethlehem and cannot find room at the inn. Our imaginations are touched and captivated, and wonder and awe of the God-sent birth of a baby breaks into and momentarily suspends all our worries and difficulties, as surely as it did for Joseph and Mary on that first Christmas.

But if we were to go back 1900 years and ask one of the early Christians to tell us about Jesus' birth and origins we would get many different stories – or none at all – depending on who we spoke to. Of the four evangelists, neither Mark nor John has anything to say about Jesus before he starts his public ministry. Only Luke and Matthew tell us about Jesus' birth and background. So, at the beginning of the Year of Matthew let us listen to what that Gospel has to tell us. Over the centuries Christian hearts and heads have harmonised the very different stories from Matthew and Luke and the subsequent tradition; therefore we must temporarily put aside all that we know – or think we know – about Christmas.

To help us do that we must first remove from our minds what is not in Matthew's narrative: no Elizabeth or Zechariah; no birth of John the Baptist; no Gabriel or Annunciation – no 'yes' from Mary; no Visitation, Magnificat or Benedictus; no census; no trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem and no donkey; no three kings – but there will be Magi; no Simeon or Anna in the Temple. (These either belong to Luke's narrative or will be later additions).

The Birth of Jesus according to Matthew

Mary Betz

Matthew was a Greek-speaking Christian (probably Jewish) writing about 80 CE (AD), perhaps in Syria, which had become a centre for mission to the gentiles. Matthew was very much in dialogue with Judaism, trying his utmost to demonstrate that Jesus had every qualification to be the Jewish Messiah. But by his time majority Judaism had rejected those Jews who had accepted Jesus as Messiah, and it was the gentiles (non-Jews) who were flocking into the early Christian communities. So Matthew seeks to set out the Christian mysteries in a manner that illuminates them for gentile Christians.

Thus Matthew's opening verse declares Jesus as Messiah (the anointed One, the Christ), both son of David and son of Abraham. Matthew had to demonstrate Jesus' connection to David because Jewish hopes rested on the coming of a just king in the tradition and line of David. But Matthew also traces the lineage farther back to Abraham, because Abraham was given the promise of becoming the father of *all* nations, and Matthew wants to show that the openness of the gentiles to God's love is no accident, but has long been God's desire as fulfilled in Jesus. Matthew answers the questions about the *who, where and how* of Jesus' identity, while demonstrating that everything about Jesus is according to God's hopes from the beginning of creation.

Jesus' family tree (1:1-17)

First, Matthew establishes Jesus as *Son of David*, showing (with artistic freedom as regards time and historical detail) that Jesus came from Davidic ancestry and therefore was given the right and responsibility to exercise just leadership. According to Scripture scholar Raymond Brown the purpose of the genealogy is not biological, nor

historical, but theological. It is intended to show God working though human beings, despite the faults or tragedies of their lives.

Matthew also prepares his readers for Jesus' highly unusual conception, which in human terms is both irregular and suspicious, not to say scandalous for those times. While ancient genealogies all list patriarchal descent (through the father), Matthew unusually mentions five women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Uriah's wife (Bathsheba), and Mary herself. While each of these women had a somewhat irregular relationship with their male partners, each of their stories also demonstrates initiative and risk in moving towards a more just human situation. (***See the box below)***

Before the birth of Jesus (1:18-25)

Matthew now begins to establish the identity of Jesus as *Son of God* by Joseph's discovery that Mary is with child. In such circumstances Joseph might have surmised that Mary had either been raped, or seduced, or had committed adultery. In ancient Judaism betrothal was as serious as marriage itself, and even required a divorce to break the agreement. Under Jewish law Joseph was required to think very seriously how to bring the marriage to an end through divorce.

At this juncture God (through an angel) speaks to Joseph in the first of four dreams to reassure him of the working of the Holy Spirit in Mary. Like the patriarch Joseph in *Genesis,* the carpenter Joseph in *Matthew* interprets dreams – in this case his own. The allusions to Jewish ancestors and events, the quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures, are no accident: they are intended to show Jesus reliving in his own life the history of all Israel. Matthew thus also begins to draw parallels between Jesus' purpose and actions and those of Moses and Joshua from the Exodus stories. The name "Jesus" was a popular form of Joshua, a name which means "God saves".

The visit of the Magi (2:1-12)

Matthew's story of the Magi begins to develop further his identity of Jesus as *Son of Abraham* – of Jesus as one through whom the gentiles will be gathered to God. The story also, paradoxically, demonstrates the rejection of Jesus by the Jerusalem Jews. Just as the gentile Magi seek out and accept Jesus, so Herod and the Jerusalem Jews reject him. It is Matthew's intent that the perceptive reader will here foresee the later rejection of Jesus, the mature and prophetic Messiah. The infancy narrative of Matthew gives the reader a glimpse of the entire paschal mystery: Jesus rejected by the Jerusalem Jews, his disappearance from Israel and return to life and ministry paralleling his later

Women in the genealogy

Tamar became pregnant by her father-in-law, Judah, who mistook her for a prostitute. Rahab was a prostitute who hid the Israelite spies before the taking of Jericho. Ruth put Boaz in a compromising position in order to become his wife. Bathsheba conceived a child by David while she was still the wife of Uriah. The fifth woman is of course Mary, who conceived a child before she went to live with her husband, Joseph.

Each of the women move outside the normal pattern of family relationships for a higher moral good. Tamar took advantage of a situation to obtain justice when her father-in-law had refused to act on her behalf. Rahab recognised Yahweh as God and so betrayed her city to the Israelites to secure her family's safety. Ruth moves Boaz into action which secures her rightful protection. While Bathsheba obeys the summons of David, it is Uriah who is cast as the model of righteousness and fidelity by obeying the king's commands.

Finally, Mary's situation and the angel prompt Joseph to act with complete fidelity to the desires of God (despite the strict demands of the Jewish law) for the well-being of Mary and the child to be born.

St Matthew (page 8). This representation of the evangelist seated at his desk, comes form a book of Gospels by Grigor (14th Century). The rich ornamentation gives the picture the appearance of a Persian carpet.
The ancestors of Christ (left). Matthew's Gospel starts with a genealogy of Jesus Christ "son of David, son of Abraham". This comes from the book of Gospels illuminated by Avag (A.D.1337), the text being interspersed with little sketches of the ancestors. King David is seen seated on his throne.
The Nativity (overleaf p 10). From a book of Gospels by Vardan (A.D. 1319) this representation of the adoration of the Magi is striking in its simplicity and absence of unnecessary ornamentation. The visit of the Magi has always been especially emphasised in the Eastern Churches.

The Magi of the Epiphany

The Magi (wise men) are not mentioned by Matthew. In the centuries following the Gospel the number varied from two to 12 in art and fable, but gradually became three to correspond with the three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They often became kings because of an allusion by Matthew to Psalm 72. They were even given names – and by the 8th Century, tradition had named them Melchior, Gaspar and Balthasar, the middle of whom became a black king by the time of the 11th Century.

rejection, death and Resurrection. In either case the Son is delivered by a loving God who works through human plans – and in spite of them.

Matthew again draws on the Hebrew Scriptures to background his narrative: the prophet *Micah* predicted that a ruler would be born in Bethlehem, city of King David – and there is no indication of a Nazareth origin for Joseph and Mary. The gifts brought and the homage paid by the Magi has a clear precedent in the story of Balaam bringing gifts in *Numbers*. The nations bring their wealth to Israel in *Isaiah 60*.

Flight to Egypt and Return (2:12-23)

Just as the infant Moses was threatened by a Pharaoh who slew Hebrew baby boys, so is the infant Jesus threatened by an evil king who murders innocent children to retain his power. Just as the young Moses was forced into exile to avoid the Pharaoh's wrath, so the boy Jesus is forced to flee with his family to Egypt to escape Herod. Both Moses and Jesus would exercise prophetic leadership, would deliver their people from bondage, would redeem Israel. Matthew weaves the Jesus-Moses parallel unmistakably in these stories, while also reinforcing the parallel through the two Josephs who listen to God's intent in their dreams. By the obedience of Joseph to God in the final dream Matthew explains how Jesus, Son of David, came to live at Nazareth, in the 'Galilee of the Gentiles' and so fulfil his role as Son of Abraham.

Matthew's infancy narrative on its own may not have the child-like appeal of *Luke*'s, but it does have the capacity for inspiring awe. We are invited to become dreamers and people of wisdom who follow the voice of God (like Joseph and the Magi). We are challenged to risk scandal by acting on a higher moral authority than social convention (like the women and their partners in the genealogy). We are called to be prophetic, like Jesus – but also like Joshua and Moses, in their role of bringing the vision of God's reign into the here and now. With the help of *Matthew* we discover that God's promises of old are to be eternally and mysteriously brought to birth again in the lives of each one of us. ■

http://www.biblesoc.org.nz

God doesn't hang up jawbones

"We never go into a culture and say: 'We're going to provide you with a Bible translation", said Biblical scholar and translator Dr Eugene Nidd, on a recent visit to Wellington. "It is people from the local culture who do the translating. The Bible Society person or persons are essentially resource persons who can help explain what the Greek and Hebrew mean. But the local people are the ones who do the translating."

He gave a graphic illustration of translating the Bible into a cultural context by citing an amusing example from the Baiyer River area of Papua New Guinea. To translate the concept of God's forgiveness they came up with the phrase, *God doesn't hang up jawbones*. In the times of head hunting, when a family member had been killed by someone of a different tribe, the people always cut off the jawbone while preparing the body for burial. They stripped it of flesh and hung it up by the door to remind the family that some day – maybe next month or next year – they had to avenge the killing.

When the tribe became Christians they asked: "What are we going to do with the jawbones hanging on our doorposts? God doesn't hang up jawbones against us because of our sins. So we shouldn't hang up jawbones against other people."

"And so," said Dr Nidd, "these people gathered all the jawbones, made a pile and burned them.. The phrase is still used as an expression of forgiveness, totally within their own cultural context." ■

A Haunting Memory

In September Mary McAleese, President of Ireland, visited Sydney to establish a monument to the Irish girls who were shipped to Sydney 150 years ago

This is a very special occasion, for to stand here in this hallowed place which witnessed so much personal tragedy, to recall the great Irish Famine and all its harrowing anguish, is to remember an event which is at the very heart of modern Irish history. The Great Famine profoundly affected our consciousness and personality as a people, and influenced and directed our destiny. If it was a century and a half ago it is worth remembering that those times are not as far off as we would like to think. My grandfather's mother was born during these years.

Our foremost living poet, the Nobel Laureate Seamus Heaney, wrote these poignant lines:

Stinking potatoes fouled the land
pits turned pus into filthy mounds
And where potato diggers are
you still smell the running sore.

The experience of that harrowing time still lingers, not alone in our folk memory, but in the warp and weft of our thinking, feeling landscape. And yet it is so hard to accept and comprehend how such devastation, hardship and suffering was caused by shortage of food in a land which we know as the 'Green Island', where, as the poet said, "so much beauty meets nature".

But between 1845 and 1850 the potato was destroyed by blight, the green land turned hostile, and the lives of the people of Ireland were fundamentally changed. Out of a population of almost nine million, over a million died from starvation and related diseases. A further million emigrated, many under appalling conditions, and many of those indeed died on the journey, or soon after landing on the shores of distant lands which held out the promise of a better life in abundance and in freedom. My grandfather's cottage is now our holiday home: the little road leads to Ardcama graveyard; the ditch we travel past on our daily runs to the shops was once lined nine deep with bodies awaiting burial. So far – and yet so near!

Beyond the shores of Ireland itself, the famine resulted in the formation of another Ireland – the global Irish family scattered across America, Australia, Canada and New Zealand – and indeed Irish communities everywhere. They never forgot the risks of vulnerability and marginalisation, and whether in the world of politics or of education, in the Labour movement or in the market place, the Irish were to be at the forefront of those who championed the cause of social justice, the need for fairness in society, the politics and policies of brotherhood and of humanity. They remembered their own loneliness, their lostness, their disconnectedness.

In remembering the victims of the Great Famine and their descendants, we should not overlook the fact that it had particular consequences for the women of Ireland who were affected differently – and often most tragically – in the huge wave of emigration both during and following this awful time. The emigration of its women had a lasting impact in Ireland, and made us unique in the Europe of that time when more women left our shores than from any other European country. We can only guess at their fortitude and courage needed to transcend aching loneliness, despair and heartache.

Between May 1848 and April 1850, according to the records of the Poor Law Commissioners in Ireland, 4,114 orphan girls and young women between the ages of 14 and 20 – the overwhelming majority between 16 and 18 – were dispatched from Union workhouses in every county of Ireland to the Australian ports of Sydney, Port Philip and Adelaide. Over half the girls were transported to Sydney.

As history tells us, the scheme began with the arrival in Sydney from Belfast of the notorious *Earl Grey* in October 1848, carrying girls from workhouses across the north of Ireland. Fifty six of the girls were from Belfast. My own children are young teenagers far from ready yet to be self-reliant, still running to Mammy with cuts and hurts, still needing love and care to nurture them to independence and adulthood. Too many of those who came here never knew that love, that nurturing; but it is to their credit that they endured awesome hardships and became witnesses to the indomitable nature of the human spirit – the transcendence of love.

I am honoured to inaugurate the National Memorial to the great Irish Famine and to express my heartfelt thanks to those who have worked with so much diligence and dedication to raise the necessary funds for its completion... The magnificent National Memorial will remind us of a harrowing time, but will also bear witness to the fortitude and courage of a unique group of Irish women. ■

Tui Motu is endebted to Mr John Coghlan of Nelson, a descendant of one of the Irish Orphan Girls, who kindly sent us this copy of Mary McAleese's address

Lambeth 1998

840 bishops and 600 spouses: the 840 bishops included 11 women; the spouses included five men. And more than half the bishops were African. The Lambeth Conference has taken place every ten years for the last 100. This year's was the biggest, the longest (lasting three full weeks) and the most diverse. The gathering has long outgrown Lambeth Palace, its traditional London venue. This year it took place in the verdant surroundings of the University of Kent, overlooking Canterbury and the famous and beautiful old Cathedral where 800 years ago Thomas à Becket shed his blood.

Bishop Penny Jamieson attended with her husband, Dr Ian Jamieson, who lectures in English at Otago University. The prominence of the spouses – the parallel programme organised for them was actually called the "Spouses' Conference" – made it a very human occasion, says Bishop Penny. She described the assembly as a very "coupled com The spouses attended all the they came to the plenary se on World Debt, on the Bibl Christian-Muslim relations – and while the bishops ever morning had their hour and half of Bible study, the spouses in groups of ten, were havin their parallel sessions.

Both sections followed a reflection on Paul's *Second* *the Corinthians*. The unifyi was *Leadership under Pressure*. special memory of the Conference were "the stories told of bishops in difficulty: all sorts of difficulty – stories they were able to recount in this safe place".

Bishop Penny unconsciously used a gospel phrase to describe the atmosphere of the Conference: "it was good for us to be there". There was a sense of hospitality and warmth, established from the very first by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Carey and his wife, Eileen, who organised the Spouses' Conference. The very composition of the group reflects a Church which is extremely hospitable to partners and whose clerical life is centred on a married ministry. With so many women present and taking an active part, the women's debate which had dominated the previous Conference, was very low-key in 1998.

The issue which really caused hackles to rise was homosexuality. Both Penny and Ian felt that the last week of the Conference was marred by the dominance of this issue. Up to then the mood of proceedings had been one of discussion, debate, of listening and seeking consensus. But in the homosexuality debate both sides were pressing for resolution. The American liberal wing, who at first chose not to crusade on behalf of their cause, were steamrollered into seeking a resolution by the very vehemence of the condemnation of homosexuality by many of the African bishops supported by the evangelical wing of the American Church. Bishop Penny thought that this vehemence arose partly because many African bishops live very much under the shadow of Islam, in a society fiercely of homosexuality. "We don't – because we shoot them!" ogan quoted. These bishops mply not able to understand re nuanced approach. Their estors had received the Chris- faith through the evangelical suasion of the London Mis- ary Society. "You brought us aith", was their cry. "Don't go n what you brought us!" The ion time of these Churches is d to them. The strong words the debate during the closing days unfortunately tended to promote an extremism which had been totally lacking in the earlier sessions of the Conference.

Not all the Africans of course belong to the evangelical wing. The South African bishops come from a much more Anglo-Catholic tradition. What the South Africans brought with them were stories of recent deprivation and persecution. All over Africa there are

difficulties of coexistence with Islam – two evangelising faiths competing with each other. Another threat has been the influx of Pentecostal missionaries heavily subsidised from the United States. Anglican Churches in India, Pakistan and in North Africa also encounter a lot of opposition and persecution. These stories made bishops from the First World only too aware of how much they were protected from the stark immediacy of such threatening situations

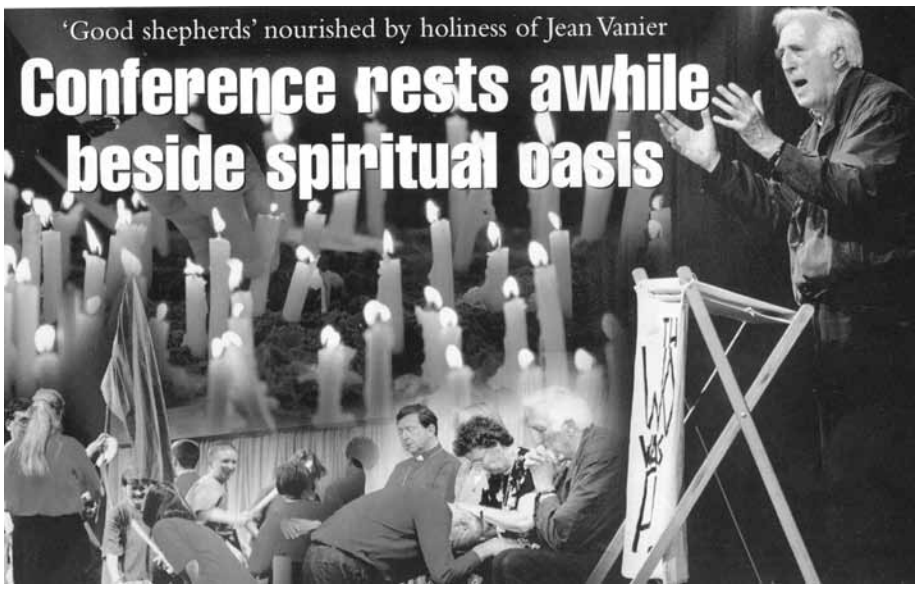
There were a number of observers from other Churches. Cardinal Cassidy addressed a plenary session on behalf of the Catholic Church – but, said Bishop Penny, he appeared to be "laying down the law" rather than coming to them with openness. The President of the World Bank was another visitor; he was somewhat put out by a video presentation preceding his address which emphasised the impoverishment of people as a consequence of the policies controlling debt repayment.

One of the highlights of the Conference was the visit of Jean Vanier, founder of *l'Arche*, the worldwide movement of care for the intellectually disabled. When he arrived in the afternoon all business ceased for a vigil of prayer which continued overnight until the celebration of Eucharist the following

exercise your authority in love, in truth and in forgiveness

morning. Many participants fasted to express solidarity with the ideals which he placed before the Conference. Jean Vanier spoke movingly of the need for bishops to exercise *servant-leadership*: "I want you to exercise your authority in love, in truth and in forgiveness", he said. The vigil concluded with a ceremony of the washing of feet, echoing the action of Jesus at the Last Supper.

Jean Vanier's visit epitomised all that was unifying and inspiring at this year's



Front page montage from the *Lambeth Daily*, the Conference's own daily newspaper, for August 3, when Jean Vanier addressed the Conference

Lambeth Conference. Dr Ian Jamieson noted how during the first two weeks a great sense of union and a profound atmosphere of trust was built up. This even included the subsection dealing with human sexuality where in spite of the differing cultures and understandings of Scripture there was nevertheless mutual respect and a statement embodying consensus was reached.

Unfortunately much of this spirit was lost during the final week and this was in part due to deep divisions over the homosexuality issue. But Ian identified a broader problem. As soon as the Conference moved into "resolution" mode, Western-style committee procedures took over. Instead of seeking consensus, decisions were being arrived at by majority voting, leaving aside a minority in dissent. Many non-Europeans found this Western procedure alien and unacceptable. Ian noted that the change was even symbolised in dress. Whereas in plenary sessions earlier on the groups had mixed and the bishops usually 'dressed down', now many of them signified the deliberative mode they were adopting by wearing clerical dress.

Conference procedure was driven by a group who were determined to effect a closure on the homosexuality issue. Feelings became inflamed. The atmosphere was not helped by the fact that the weather was extremely hot and the debate was being fanned by the British popular media busily making hay out of controversy. Some bishops spoke in a manner which they would later regret. Others were simply embarrassed and

"God stands for right – not rectitude – for truth, for integrity... in our confusion Jesus comes to shed light upon us"

(Archbishop Khotso Makhulu of C Africa)

ashamed of what was going on. The Conference was being railroaded into making definitive statements over an issue of extreme sensitivity, a campaign being seemingly driven and funded by a conservative American lobby.

Some observers were critical of the Archbishop of Canterbury who seemed to 'become invisible' during the crisis days. However, Ian Jamieson gave Dr Carey full credit for drawing the Conference back to some sense of unity during the final sessions. Perhaps the three weeks of swinging mood reflected a Church which embraces such a broad spectrum of peoples and beliefs, nevertheless seeking unity in the gospel of Christ. ■

M.H.

Frank Petre – a Great Colonial

Keith Harrison celebrates a pioneer architect who one hundred years ago beautified our southern cities with magnificent buildings

As Otago's 150th year of settlement comes to a close, it seems appropriate to remember the man who died on 10 December 1918 and who had contributed so much to the architectural impact of the new colony. The discovery of gold had catapulted Otago into the forefront of commercial development and Frank William Petre was there to help the people realise their dreams.

Born in Lower Hutt, the son of Hon. Henry William Petre and the grandson of the eleventh Baron Petre, Chairman of the New Zealand Company, he was taken back to England and France to complete his education. Study in both England and France led to the completion of his formal education at Usham College, London.

After qualifying in both engineering and architecture, he was employed in private practice in London before returning to work in New Zealand. He was employed as an engineer by Brogden & Sons, railway contractors and his first task was to superintend the Dunedin-Clutha and the Blenheim-Picton lines. He worked on the draining of the Henley swamp, the building of the Deborah Bay tunnel and the first section of the Central Otago railway before setting up an office as an Engineer and Architect in Liverpool Street, Dunedin, in 1875.

Although he had trained as a naval architect and had a number of engineering accomplishments to his credit, the rest of his career was devoted to architecture, and it is for his church designs and for his pioneering use of concrete that he is best remembered.

Phoenix House, a commercial building, designed and built by Petre in 1885

Petre's selection as architect for the design of St Joseph's Cathedral in Rattray Street, was a happy choice for the Catholic Church and the city. Begun in 1878 and completed in its present form in 1886, the Cathedral is a truncated version of the original design. (*See pages 16-17 for photographs of Petre's church buildings.)* Intended to be a traditional cruciform Cathedral with a massive tower and spire rising to a height of nearly 70 metres above floor level, the completed facade and nave offer rich examples of the splendour of Petre's Gothic design.

Other churches designed by Petre include the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Christchurch (1904-5), the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Hill Street, Wellington (1901), St Patrick's Basilica, Oamaru (1894), and the magnificent and recently restored Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Timaru. Many charming smaller churches grace the province of Otago, notably St Patrick's, Lawrence and Sacred Heart, North East Valley, Dunedin.

Some fine examples of his splendid commercial designs enhance the city of Dunedin. The Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance building and Phoenix House have been recycled by their present owners to serve into the new mill-enium. Petre's willingness to experiment with poured concrete earned him the nickname 'Lord Concrete" and his commissions for Judge Chapman ("Woodside" in Lovelock Avenue) in 1875, for

Architect

Edward Cargill ("The Cliffs" better known as 'Cargill's Castle") in 1876 and for St Dominic's Priory in 1877 (see photograph of the Cathedral overleaf), each involved the use of mass concrete.

The Guardian Royal Exchange building (1881-82) displays considerable architectural refinement. Although some of its original features have been removed, the Liverpool Street facade has a splendid double entrance with semi-circular headed windows. Each bay is separated by a pilaster and a half-column with Corinthian capitals on the upper storey and Ionic on the lower, giving the building a distinctive elegance of

style. An imaginative re-cycling of this inner city building has taken place in the last few years and it now houses 11apartments, each with a parking space in the altered basement. In excavating this space, the owner found the remains of one of the original wharves, a dramatic reminder of the extent of reclaimed land in this part of the city.

Phoenix House (1885), known also for a time as Airport House, is one of the finest remaining buildings in the Queen's Gardens' Precinct and has been given a new life with three attractive apartments on the first floor while the ground floor houses the Otago Youth Wellness Trust.

The Guardian Royal Exchange Building, Dunedin, built by F. W. Petre in 1882. Details of the cornice and architraves below left. (photos: Reg Graham)

Two handsome Petre houses survive today to illustrate the fashion and style of the period. They are numbers 15 and 20 Cliffs Road St Clair, built on land once owned by Edward Cargill and designed in the timbered Tudor style. Number 20 is thought to have been built by Petre for his own use on the occasion of his marriage to Margaret Cargill in 1881, a romance which began during the building of "The Cliffs" for her father. Title to the land, part of the huge Cargill estate, was not secure and the dispute led to the couple building further up the hill and settling there.

The Petres had a family of six boys and six girls and this union of the leading Presbyterians of their day with the descendant of an aristocratic Catholic family, seems to have been a happy one. Frank Petre was the second President of the New Zealand Institute of Architects (1907-8), the society of which he was a foundation member, and was elected a Fellow in 1905. He also served for a number of years as Consular Agent for Italy in Dunedin. Petre died at "Writtle", St Clair, Dunedin, after 42 years of architectural practice, not only securing a place in the annals of his profession in New Zealand, but having achieved significance on the world stage.

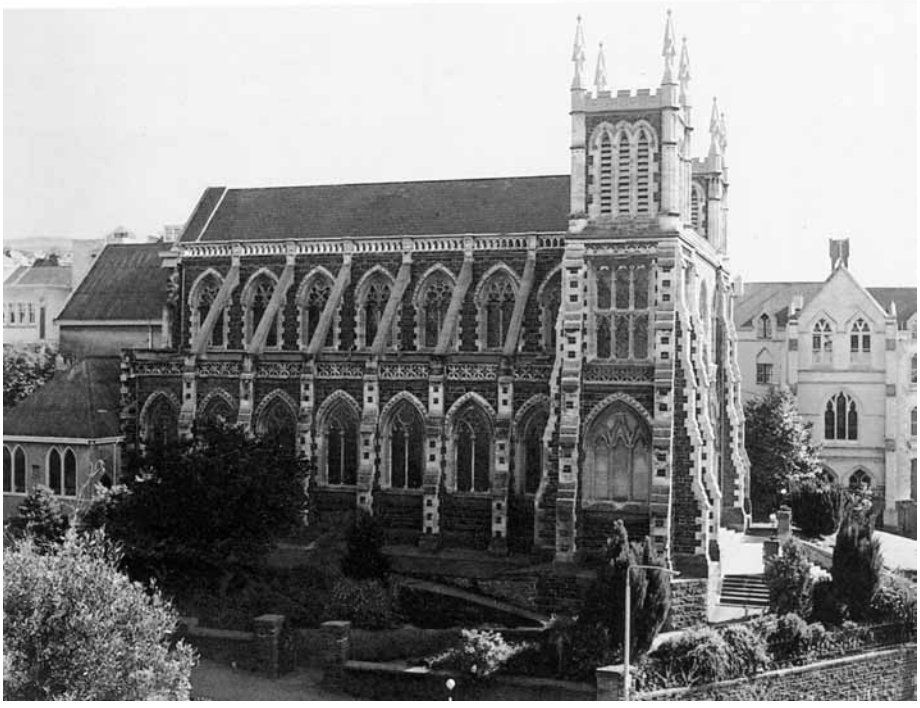
(continued overleaf for Petre's churches)

The Brunelleschi of the South Pac

Frank Petre is specially remembered for the wonderful churches he built up and down the South Island. His original concept for St Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin (above), had it been realised, would have been the finest church building in Autralasia. The actual Cathedral (right) was erected between 1878 and 1886. Details of the interior are shown upper right. St Joseph's has recently undergone restoration and is due for reopening this month.

The title above refers to Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446), one of the great builders of the Renaissance, the first person to build a true dome since Roman times. Petre, like Brunelleschi, is notable for the magnificence and originality of his architectural planning as well as his technical skill.

Photographs : from publications by Msgrs P Mee (Dunedin) and J Harrington (Christchurch)



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The magnificent interior of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Christchurch, (1905), beautifully restored during the 1980s. The floodlit exterior is shown below.. George Bernard Shaw, on his visit to New Zealand in 1934 pronounced it to be the finest building he had seen on his southern journey.

Petre's design for Christchurch Cathedral was based on the traditional Roman basilica style. The exterior is faced in Oamaru stone

How psychology can help our spirituality

Our spiritual growth will be helped if we have some insight into our psychology. Jack Dominian, who was Senior Consultant Psychiatrist at the Central Middlesex Hospital and is now the Chairman of One plus One, shows how love has the pre-eminent role in spirituality and how 'dynamic psychology has made a great contribution to understanding love'.

Spirituality is a much-used word and most people associate it with prayer, and yet there is so much more to it. The Pharisees got together and asked Jesus: 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?'

Jesus said to him, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it. You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole law and the prophets too' (Matthew 22:35-40)

Love has the pre-eminence of place, love of God, of neighbour and of self. Love is not only pre-eminent because it cements all human relationships but also because it is the nature of God. The Christian God is a trinitarian one. Three persons are united in a dynamism of love and human relationships reflect this. Now love is an easy word to utter and an extraordinarily difficult one to understand. Dynamic psychology has made a great contribution to understanding love and, although Freud was an atheist, it is to him and his successors that we owe many advances in appreciating love of self and that of neighbour.

Dynamic psychology has laid emphasis on childhood as the time we learn the rudiments of love. In the interaction with our parents we learn the elements of closeness, intimacy, affection, trust, autonomy, self-esteem, the capacity to give and receive, to handle our anger and sexuality, in other words all the rudiments of interpersonal encounter in the midst of which love is situated. How we handle this interpersonal encounter is the substance of love of self and neighbour and the foundation of our spirituality. And so we can divide spirituality into an awareness of God and our subsequent communication with God, which is the proper concern of faith, and love of neighbour and self which is best understood through psychology.

Possession of ourselves

In the process of development we gradually separate from our parents, physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually. As a result of this separation, a crucial element of love is the process by which we learn to possess ourselves. This seems a strange starting point for love, but let us look at what happens in reality. We begin life as helpless babies, we do not possess one iota of our being. We live by kind permission of adults, our parents, relations, friends and the community. Gradually we begin to separate from all these adults, particularly our parents, and commence to own our bodies, minds and feelings. I have five grandchildren and can observe this gradual growing of self in the things they can do, the ideas they utter, the feelings

they express. Gradually, as they reach adolescence, they will be in full possession of themselves, ready to make free choices. But this is not always the case. There are young people who are unhappy and coerced at home. Their escape is an early and immature sexual relationship to seek affection. They think they are in love but they are simply in need of affection and with their adult bodies they form hopelessly jejune relationships. The difference between seeking affection and the capacity to love is considerable and these young people, of whom there are thousands, are unable to love in a mature fashion.

Many more do not escape into the arms of another person, they actually leave home but simply live in the shadow of an authority figure. Emotional dependence is an inability to own ourselves and therefore have the capacity to love, and these people live by kind permission of others. The other may be a spouse, a friend or the Church. When they grow up and possess themselves, the marriage is broken, the friend abandoned, or they leave the Church. Genuine love requires that we own ourselves and that we offer our authentic self for which we assume responsibility.

Guilt and badness

Another feature of childhood which psychologists note is the experience of people who felt unloved in their childhood and felt that it was their fault, feeling that it was their badness that made them unlovable. Later on in life, this sense of badness continues and they transform it into a sin for which they need God's forgiveness. Gradually, with or without help, they realise that their sense of badness is misplaced. As they gain their sense of value and integrity, they begin to feel lovable, lose their sense of badness and also their sinfulness.

I believe this has happened on a large scale in the people of God who have stopped feeling guilty by the imposition of badness initiated by the Church, and the large flight from confession is a healthy sign of spirituality from unsound spiritual badness.

In the light of this process of separation and personal possession, we can make some sense of Our Lord's own process of growth and love. We find in Luke, in the episode of the temple, how he first separated from his own parents and established a personal link with his heavenly Father. In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, we see his further separation from his family when his mother and brothers could not get access to him. His reply was, 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and put it into practice' (Luke 8-26).

On the surface Jesus appears callous and indifferent towards his family, but in fact he was growing in that authentic possession of himself in which his earthly relationships were ceasing to affect his sense of himself and his spiritual relationship with his father.

Psychologically we see many problems arising out of the lack of possession of ourselves. We enter marriages without fully knowing that we are doing so out of dependence or infatuation, and then we leave the marriage when we have matured and outgrown our partner. We enter jobs or vocations and find later we are in the wrong place. Likewise, if we enter the priesthood because we need dependence and security and the Church appears a safe haven, when we grow up we depart because we are ready to donate ourselves in marriage.

Possession of ourselves helps us to direct our lives. The process of possessing ourselves does not stop at adolescence, it proceeds throughout our life. We learn about our inner world slowly, as the unconscious becomes conscious, as we identify what is truly ours from what belongs to others. Apart from the gradual separation, we begin to add slowly our own original increments to our personality so that we build a genuine combination of what belongs to us, both from the old and the new.

Feeling good

Another aspect of the possession of ourselves is the need to feel good. Love requires the freely donated sense of ourselves, but what is given must be of value, positive and creative.

If what we have to offer is anger, hostility, destructiveness, jealousy, envy, hate, resentment, then what we have to give is not love. What we offer depends on what we feel about ourselves. We need to feel lovable or, in other words, have the capacity to feel recognised, wanted and appreciated.

The capacity to feel lovable has two implications. The first is the capacity to register love. This is very important in the selection of friends, spouses and being loved by God. If we feel unlovable, we pick up, unconsciously or even consciously, messages from people who are critical, negative, or are unlovable themselves. Our lack of lovability matches what they are offering to us, which is a dose of rejection. And so research has repeatedly found that people with similar characteristics attract one another and, in particular, emotionally deprived individuals choose one another and in

their relationship find that both need what neither have in fact the capacity to give.

In our relationship with God, instead of feeling loved because of our loveability, we are attracted to an austere God who is forgiving of our badness. In my lifetime I have seen the Church shift from an image of God who is powerful, severe, critical, judgmental, relating to persons who feel subdued, cowed, judged, with the need for repentance, to a God who is merciful, compassionate and loving, who wants us to feel lovable. It is this combination of culture and personal experience that we have to meet in every Christian.

...I have seen the Church shift from an image of God who is powerful, to a God who is merciful, compassionate and loving

The second implication is the capacity to give love. We cannot be loving if we hate ourselves, if we feel dubious about our own worth and value, if we doubt ourselves. Under these circumstances, what we offer is a sense of worthlessness, doubt and uncertainty. Here we have to distinguish between the humility of the image of ourselves and the worth of our contribution. This is a subtle distinction which is often confused.

Humility is a clear awareness of our limitations, the openness to learning, correction and change, the desire to serve rather than to pontificate, coupled with an appreciation of our significance, which is neither exaggerated nor undervalued. Humility is not a denial of our worth or integrity; it is not an apology for our existence. This combination of humility, coupled with love of self which wishes to be available in service, is a true giving of love and once again we find it in Jesus.

What impressed the crowd and the apostles is that Jesus spoke with authority, that is to say there was a unity between the outer and inner man. His psychological authority rested on the fact that there was no conflict between what he taught and the way he felt and behaved. We cannot love if there is a marked difference between the outer and inner person.

Self-esteem

Part of loving others depends on giving to them, as noted above, a part of ourselves which feels good and that depends on love of self. Love of self has had a bad press in Christianity because it is linked with selfishness. There is, however, a basic distinction between selfishness and love of self.

Love of self is built on self-esteem, that is to say an appreciation of our own worth. The whole of our childhood was based on receiving love from our parents and relatives, which made us feel lovable and made it possible to link apprec-iation to our bodies, minds and feelings. In this way, when we try to reach out to others, we have a body, mind and feelings that feel good. When our self-esteem is poor, we do not feel we have anything of value to give, and we are surprised that anybody wants us. I had a patient whose self-esteem was so poor that she described herself as feeling invisible, that is to say there was no part of herself that felt wanted by anybody.

Self-esteem is crucial in loving because our capacity to draw near to others depends on the conviction that, when others make demands on our personality, there will be something positive to give to them. People are constantly surprised that they are found to be of value and lovable and one of the most important ways of loving others is to affirm them in what they think and do. In this way their self-esteem rises.

Jesus' self-esteem must have been complete and the fruit of it was the Eucharist. The Eucharist would not have been possible if Jesus had the slightest doubt about his self-esteem. One cannot conceive of such an event without the certainty of the value of the donation.

Self-centredness

Selfishness on the other hand is linked with a focus of self-centredness, which psychologists call narcissism. It is the opposite of availability. It is linked with receiving exclusively, focusing on oneself, making oneself more important than others. Selfishness is essentially a return to childhood in which one becomes the centre of attention with diminished awareness of the other. It reflects an inner emptiness, a desperate need for care and attention, a state in which, as an adult, one has not outgrown the urgency of receiving. The greater the selfishness present, the more wounded people are.

It is very important to distinguish between self-esteem and selfishness. The former is a legitimate possession of one's value. The latter is a quest, however small, for completion. We can love through our self-esteem and need through our selfishness; both are present in all of us, but the balance between the two is a constant struggle for our spirituality. Love of self is the key to love of others for we can only donate what we possess which feels good.

At the centre of the Christian's life is the richness of Jesus' availability which ended on the cross. We can take a daily stock of our loving of self and of our neighbour. An examination of conscience, not of how bad we have been, but how loving we have been, is an urgent necessity for the spirituality of the Christian community. ■

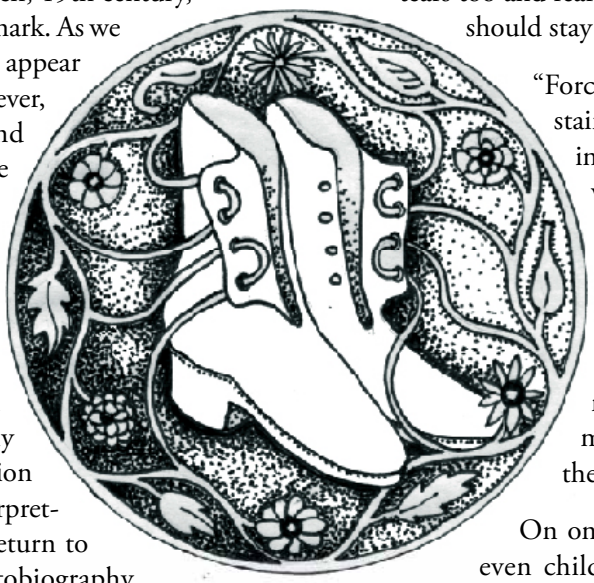
The Eucharist would not have been possible if Jesus had the slightest doubt about his self-esteem

By kind permission of Priests & People. *The article of which this is an abridged version, first appeared in April 1998.*

St Therese's Christmas Conversion

Michael Dooley

In 1997 St Therese of Lisieux, "The Little Flower," was declared a doctor of the Church and joined the likes of Teresa of Avila, Augustine and John of the Cross. At first sight Therese appears an unlikely candidate as an official Church theologian. This young French woman had no formal theological education, her significant writing was an autobiography. Therese's theological development had grown out of reflection on her own experience, a matter of necessity rather than choice. As with all experience it was a product of her time and culture. Being French, 19th century, and middle class leaves an indelible mark. As we read her words today the piety can appear saccharine and naive. Therese, however, is being true to her experience and the task for us today is to apply the spiritual insights of this doctor of the Church to our own time and place...



Therese herself wrote: "If some of the saints were to return to earth, I wonder how many would recognise themselves in what has been written about them". Perhaps more than any saint she has suffered from a distortion of her message by well-meaning interpreters. One way to correct this is to return to what she wrote herself. In her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, Therese relates an experience that happened one Christmas. "It was December 25, 1886, that I received the grace of leaving my childhood, in a word, the grace of my complete conversion." Some background helps us to understand this significant statement.

Therese saw three stages in her life. From birth to five years was a time of happiness in a secure and loving family. Her mother's death at the age of five brought on the second and most difficult stage. During these years Therese was depressed, and often in tears. School was a further trauma and her sensitive nature made her prone to the bullying of other children. The situation was intensified when her sister Pauline, her "second mother," chose to leave and enter the Carmelite convent. Once again Therese experienced great loss. She suffered from incessant headaches, and uncontrollable weeping, she would cry and then "cry again for having cried". Add to this a bout of scruples that lasted two years and we see that "The Little Flower" had less than an idyllic childhood. The third stage of Therese's life began with her Christmas conversion.

After Midnight Mass that year the family had returned home. Therese explained that the custom was for the children to take their shoes from the chimney and examine their presents. Being the youngest she was looking forward to this. That night her father was rather tired and on seeing the shoes at the fireplace he expressed annoyance saying: "Well, fortunately, this will be the last year!" Therese was going upstairs and overheard his reference to her. In her emotional sensitivity she felt the tears come to her eyes. Celine, her sister, saw the tears too and fearing an outburst suggested that she should stay upstairs. However...

"Forcing back my tears, I descended the stairs rapidly; controlling the poundings of my heart, I took my shoes and withdrew all the objects joyfully... The work I had been unable to do in ten years was done by Jesus in one instant, contenting himself with my goodwill which was never lacking... I felt charity enter into my soul, and the need to forget myself and to please others; since then I've been happy!"

On one level this can seem a trivial and even childish incident. At another level a profound decision and change had been made. Therese had the wisdom to realise that in this simple incident a conversion had occurred. In this case she moved on from her difficult years of extreme sensitivity and sadness to a period of relative freedom. The insight of Therese was to see God working in the emotional and psychological growth that took place. Therese realised that to see God's grace in action she had to look no further than her own experience.

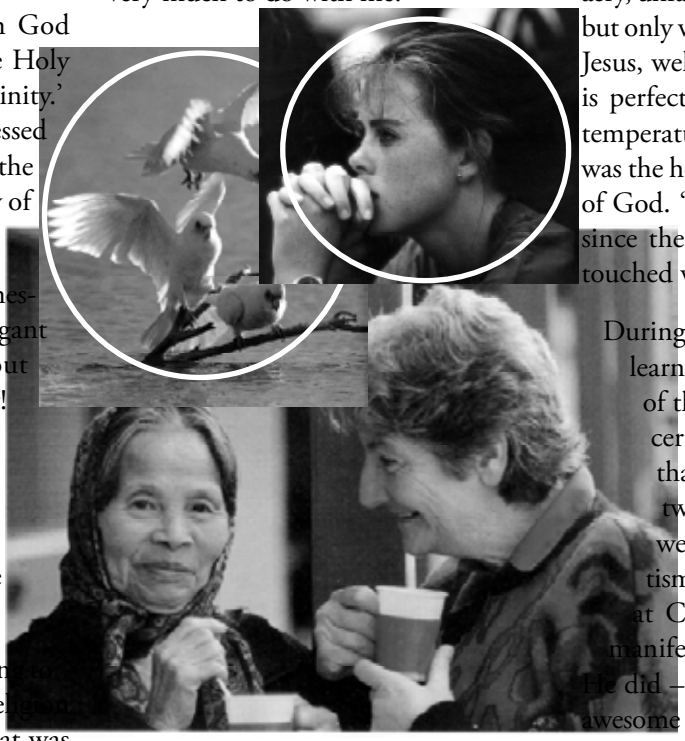
The naming of Therese of Lisieux as a doctor of the Church has implications for theology that are yet to be explored but surely one of her gifts is the way she uses human experience as a starting point for her theology. How often do we easily dismiss the religious dimension of events such as human emotional and psychological growth? These are our own religious experiences, our own "Christmas conversions" and this doctor of the Church encourages us to see that. Therese's approach to theology could well be summed up by her comment: "It seems to me that if a little flower could speak, it would tell simply what God has done for it without trying to hide its blessings". ■

"How do you know there's a God?" someone asked Wellington writer Trish McBride – and out came a cascade of images and memories from Tertullian to shamrocks. Here she whimsically, but profoundly, explores the ultimate mystery of Christian faith

Trinity Revisited

I was quite small when I first met, so to speak, the Blessed Trinity. Six or seven, probably, and in the Penny Catechism. 'How many Persons are there in God?' 'There are three persons in God.' 'Who are the three persons in God?' 'The three persons in God are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, known as the Blessed Trinity.' 'How can we understand the Blessed Trinity?' 'We cannot understand the Blessed Trinity – this is a mystery of Our Faith.'

'Don't tangle with this' was the message. That would be a sin of arrogant presumption. The Trinity is out there somewhere. Just believe it! No answers this side of heaven. And so the theory was instilled. You can't understand It but believe It anyway. That was Tertullian's 'one substance, three persons'.



As an adult reading theology, trying to make experiential sense of this religion of mine (because if it didn't, what was the use of it all?) I met the Augustinian explanation. God the Father, the First Person of the Blessed Trinity, knew himself so profoundly that the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, was generated by/from this knowledge from all eternity, and eventually became man in the person of Jesus. And, the story went, the love between the Father and the Son was so intense that this 'became' the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. A Community of three consubstantial co-equal Persons bound together in one will by their mutual love. It all sounded logical enough, even if it didn't feel like it had very much to do with me.

Then came a period of metaphors. Most folk have heard of St Patrick's sermon on the Trinity, using a shamrock leaf to illustrate the message of three distinct persons with one shared life. Into my ponderings around this came other images. How about a plait of three gold threads – three in one, just like they said, and one strand looped down to thread the beads of our hollow humanity and bind us into the being of the Godhead. I was quite proud of that one! Less fanciful was the image of the three forms of H20: I could equate the Father with water, as the essence and giver of all life, the Spirit with steam: aery, unfathomable breath, ever present, but only visible on frosty mornings. And Jesus, well, he was the ice. No analogy is perfect, and I had to disregard the temperature of a block of ice. But he was the holdable, touchable, solid form of God. 'Something which has existed since the beginning... which we have touched with our own hands.'

During a lengthy charismatic phase I learnt to pray to all three members of the Trinity in different ways. It certainly felt more even-handed than giving one of them, or even two all the attention. The indwelling Spirit, received in Baptism we were now told, not simply at Confirmation, was invited to manifest His power in our lives. And He did – in ways that were sometimes awesome in their intensity, with physical sensations on occasion that shocked my faith into a new dimension. This God was too close, and far more involved in the nitty gritty of our lives than I had ever imagined!

Later I came to understand the Spirit as the feminine principle of God, a role hitherto reserved for Mary. But with the post-Vatican II theological developments, she found herself firmly back in the human race. I can only imagine her

relief! Given the Father and the Son, there just had to be Somebody somewhere in whose image I was made! And all those wonderful 'feminine' gifts of the Spirit – now returned to sender, so to speak, the 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self control'. It was obvious to me that the Spirit was indeed She. I began to get very uptight when I heard the Spirit referred to as He, and when I realised that yet another generation of little girls was learning subliminally through the language of the Mass that God is 'like them' and 'not like us'.

Later again, as I was becoming disillusioned with the male God as presented by the church, Sandra Schneiders' description of the Trinity as 'more than two men and a bird' touched a deep chord. Theologically, clergy I talked to were really ready to admit that God was beyond gender, but many were fixated on how saying 'She' would be just as inaccurate. This ignored altogether the problem of the inaccuracy of 'He'. Why should one inaccuracy be used 97% of the time? That is just the way it is! I honour those who see, understand and make the effort.

An exultant 'YES' to Jim Cotter's original naming in his magnificent reworking of the Lord's Prayer: Life-Giver, Pain-Bearer, Love-Maker. And to the somewhat censored version used in the New Zealand Anglican Prayer-Book: Earth-maker, Pain-Bearer, Life-Giver. That felt like getting somewhere.

Elizabeth Johnson's book *She Who Is* filled a great hunger. A work of profound thealogical/theological significance describing a God that women can feel as one with, as men must be able to do with the Father. A recognition that all God-language is of necessity metaphor. As Thomas Aquinas said, 'If you think you have understood God, what you have understood is not God'.

And then this year, a researcher who has been exploring the spiritual journeys of many New Zealanders asked me that most deceptively simple of questions. 'How do you know there's a God? How do *you* know there is a God?' How indeed? And the experiences of over half a century, a kaleidoscopic cloud of witnesses whirled around me, and settled into a shape that I could begin to put into words. I know there's a God when I look at the stars, at a silver snail-trail in the morning sun, and at the self-sown white lily flowering amidst my red carpet rose. That is transcendence. I know there's a God when I look within, and Someone is bringing wholeness, giving strength, leaping joyously in whatever creativity I discover, and according to the promise in John 16, leading me into all truth. That is immanence. I know God in my relationships. God is love. God 'happens' when I cry and someone holds me, when I laugh with a friend, when our compassion is stirred for each other or someone else. That is the God between.

That's – that's three ways – wait a minute – why does that sound familiar? Could there be some trinitarian connection? A ReWorded Trinity? Is that what it is? Easy enough to see the Creator connection – then the Spirit at work within, in Quaker language, the Inner Light, 'that of God in everyone'. And yes, there is my Friend Jesus at work in and through others, affirming, encouraging, present in the deaths and resurrections of our lives just as he was in the gospel stories. A flood of recognition, of relief! Maybe the Blessed Trinity is not so mysterious after all! 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.' Is that the most profound trinitarian statement of them all? The actuality of where we are, how we are and who we are – all inextricably interwoven with God-presence.

Oh my God! Oh my, God! Oh, **my** God!

It was one of those extraordinary homecoming moments described so succinctly by TS Eliot in Little Gidding: 'And the end of our exploring/Will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time'.

Then I was able to name the different approaches as the old 'descending theology' and the newer 'ascending theology'. It depends which end of the telescope you look through! And a sadness! Knowing God, and **knowing** that we know God is our birth-right. These are such simple ways that we can begin to recognise the God who is so intimately concerned with each one of us. Why did they make it sound so complicated? ■


Sr Sue Cosgrove as a novice

The Poet and the Woman by the River

In 1969 James K Baxter went to Jerusalem on the Whanganui River. Sr Sue Cosgrove DOLC describes the impact he made on the Sisters – and on herself

Imagine Jerusalem in 1969. It is spring, and James K Baxter is drawn to the place. He would say at the time "the Almighty took me by the scruff of the neck and the seat of the pants". And there he was.

The Sisters of Compassion were there – in fact they'd been there for 80 odd years. They were known and loved, they were sure of themselves, their life was full and the routine was clear and predictable. Up at 5am – prayers to be said, cows to be milked, chooks to be fed, and then schools to go to – one sister at Jerusalem, two at Ranana.

The Sisters felt the impact of James K. Baxter's arrival. In a way, Baxter came suddenly to Jerusalem, and died suddenly, just four years later. He became a very public figure, and of course, Jerusalem became a very public place. It's rare that a poet should be such a public figure in any community. Among the Sisters there was felt, alternately, profound admiration for him – and then utter alarm. His lifestyle, his dress, his prophet-like beard made many people of his own generation feel quite uneasy.

Frank McKay says in his biography that James K Baxter was 'lonely', and connecting with the Sisters was life-giving. Despite the apprehension there were lots of moments of sharing: "There's just myself, the birds and Sister Aquinas, knocking at the door with a bowl of dwarf beans".

Baxter was a poet, and he was now a social philosopher. Jim's main criticism was that society disregarded the worth and dignity of the human person. Society's defining question was "what do you do?" Personal needs were sacrificed to productivity and efficiency. What a time Jim would have today! As Sr Sheila says: "He came to comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable". Quite genuinely, many were unsure that what he was saying was an unavoidable consequence of the gospel, and then he died before many had time to catch the idea and digest it.

I was a 19-year-old novice in January 1970. Twenty or so of us went 'up the River' for our Christmas holiday. I'd never heard of James K Baxter until Christmas '69. One of the novices had received a copy of *The Flowering Cross*. As we went up the River, in those days in a solid Landrover, I remember pondering on those essays: The Church and the Alcoholic; Trade Unions and Unemployment and so on.

I was anxious to meet this man. We were cautioned against going over to the cottage – the cottage directly over the field from the old convent, a place Baxter would describe as having "two rooms, a stove, a range, even a bath. Somewhat palatial I fear, with a plot of ground alongside, which I am beginning to cultivate".

NZ worshipped a secular trinity: education, respectability and the dollar note

We didn't initially go over to his place; however, Jim came to ours. He would sit on the front doorstep and talk; usually somebody sat and listened. Coming as I did from a very sheltered background, I was enthralled by Baxter's commentary on society as he perceived it at the time. He woke me up when he said that New Zealand worshipped a secular trinity and that it was Education, Respectability and the Dollar Note. He soon recognised the victims of this in the drop-outs, the drug addicts, the Remuera Housewife – remember that poem? And the Takapuna businessman lamenting his son – another very powerful poem.

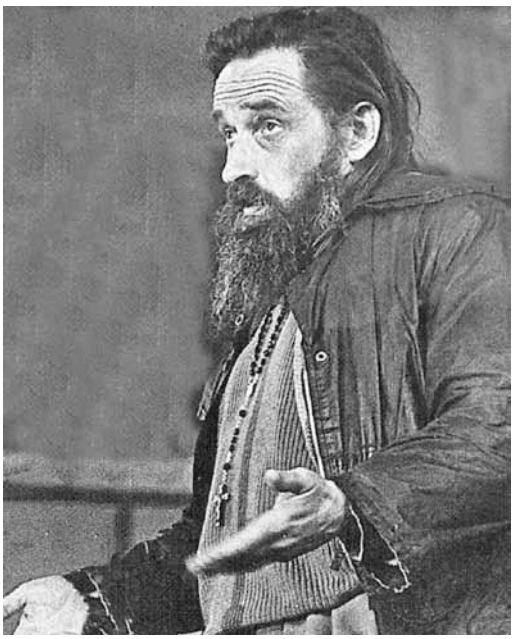
I recognised some of my own fears and dilemmas being voiced and questioned. I smile now as I remember creeping over to the cottage and telling him that I had a problem. I had gone up the River with a particular concern to iron out. My dilemma at that stage was the whole question

of poverty. Here I was preparing to take a vow of poverty, and I felt surrounded by such wealth and riches. I shared this with Jim and he, of course, talked. He described poverty as a *spirit of non-possession*, and said that "when it is lived, it brings peace and freedom".

Empty Bellies

Poverty, man, is a word that skins the lips
The prior of Taizé said.
But when the gut is empty
And the house is crowded with forty visitors,
Then Te Whaea throws her coat over the lot of us
And nobody goes hungry.

As a young novice I was beginning to learn something of Suzanne Aubert, although I have to say that because of my reading and because of the material available, I knew far more about James K Baxter for a long time than I knew about Suzanne Aubert.



Baxter has a lovely vision of Suzanne. He is in his cottage...

With Mother Aubert on the wall,
Who has forgotten her own funeral
And is quite relaxed about it all
Well lighted by the sisters seven
Playing scrabble in the Maori heaven
With her potato eating Cure...
As merry as a hippie girl...
She says to me: Take heart, my child,
his arms are strong,
his thoughts are mild,
the faults that make your forehead grim,
are just a piece of earth to him;
Be joyful in the holy fire,
for you will have your heart's desire
and come into this fair green land
where he and we go hand in hand
simply by being who you are
and following the Maori Star!"

(Letter to Eugene O'Sullivan)

We were always told that Suzanne Aubert's ministry was all about responding to the needs of the time. I would hear stories of the incredible things the Sisters were involved in, and the way they did respond to needs as they arose, and how the needs changed over the years.

This presented another difficulty for me, and that was, at the time, drug use. I'd heard that several drug users had been guests at our Soup Kitchen in Central Wellington. So, another evening I crept over to the cottage and I said to James Baxter that I had this terrible fear of meeting a drug addict. He could have laughed at me. However, he said, "Why don't you come over to my place tomorrow at some stage... pretend there is a telephone call for me because I know there are two people coming to visit me who are drug addicts." So I duly went over the next day, and said "Mr Baxter, there's a phone call for you" and he disappeared and left me to it.

I recall at the time reading a little snippet in a women's magazine which quoted Jim as saying:

"When I think of my country, I think of the cloud of pain that presses down on the spirits of her people. She has not yet come to understand herself. Perhaps some of the young in their heavy tribulations, may be able to become her eyes. When the people have learnt to share their possessions freely, they may then be able to say from their hearts the Maori blessing – k*ia tau te Rangimarie* – may peace be strong among us".

That particular day I listened to the stories of these young people. I listened to their fears and their concerns. They didn't lack possessions, but they did lack a sense of meaning in their lives. They were confused by the paradoxes and contradictions that they witnessed daily in the adult life that surrounded them. This was a new awakening for me – just the simple listening.

In a poem to Peter Olds, Baxter said:

The revolution doesn't need guns;
It happens whenever a man arrested
for being out of work and
booted into the meat wagon
begins to laugh, instead of squaring his fists;

It happens whenever a screw at Paremoremo
walks out of his job instead of
staying and watching
twenty men bumming a boy.

It happens when the owner of a restaurant
sits down with a moneyless customer
to pass the time of day.

It happened for me lately at Taumarunui,
when I stood on the grass of the Marae
beside one Kuia and said to her
"When I am beside you, I know that the
earth below our feet is our mother."
It gives me a sense of peace.

The revolution happens
when the eyes begin to open at last.

(cont'd p.26)

(cont'd from previous page)

Sisters of Compassion and local friends at Jerusalem in the early '70s

That was the gift of that particular encounter for me. It was far more than just meeting a couple of people who happened to be on drugs – who happened to be looking for a way to obliviate the pain that surrounded them.

In a poem written to Pat Lawler, Jim would say:

> *And my friend Pat has written me a letter*
> *worrying about the way I live*
> *– bearded, barefooted, jobless, lost and floating.*
> *An ostentatious servant, Lord.*
> *But where will the hippies see you*
> *except in a man with a beard,*
> *and where will the junkies know you*
> *except in an old dry drunk.*
> *Let us laugh, Lord, and be drunk together*
> *on the invisible wine of your endless love.*

It's interesting that Jim should talk about laughter, I don't remember much laughter surrounding James K Baxter. And if he did laugh, there was something uneasy about it. A slightly sad laugh, it was more than normally conscious of the tragedy within every humorous situation. He would write to Colin Durning: "If you are consulted, one day, Colin, about my epitaph, I'd suggest these words: 'He was too much troubled by his own absurdity'.."(Jerusalem Sonnets).

It was true – he was too filled with the tears at the heart of all reality. It's been said that his best satirical writing has an edge of anger – anger on behalf of those who are being wronged. His light-heartedness had always a hint of having been done somewhat self-consciously, perhaps even as a penance. As he says in the 'Thoughts of the Holy Spirit': "By now the penance the Holy Spirit imposes on me is to laugh as often as I can."

Perhaps one thing Baxter's poetry – particularly the poetry of latter years – has taught me most is this: the most life-giving truth, the truth that makes all the challenges and perversities of everyday life not just more than bearable, the truth that gives all of them meaning is the hunger and the longing that is within each of us. This is the central learning of the journey of the spirit. Baxter taught me that hunger, the void he referred to so often, is a good thing. It is *that* void that is behind the loneliness in all our lives at times. It is Saint Augustine's restlessness for the beauty ever ancient and ever new.

Baxter would be found with the poor and with the outcasts, his poems in their defence, a whip to scourge the complacent. He also had to scourge himself, and he found that the gift of self to others reveals our own flawed love. Like all prophets Baxter was a sign of contradiction, and many people regarded much of what he said with incomprehension, even with aversion.

But a prophet, the mouthpiece of God, proclaims the values we have lost or forgotten, and God's message is often pungent.

> *"But loss is a precious stone to me,*
> *a nectar distilled in time,*
> *preaching the truth*
> *of winter to the fallen heart*
> *that does not cease to fall".*

The cold truth of winter is the difficult wisdom of detachment which Jim practised so well:

> *"Yet hard for human blood*
> *Is the habit of relinquishment.*
> *Abandonment of Isaac to the knife,*
> *That tortured Abraham."*

Baxter considered himself to have found a 'precious stone'. As with so many things this complex man took it seriously, and trying to cope with this treasure had tough consequences for him.

In 1993 there was a TV documentary about the Whanganui River. Sam Hunt was the commentator, and I remember so clearly the bit where Sam Hunt arrives at Jerusalem. It was in pouring rain. Sam is leaning against the old shelter shed at the foot of the drive that goes up to the Convent and Church.

He says: "Baxter wrote to me and said 'Sam, come to Jerusalem'. And I wrote back to Baxter and said 'Hemi, we've all got to find our own Jerusalem'. ■

Looking back in anger – forward in hope

Keeping our Heads above Water
Reflections on the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women
Edited by Ree Bodde
Women's Resource Centre and Anglican Council for Christian Nurture
Price: $29.95 plus $1 p&p from WRC Private Bag 11903, Ellerslie
Review: Margaret Bedggood

In 1988 Christian women in Churches entered hopefully on a decade of change, the "Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women". To the 1985 World Conference on Women the World Council of Churches (WCC) had sent this message: *"Every human being is created in God's image and likeness and cannot be deprived of this divine dignity by sexism, racism and class; neither can the Christian gospel be used to sanctify or perpetuate existing inequalities and injustices against any human being."*

The message also admitted that:
"The Churches have often failed to live up to this affirmation of faith and have legitimised and perpetuated women's inferior status in church and society. By doing so, they have not given leadership and prophetic witness to the world and have not acted in solidarity with women in their struggle for equality."

In the Decade the Churches (not just the women in them) agreed to do two things: to embody the theological basis of their faith – the essential worth of all human beings – in their own structures and actions and to model, affirm and progress the position of women in the wider society.

This book of essays from 20 women is assembled to mark the end of that Decade, but certainly not to celebrate it. For the voices of these diverse women, young and old, from a variety of theological, social, ethnic, sexual and religious backgrounds, all speak powerfully and painfully of struggle unrewarded, of a casual crushing of the spirit and in one telling phrase of 'the remains of dreams'.

Far from getting to its prophetic task of modelling for the world, the institutional Church, the Body of Christ, is revealed as unable to grapple with the necessary preliminary setting of its own house in order, as this book makes abundantly clear. Indeed the overwhelming impression is of the loss of strength and opportunity. The reader is left with the conviction that, as one of the contributors writes, 'the Church needs me more than I need them'. But what is astonishing about this book is that taken all together it does not leave the reader comfortless. For almost all the women, hope remains a constant theme; rarely within the institutional churches, but, for most, on the margins, or outside the walls altogether. "It seems," says one writer "that the Church is now looking for solutions in the past, not the future." The overwhelming impression of this book is surprisingly of hope for the future and in the tenacity for God. As the Churches look in and backwards, as they move into survival mode, these women look outwards and forward, to new possibilities for the Church. In the end I would have preferred a different title – *Walking on Water,* perhaps. The recent Hikoi of Hope, another encounter with hope on the margins, served also to turn a spotlight back on the Church. This book does the same. We who remain with it would do well to heed them. ■

Contributors:
Susan Adams, Theresa Angert-Quilter
Enid Bennett, Carolyn Brewer
Susana Carryer, Wendy Conwell
Janet Crawford, Judith Dale
Jenny Dawson, Rosemary Duncan
Erice Fairbrother, Ann Gilroy
Beverley Holt, Penny Jamieson
Susan Jones, Judith McKinlay
Miriel Bissett Kyle, Mitzi Nairn
Rosemary Neave, Suiva'aia Te'o

Meeting a 'treasure'

You Visited Me
Fr James Lyons
Cost: $12.50 plus post
Review: Pauline Maloney, PBVM

My first response when I was introduced to this was was "what a beautifully presented publication". The cover photo uplifted me and brought to mind the line of Psalm 84. As I read through the contents I was inspired by the prayers, readings, reflections, quotations from Church documents, the liturgy etc.

Our sick are the 'treasures' of our parish communities. It is a privilege to bring to them the Bread of Life – Jesus' great gift to us. Any helps to enhance our ministry in this area are very welcome. The photographs add a powerful dimension and add to the richness of the publication. Father Lyons has done as a favour. He has compiled a special treat for use in our parishes. A New Zealand production: and a welcome one. My one reservation is that it lacks a Maori perspective. I would appreciate Maori prayers, reflections and Maori art.

All in all, I heartily recommend *You Visited Me* as a resource for parish libraries, Eucharistic ministers and for those who are at home and unable to participate in community worship. ■

Available from Catholic bookstores or Ss Peter & Paul Parish, P O Box 30079, Lower Hutt

An organic approach to the NZ Economy

Taking New Zealand Seriously : The Economics of Decency
by Tim Hazeldine
Harper Collins
Price: $24.95 (218 pages plus notes)
Review: Jim Elliston

"The fact that ideas have an emotional matrix is of the utmost importance because it is the key to the understanding of the spirit of a culture.... Thus, for instance, the idea of work and success as the main aims of life were able to become powerful and appealing to modern (western) man on the basis of his aloneness and doubt; but propaganda for the idea of ceaseless effort and striving for success addressed to the Pueblo Indians or to Mexican peasants would fall completely flat."
Erich Fromm Fear of Freedom 1942

A New Zealander who has had wide academic experience overseas, Tim Hazeldine, Economics Professor at Auckland, espouses the unfashionable notion that our economy can only be successful **for us** if it is based on our own culture.

His is not the simplistic, populist approach of many politicians, using slogans to exploit fears and prejudices. It is that of a professional who writes in a simple, clear style. He explains economic concepts with examples drawn from everyday life in the manner of an accomplished teacher who knows how to respect his readers' intelligence. He neither indulges in cultural romanticism nor advocates a subsistence economy.

The first section, devoted to examining current myths, exposes the emptiness of a number of 'truths' peddled by economists and politicians of both left and right, including interesting insights into the role of GNP and tariffs, and the 'workable' competitive market.

The second, on morals, develops a philosophy linking social and personal responsibility with economic well-being, in contrast to the currently fashionable emphasis on economic aims as the pre-condition for social well-being. He is equally trenchant in his criticism of Muldoon's interventionism and the current 'hands-off' dogma, for both undermine the basis of true wealth, which is that complex network of personal interrelationships that go to preserve fundamental human values.

In the final section, *Means*, he outlines a framework for an essentially bottom-up approach to economic policy in which "just about everyone contributes, as against the top-down, know-it-all *dirigisme* of Muldoon, Douglas, Richardson and Treasury" that has done so much to destroy that basis.

He suggests for consideration a number of policies – but not a blueprint – including ways of enabling us to retain our independence in spite of increasing globalisation. And he believes 'the market' has a vital role to play.

He draws from physics, medicine and sociology to illustrate the point that "the economy is a living system in which the health of each organ depends on the health of everything else". He gives examples of how an economic system brings changes in the moral and cultural values of the people subjected to it, stressing the value of many small changes which are mutually reinforcing and together add up to something worthwhile.

Three of the questions I asked myself are: to what extent is there internal consistency in the argumentation, how compatible are the underlying principles with those of St Thomas Aquinas' educational philosophy (eg Paulo Freire's are very compatible) and with those of current Catholic social teaching. This work scores highly on all three counts. The individual policies suggested have to be judged by their results, but they do seem worthy of serious consideration.

Do we really take New Zealand seriously? Professor Hazeldine certainly does. ■

Music in the Air

Song and Spirituality Winter 1998 – Issue 6
Editor John Thornley
Song Poetry, Palmerston North
Price $12. Subscription $24 (twice a year)
Review: Ray Stedman

This is a well presented magazine, which adds a worthwhile dimension to the discussion of music and spirituality. It asks one to explore, to share. It bids one *Welcome!*

This writer, ever curious however, likes to know with a new magazine *who? Whence? Why?* and *How much?* These details were difficult to come by. Isn't this an age of mission statements? Just what is this magazine about? Who is its intended audience? In one sense we got off to a bad start, this magazine and I.

The magazine views spirituality in its biggest sense and is not constrained by our individual spiritualities. It strives to provide a platform for sharing, where all those who have reached out and touched the face of God can find a place to share that precious moment. For some this will be in the music of Bach; for others in the treasures of a worthwhile book or one of those special moments when the land moves us to contemplate the wonder and the wonders of our God.

The contributors all had something worth saying. It is not a specialist magazine – a handbook for liturgists or ministers of music. It is, nevertheless, a worthwhile endeavour which many will find uplifting and helpful in their faith journey. Recommended. ■

More curry needed in this recipe book of Kiwi spirituality

Long, White and Cloudy – In Search of a Kiwi Spirituality
by John Bluck
Hazard Press, Christchurch 1998
Price: $24.95
Review: Jim Consedine

I have found reviewing this book a somewhat frustrating experience. It is not so much the quality of the writing or the production. Indeed, as one would expect from John Bluck and Hazard Press, both are excellent. It's more related to my expectations of what John Bluck might write that would be useful both for his own Church and the wider community. These are not met and I had to keep refocusing on the limited goals he did set.

He writes about Kiwi spirituality and about finding the divine on city streets, in the chaos of modern culture, through our sporting dimension, the Anzac spirit, in the quietness of the bush, in urban life, amid modern technology. He finds the divine presence in every nook and cranny. In doing so, he specifically addresses an audience outside the Churches, seeking to help people find the divine in the ordinary.

This is no easy task and I think he makes a fair fist of it. His feel for the city is panoramic. Not for him the limits of stuffy cloistered churchiness that is more exclusive than inclusive. He feels, he smells, he grasps city life. His origins in the country give him a good feel for that as well. Indeed he has a good grasp of the whole kiwi experience.

But I am left with questions about what could have been said given he is such an imaginative and creative priest. I think he has a much better book in him somewhere. It is true a type of spirituality can be experienced in many ways and the divine is present everywhere. During the nineties, California's *New Age* movement has made an industry from that insight alone. But given the state of New Zealand today, surely a Christian leader with the broadcasting and writing skills of John Bluck should have been able to bring something of a prophetic message from his specific tradition to appeal to a non-church audience? The Anglican-led *Hikoi* of Hope did it by showing that God speaks to a nation when Christians join in a struggle for justice with and on behalf of the poor.

If the wealthy, comfortable, self-centred person can experience the divine anywhere, why try and live the gospel at all? Theoretically, someone could go home each evening after a hard day at the office spent exploiting and oppressing people, lie back under the stars in their spa pool and believe they were at one with God. I believe many do. Is this a genuine spirituality? I think not. It seems more like having fuzzy feelings. Do the radical hard sayings of Jesus not speak to an authentic spirituality for Kiwis today? What about the sharp edge of *metanoia* called for by Jesus and the prophets? I think his failure to think through this quandary is the major shortcoming of this book.

John Bluck chooses not to grapple with what a really alive and committed Christian Church might offer by way of spirituality to Kiwi culture, seduced as it is by an ungodly ideology of crass materialism and self-promotion. He leaves us with a happy book, a nice book. But there is something missing. I guess I come from the tradition that says the Hikoi form of Anglican spirituality has much more to offer. ■

Best reads for '98...

Kathleen Doherty offers her choice of three from this year's vintage

Having been deeply moved by *Birdsong*, Sebastian Faulks' superb novel of World War 1, I seized on his new work, *Charlotte Gray*, with a mixture of excitement and apprehension: having a hard act to follow so often results in a diluted offering. I had no reason for disappointment. *Charlotte Gray* (Hutchinson, London, 1998) is a moving story of a woman in occupied France in the second World War, involved in both a personal quest and in the upheaval of a social order torn apart by war.

In the hands of a lesser writer this could have so easily been a stock romantic novel: the eponymous heroine is recruited by British intelligence men while on a train to London to take up a position as a doctor's receptionist. She falls in love with a young airman who is subsequently lost over France, travels to France to search for him at the same time as becoming involved with the Resistance, and reaches a resolution, of sorts. But Sebastian Faulks is no ordinary writer. With powerful evocative imagery he makes one part of a world that is changing beyond belief, weaving Charlotte's story with the disintegration of the town where she is based as the Nazi occupation takes hold. The account of life and resistance against the complicity of the Vichy regime is compelling, but one is left with a feeling of sadness at the fleeting nature of human life, and the loss of personal histories in the maelstrom of war.

Is the Holocaust ever going to be exhausted as an inspiration for fiction? There has been a large body of work from Jewish writers struggling with the annihilation of their people and the guilt of those who survived, but a lesser amount has come from German writers who have arguably as great a problem to deal with, although a different one.

Tackling the issue head-on is *The Reader* by Berhard Schlink, translated by Carol Brown Janeway (Phoenix, London, 1997). It is an intensely personal narration of an inappropriate love affair (he is 15, she is 36), a desertion, and a realisation in a war crimes court that the beloved was capable of horrendous acts against the Jews.

Yet for all its betrayal and disillusion, this is a story full of tenderness and hope. After years of separation the two – he by now on the legal faculty of a university, she in prison – resume contact in their own personally unique way. During their affair he had always read the classics to her, not knowing that she was illiterate. Now he reads again, on tape, and in her prison she teaches herself to read, using the tapes in conjunction with the books. The end is devastating and tragic, giving scope for forgiveness and atonement in a way that is quite memorable. This is a haunting book, tightly written with not a superfluous word. The erotic relationship is delicately and powerfully handled, the tenderness and compassion which remained in spite of all is strangely credible.

Michael, the narrator, carries Hanna with him in spite of the gulf of experience between them: 'The geological layers of our lives rest so tightly one on top of the other that we always come up against earlier events in later ones, not as matter that has been fully formed and pushed aside, but absolutely present and alive'. It is only in accepting and understanding the past, in facing and forgiving wrongs, that one can find healing.

Jane Mander is probably New Zealand's least appreciated writer. Her name rarely comes up when the greats of New Zealand literature are being discussed, yet her 1920 novel *The Story of a New Zealand River* set in the north late last century, is a gem, towering above other works of the time and most since, dealing with issues which are relevant now and were daring at the time of writing. Now she has been given worthy recognition with Rae McGregor's *The Story of a New Zealand Writer* (Otago University Press), the first full-length biography of a writer who deserves much wider recognition.

Jane Mander, in spite of the detail revealed in this work, remains an elusive figure. She lived for long spells between 1912 and 1932 in London and New York, never married, and appears to have had an intense life inside her head which was revealed to no-one. She died in Whangarei in 1949, her greatest work out of print, as it has been for most of the time since it was first published.

Because it had to be done, Rae McGregor has dealt, in a very careful fashion, with the debate on the similarities between *The Piano,* Jane Campion's award-winning film, and *The Story of a New Zealand River.* There is no denying that there are striking similarities, enough to make a film of the Jane Mander work now impossible. It is an intriguing chapter in a biography which fills a big gap in our literary history. And if this biography results in reader demand initiating a reprint of the subject's greatest novel, it will have served its purpose. ■

Austrian Catholics seek change

Three hundred people invited by the Austrian bishops gathered together in October for a "Delegates Summit", to discuss the crisis in the Austrian Church.
At the opening the Bishops' President, Bishop Johann Weber, encouraged the delegates to be frank and promised their views would be taken seriously and there would be no "appeasement games" on the bishops' part.
After a weekend of discussion, three quarters of those present came out in favour of ordaining mature married men, 70 percent in favour of women deacons, 87 percent in favour of allowing remarried divorcees to receive Communion under certain circumstances; 75 percent for respecting conscience decisions in regard to the practice of birth control, and 84 percent in favour of speeding up the laicisation process for priests who left to get married.
All the majority motions were passed on to Vatican officials by the bishops during their *ad limina* visit in November.
On November 20 the Pope addressed the Austrian bishops and reminded them that the process of dialogue required "a minimum agreement on basics" and urged the bishops to help the faithful in Austria to develop an "ecclesial soul". The Church, he said, is not merely a human community, but a transcendent mystery, "a sort of icon of the Holy Trinity".
Afterwards Bishop Weber stated that he considered the Pope's remarks to be positive in tone; the only clear negative was when he reiterated the ban on ordaining women to the priesthood.

Holy Father and the Wrinklies

At a Vatican conference on Ageing, Pope John Paul has spoken out in favour of the contribution older people have to offer society.
He criticised the overemphasis which modern culture places on productivity and physical efficiency. Old people should not be regarded merely as people requiring attention, he said. "Each could, and should, be a dispenser of wisdom and a witness to hope and charity."

Oceania Synod opens

As *Tui Motu* goes to press the Oceania Synod has opened in Rome. Fr Kevin Toomey OP writes that the address of loyalty by the NZ Conference Chairman, Bishop Peter Cullinane, was "one of the straightest and hardest hitting speeches I have heard". They are not used to such direct speaking, he added.
Bishop Cullinane was critical of Curial norms made without consultation of the bishops. He pointed out the inconsistency of invoking penalties on those who find difficulty with teachings which the Church itself does not teach definitively, especially when the Holy Father himself had said that the faith cannot be imposed on anyone. Cardinal Williams was one of five speakers who asked for some redress for those who are divorced but wish to receive the Eucharist. "Discipline must follow charity", he said.

IMF under fire

While many people, especially those involved in humanitarian programmes, have long criticised the International Monetary Fund (IMF) whose policies simply seem to intensify poverty in the poorer nations, the Fund has now come under fire from influential economists in the United States and newspapers such as the *Financial Times.*
IMF's failure to deal with the economic crisis in Asia has been strongly criticised. The data contained in its own review show that many nations which followed the IMF's advice have experienced profound economic crises, declining growth, larger overseas debt and stagnation which perpetuates systematic poverty. The policies have eroded existing social services and aggravated the poverty and suffering of hundreds of millions of people. ■

Pinochet's comeuppence

General Augusto Pinochet was arrested in London on October 16 and, as I write this article, he remains there pending a Law Lords' decision on whether he is immune from charges of genocide, terrorism and torture. Two Spanish judges seek his extradition for crimes against humanity. How should Pinochet be dealt with? How is morality invoked at a time of indecision? What and whose politics are applicable in the presence of an evil man? Political expediency has no regard for morality – Macchiavelli would have confirmed this. The separation between politics and morality has brought about this impasse.

After World War II three categories of war crime were recognised by the international community, and these included crimes against humanity such as murder, rape and torture of the civilian population. They are offences under the criminal law of every civilised country. Pinochet is known to have been responsible for such crimes. Over 3,000 Chileans are dead as a result of his tyranny. Many who opposed his regime are still alive, but carry the mental and physical scars of torture and the loss of loved ones. If this global village now recognises crimes against humanity, should there not be an acceptance of international justice to punish such crimes? Should not such tyrants be condemned openly at the time of the atrocities and be threatened with eventual retribution?

The day after Salvador Allende's departure, Pinochet started his dictatorship with the words "political parties are in recess until further notice". Allende's dead body – by suicide or murder – symbolised the death of a revolutionary model for social change. He was a Marxist seeking to change the political system from capitalism to socialism. Nixon and Kissinger were appalled by Allende's programme and sought to destabilise his government from its very beginning. Pinochet, it can be argued, was thus aided and abetted by the United States. With the exclusion of civil liberties Pinochet set about the modernisation of Chile. He freed market forces, privatised vast segments of the economy, and withdrew the state from overseeing economic and social change.

Political repression was the price the Chileans paid. Allende's constitutionally elected government was replaced in a *putsch* by a dictatorship. Chileans lived under Pinochet's army and the dreaded secret police, the DINA. They had no choice: might had become right. Herein were 17 years of crimes against humanity which are well documented. In 1990 Pinochet stepped down as army chief and became a senator for life. This is enshrined in the Chilean constitution, as the price of peace and the bloodless transition to democracy.

The legal problems began to surface as soon as Pinochet arrived in London. What right, therefore, have the Law Lords to extradite him? Diplomatic immunity, safe haven and the right of sanctuary must be considered. A citizen of any country who possesses a legal passport has the right to travel under that country's protection, and should not be harassed at another border for crimes perceived by other countries to have been committed in his own country. So says international law. Surely the Chilean government has resolved the matter.

The extradition order comes from Spain, a country not known historically for championing human rights in South America. Now France, Sweden and Switzerland are considering moves against Pinochet. Aggrieved parties seek retribution and justice, echoing Edmund Burke's words on the subject: "It is not what a lawyer tells me I *may* do; but what humanity, reason and justice tell me I *ought* to do". Did these countries – including New Zealand – protest at the time; or were they all more interested in trading with Chile, no matter who ruled the country?

The Pinochet affair must be viewed as a test of international law for crimes against humanity. The world is a much smaller planet now in terms of communication and cooperation, which would make the creation of such a humanitarian process possible. Ideally, past and present tyrants like Pol Pot of Cambodia, Ceaususcu of Romania, Slobodan Milosovic of Jugoslavia, would be warned and called to account. Is it an impossible dream? Who sells arms to these people? Which country has ever stopped trading with these tyrants? Without an independent mind and a conscience to uphold moral law against the crimes of a tyrant, the hope is remote. I fear the politics of realism will be applied here, and Pinochet will escape his earthly day of judgment. What may be achieved is a warning to others that the day is over when despots can avail themselves of numbered bank accounts in Switzerland, chateaux on the Riviera and clinics in London. And that is progress. ■

John Honoré

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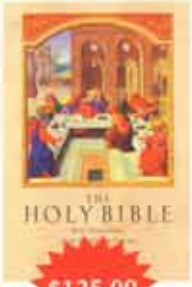

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