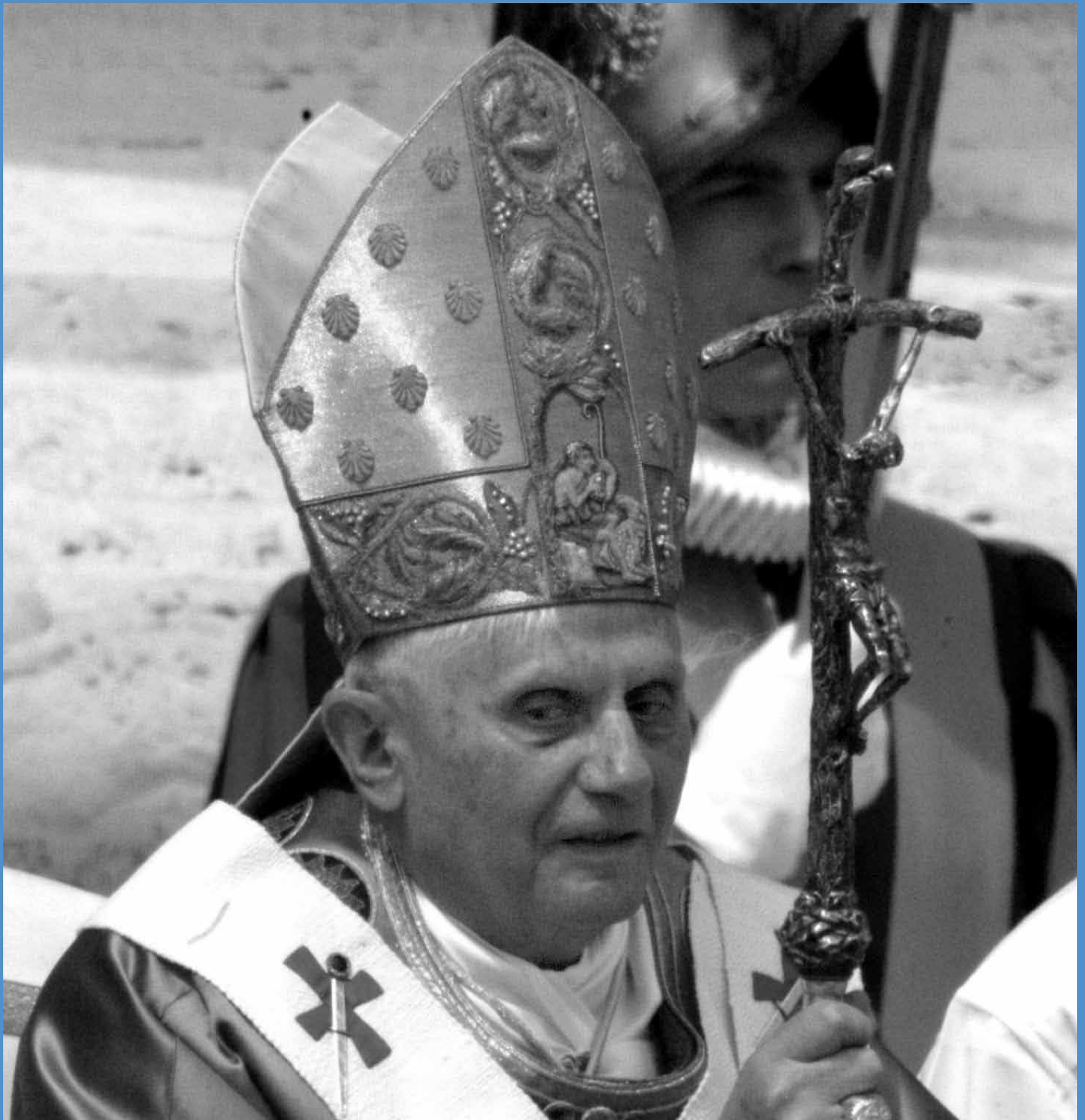


# Tui Motu

InterIslands

Independent Catholic Magazine

May 2008 \$5



*... what happened on the road*

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## . . . what happened on the road?

So what happened to them on the road? They two men were transformed – that's what happened. In the first scene they are running away from Jerusalem, demoralised and disillusioned. In the final scene they are hastening back, faith-filled.

When Professor Elaine Wainwright was giving workshops on the Gospels in March, (*see p 26*) she said that sometimes you need to stand back from a Scripture passage and place it in a larger context to glean its full import. The Emmaus story is a case in point.

First, there are *two* disciples. Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs to preach. But at first these two are not on mission: they're fugitives, preoccupied with their own misery. Then they have this experience on the road and at table. They are no longer alone. They are changed. They turn round and retrace their steps, now the bearers of good news.

Our *May* theme, covered in articles by Mark Richards of Palmerston North (*pp 6-8*) and Fr Alan Roberts (*pp 9-10*), deals with the church's pastoral strategy. Mark proposes that where we must search first is in the Gospels themselves. Jesus forms a community of disciples and tells them to go out and spread the good news. And they are sent out two by two.

From this we can deduce that the prime purpose of the Jesus community is not conservative and self-absorbed. Its focus is mission, not maintenance.

Why does he send the disciples out in pairs? He is showing them what is meant by 'servant leadership'. Alan Roberts comments by drawing on his own broad pastoral experience, building on the theological foundations of the first article.

But why *did* Jesus send out his disciples in pairs? Primarily for the basic spiritual reason that "where two are gathered in my name I am there." But also for the eminently human reason that two people working together reinforce, support, complement and, where necessary, correct each other. It is the basis of team ministry.

It is also the focus of community. Jesus formed a community; and his church is a community based on Eucharist. But it is a community whose destiny is to reach out and grow – to spread the Gospel and to serve the world where it finds itself. Community and service are its essence. A parish which is simply a cluster of devout people is failing in its basic purpose, which is to impact on the world where it is sited.

Our church today is afflicted with many challenges. We are assailed by rampant secularism; we suffer diminishing congregations and falling vocations. We are like the two men on the road to Emmaus. We can become negative and pessimistic. But the same footsteps are dogging us too. The message is still to heed God's word, to listen to each other, to serve one another – then go out with joy and face the world precisely as it is.

M.H.



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*Tui Motu-InterIslands* is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed. The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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# Lest we forget

A question which often springs to mind on Anzac Day is why the parades are attended by so many young people – not just families with children, but students and young adults, male and female. It is impressive and heartening. They are certainly not glorying in war or seeking to make a gesture of defiance against some distant foe.

Just the opposite. Young Kiwis and Aussies who go to Gallipoli each year in April are always struck by the welcome given them by the Turkish people. It is as if the Turks are aware that those invaders from far distant lands had become unwittingly embroiled in a conflict which had nothing to do with the well-being of the Turkish people, nor of the young Australian and New Zealanders who shed their blood. They were equally caught up in a vortex of collective insanity, totally beyond their control.

We asked some young friends who, in recent years had visited the sites and cemeteries of 1914-18, why they went. “When you are so far from home on the other

side of the world,” said one, “you can relate easily to those young Kiwis the same age as yourself, who were probably more motivated by a sense of adventure and desire to see the wide world than anything patriotic. When you are feeling a bit ‘foreign’, these graves and places connect you with home and give you a sense of your place in the world”.

Her brother, based in London, has made six annual visits to Le Quesnoy in northern France, liberated by New Zealand troops. The town was fortified by Vauban in the 1700s because it guards the road to Paris, and it was those fortifications which were scaled by the Kiwi soldiers in 1918. Many of their graves lie nearby. The Mayor and citizens always give the young New Zealanders a great welcome on Anzac Day, even 90 years later. It has become like a shrine to be visited.

He emphasised how humble this experience always made him feel, but also how much he was moved visiting the cemeteries to read names of families from Southland and Otago – names he had seen on farm gates when he was a child. For these young New Zealanders it is a way of remembering the dead, but it is also a fine way of seeking their identity, situating their place in history, and honouring their forebears.

M.H.

## ...to the Anzac Mothers

Those heroes that shed their blood  
And lost their lives. . .  
You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.  
Therefore rest in peace.

There is no difference between the Johnnies  
And the Mehments to us where they lie side by side  
Here in this country of ours. . .

You the mothers  
Who sent their sons from faraway countries,  
Wipe away your tears.  
Your sons are now living in our bosom  
And are in peace.

Having lost their lives on this land they have  
Become our sons as well.

*Mustafa Kemal Ataturk*

These words were written in 1934 by the ‘Founder’ of modern Turkey, as a response to an enquiry by some Melbourne mothers about the graves of their sons at Gallipoli. This humane and conciliatory statement typifies the welcome extended by Turkish people to Aussie and New Zealand visitors. The poem is inscribed on a rock at Anzac Cove

## Walk up Queenstown Hill

The lush green trees surround me,  
Like army soldiers,  
Proud and tall.  
Little red toadstools are tucked away,  
Under pine needles,  
Concealing little fairies hiding in them.



Be careful,  
The old, wrinkled trees,  
Might sneakily reach out their branches,  
And scratch you,  
Or trip you with their roots.

At the summit of Queenstown Hill,  
The scenery is so beautiful  
The lake is dark blue,  
And the sky is crystal clear.

But be careful not to tread on  
any ancient grey rocks,  
They are sleeping,  
And don't like to be disturbed.

*Taren McLeod (aged 12)*



## Even Homers nod

It goes against the grain to take issue with two favourite columnists, John Honore and Humphrey O'Leary in the *March '08 Tui Motu*.

In appealing for more doctors and health services, JH declared that "the most powerful determinant of health is wealth". Were one to infer that being comparatively wealthy would ensure access to better housing, better clothing and especially a sufficient and well balanced diet, the point would be well made. But access to medical services is a periodic and minor contributor to health in comparison.

Then H O'L calls for sympathy with Pope Benedict in a dilemma of his own making. Liturgical reform had eradicated reference to the "perfidious Jews" from the Good Friday liturgy to the satisfaction of all. But in his desire to encourage the followers of Archbishop Lefebvre the Pope is permitting the use of the older liturgy as an option, thus putting us offside again with the Jewish community.

To put it mildly, this exercise by the Pope is less than adroit; more circumspection and better advice could have avoided it. Sympathy for that? A little, but not much!

*Ben Hartigan, Orewa*

## God – male or female?

Joyce Rupp (*TM April*) made mention of Quan Yin, whom she describes as an Asian Goddess of Compassion. I was privileged, a short while ago, to visit a Buddhist monastery near Taipei and was enthusiastically led on a tour by a Buddhist Master. She explained that Quan Yin is perceived as merciful, full of grace, tender, compassionate, loving, protecting, caring, healing, and wise and as someone who quietly comes to the aid of her children everywhere. She supports the distressed and hungry, rescues the unfortunate from peril, and gives comfort and aid wherever it is needed.

As my eyes widened in recognition, the Master said to me: "Yes, the similarities between Quan Yin in our tradition and the Blessed Virgin Mary

### letters to the editor

We welcome comment, discussion, argument, debate. But please keep letters under 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge, while not altering meaning. Response articles (up to a page) are also welcome, but need to be by negotiation

in your tradition have often been remarked upon."

The Master then leant forward and, with a grin, told me that before Quan Yin came to East Asia from India, she was a man. "It would have been impossible", she continued, "for people in this part of the world to conceive of qualities of gentleness and compassion as residing in a man!" I learned that Bodhisattvas are able to assume any form male, female, animate or inanimate in order to communicate themselves.

To my knowledge, despite the teaching of *Genesis* that the image of God is reflected by both man and woman – and Paul's teaching that the distinction between male and female was rendered meaningless by our unity in Christ Jesus, Christianity has yet to achieve that level of enlightenment whereby it could allow its God such gender flexibility!

*Mike Noonan, Dunedin*

## Cardy's orthodoxy – 1

Glynn Cardy showed in the (*April*) issue – *I don't want to be 'saved'* – that he has a fluent pen, which one can admire but not always agree with. My concern is that some of his beliefs expressed in this article, in my opinion, are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. He of course is entitled to his beliefs as we are to ours.

*Tui Motu* in publishing this article shows a willingness to hear contrary views. The fact that these comments written by an Anglican priest appear in a Catholic magazine is evidence of a broad brush approach which is ecumenical in nature and in keeping with the church's ardent desire for unity with our separated brethren.

The editor is to be commended for his

pro-active ecumenical outreach.

*John Vincent, Dunedin*

## Cardy – 2

Glynn Cardy's piece in *April TM* really lights me up. I'd like to see it reprinted in England.

*Paul Oestreicher, Brighton UK*

## The word of the Lord

While I accept Paul Oestreicher's conclusion that God is a God of non-violence, opposed to all forms of violence and killing, I think his view of Scripture somewhat deficient.

From the earliest pages God is opposed to the shedding of blood (Cain and Abel). This is repeated in God's covenant with Noah and in the command to Moses: "thou shalt not kill". The words of *Leviticus* "love your neighbour as yourself" is a moral imperative that transcends every culture and creed, as Pope Benedict recently said at the UN.

Passages in Scripture apparently advocating violence or that God wants or uses violence, therefore, need to be read and interpreted in the light of the whole of Scripture and especially in the light of Christ, who is always non-violent. Noah's flood need not be interpreted literally as God's will to destroy humanity but as a natural disaster which God's love overcame. Passages attributing violence to God's will ought to be read in the sense meant by the ancient authors: attributing all events to God as original cause.

Perhaps we have lost the Jewish view of Sacred Scripture, enriched by the Targum, the Midrash and the rabbinic interpretations in the Talmud, and try to interpret Scripture without these essential companions. For example, one of the Targum on God drowning Pharaoh's army recounts God's love and sorrow for Pharaoh's soldiers, also his children.

With this in mind, there's no reason we cannot say: "this is the word of God", so long as Scripture is properly understood and we read it with the mind of the church.

*Chris Sullivan, Pakuranga*

# The real causes of youth crime

## *Political responses to youth issues raised in the March Tui Motu*

**G**reen Party Co-leader, Russell Norman, offered the following response to the John Key's statement earlier in the year regarding serious youth offending:

We welcome the spotlight being placed on these important issues of education and youth justice, but we were looking for initiatives that would make it easier for New Zealand parents and families to provide the stability that young people and children need.

- We were hoping that *National* might decide to support flexible working hours for parents of dependent children, a Green members' bill that National opposed in Parliament. But no.

- We were hoping that *National* might come out in support of an expanded program of state housing so that parents don't have to keep moving from house to house as their rents rise. Nothing disrupts children's education and community connections more than moving house all the time. But no.

- We were hoping that *National* would support increasing the minimum wage, to take the pressure off working families. But no.

- We were hoping that *National* would support a universal student allowance and moving towards fee-free tertiary education so that all young people could get access to tertiary education regardless of which neighbourhood they grew up in. After all John Key got free education. But no.

- We were hoping that *National* would support more funding for our schools to provide lower student to teacher ratios and more support for literacy within our schools. Again, no.

- Instead, *National's* plan threatens to make public schools compete with private tertiary providers for students, and, offers young people an incentive to drop out. We got compulsory boot camps for troubled youth. Boot camps might work on reality TV but in the real world all the New Zealand and international evidence is that they don't work. Crime is an emotive issue, youth crime is even more emotive. It's easy to win support by exploiting people's fears, it is much harder to offer real and constructive solutions. The National Party has clearly chosen the easy route.

**G**reen Party Youth Affairs Spokesperson Metiria Turei also comments:

Every election year has its targets. In the past, we've seen beneficiary bashing, immigrant bashing and Maori bashing - and now youth have been added to the list of scapegoats.

John Key advocated boot camps, ankle security bracelets

and a lower age for Youth Court prosecution as part of the *National Party's* set of generally punitive reactions to the problems posed by a relatively small number of youth offenders. Mandatory, punitive measures do not work with the tiny minority who do most of the violent youth offending. The Burnham military boot camp cited by Mr Key as a model is a voluntary programme, and the military have made it very clear they have no interest in running a correctional facility. The evidence from here and overseas is that boot camps simply don't work. They make things worse.

Both *National* and *Labour* are treating symptoms, not causes. Helen Clark correctly called today's youth offenders the children of Ruth Richardson's *Mother of all Budgets* in 1991, which cut benefits. She then proceeded in her speech to ignore the problem she had just identified.

The Greens believe the real problem behind youth offending is poverty. It is the lack of affordable state housing that forces parents to shift their kids around from school to school. It is low wages that keeps both parents at work, and creates latchkey kids. ■

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# Church, community and mission

Mark Richards

**T**here was once an itinerant preacher in the country north of Jerusalem. What he taught, said and what he did was seen by those around him as 'Good News' ("gospel").

When they came to reflect on his life and why it was life-giving, and when they looked at who they were as a community after he was dead, they recognised that he had done more than

preach and teach. He had formed them as a community. They had all learned a core way of being that community by living in the way he had taught them.

This new life that he brought was given to them in two parts:

- a method to the formation he gave;
- a content to the message, told as stories of the kingdom, and as activities the community had in common.

## Jesus taught by the way he lived.

Jesus walked on his own two feet. He didn't run, he didn't ride, (other than when he was a little baby and on a certain afternoon as he entered Jerusalem). He *walked*, and as he walked he talked and discussed. Every day it seems, and on many named occasions, he stopped walking and he and his friends sat down at table; they talked and ate together. They formed a group of disciples – women and men who walked and lived with him.

As he walked, he *called people by name*. Some came to him with needs, but the disciples, the ones who were around him and walked with him, he called by name. He knew them and he invited them, to walk, to be with, to dine, to listen, to come apart with him, to be one of a group, to be identified as his followers and to serve. People responded to that call, and they walked with him.

Then at a certain stage he began to *send them out to preach* and teach and to do what he was doing. There was a goodly number of them, because he sent them out in pairs, and he sent 72 of them in this way: not alone, but with a companion (is it because it is 'not good for us to be alone'?)

There were also noted times when *he called them to a place apart*, and

to prayer. On top of a mountain, he took three of his closest friends and they saw his glory. Later, as a community apart in an upper room, they received the call to be servant, to be broken and poured out to share the fullness of life.

They went together into a garden where they prayed, or slept, and learnt that prayer is not simply joyful ecstasy; it is also the facing of reality and the pain of life. They left him alone – bar some of the women, who walked as he suffered. Then there were two walking to Emmaus; then as a community they were gathered in the room when he appeared and the Holy Spirit came upon them.

There was a method in all this. You and I are called to be disciples in the same way as the generations before us were called, and called by name. We are called to walk in a community that is characterised by telling parables, healing the blind, the lame and the deaf, sitting at a meal together; and we receive the bidding to go out and preach the Good News and serve the world in which we live.

## How was this community around Jesus structured?

There was the preacher, and around him was a group of 12 – and maybe an inner group which was Peter, James

and John – or clearly at other times, Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Then there was another wider group of disciples: 72, or 36 pairs, who were sent out to do what they had heard and to be what they had seen.

In all this we can discern a pattern which is life-giving. I can't be a follower on my own; I am chosen by Jesus, and then I choose to be one with him and those others he has called. We are one, "one body, one Lord, one baptism". This unity is a communion with all believers, a communion that demands openness and care, so that believers can truly be one.

That demands a Spirit, the Holy Spirit drawing believers together. That Spirit is given to us in Baptism, fully and freely, and the community proclaims that in it we are given the gifts (charisms) that are special to us and needed to create the whole body. We are a people of prayer, because we must, individually and communally, be aware of and inspired by (have breathing within us), the Spirit we share.

We continue in dialogue with the Spirit, and as such we are formed and vitalised. From the first days of the church the disciples went up every day for prayer as a community, and then on the first day of the week they gathered to listen to the word and to



celebrate Jesus' presence among them in the breaking of the bread.

We are a people who are aware that the gifts we have, the talents and the very gift of life, are given to us. You and I didn't create ourselves; we received life through the love and life of others. Our response and the choice we make is to be thankful. As followers we know the way in which Jesus called us by name, in which he taught us *the Way* and spoke words of truth, and that these are words we don't hear anywhere else.

It is in and through him that we have learnt the way that is fully alive. And therefore on a daily basis, individually and as a community, we come together to give thanks. We call this *Eucharist*; we live Eucharist and give thanks to God the Father, in and through Jesus and in the unity of the Holy Spirit. That is the public work of the church, to be a living sign of thanksgiving to God, a real sign of God's presence in the midst of the world.

### What is the content of the message Jesus gave us?

This *Way* Jesus asks us to live is different, as is the truth he invites us to believe. There is a fullness of content, and many before us have reflected and learned and taught that truth, which it is our turn to live and teach.

Jesus teaches us forgiveness; he teaches gentleness and humility; he teaches truth and respect of the poor and the marginalised; he teaches how to pray *Our Father*...

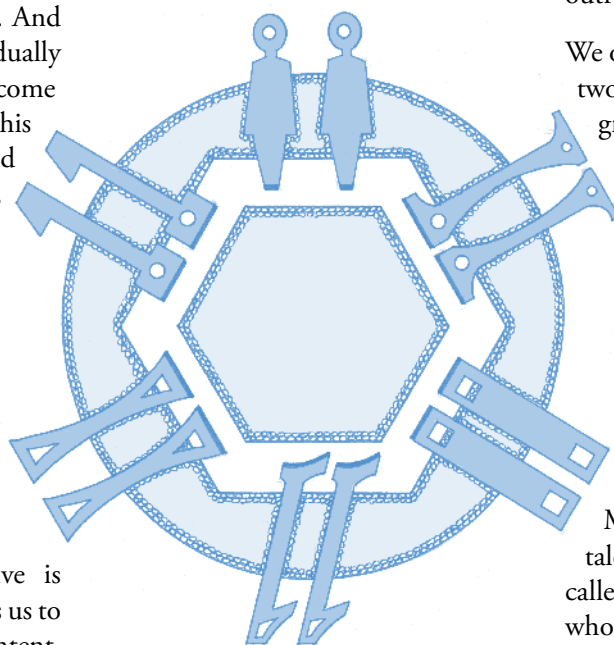
Jesus teaches – and this community has learned.

This Jesus community, this teaching, this Spirit, this church is not for itself. It has only one purpose: to go out and preach the good news to the ends of the earth. Moreover: "when you did this to one of these the least, you did it to me" – and when you didn't do it, you didn't do it to me. We are called

in our mission and in our ministry to spread the Good News in what we say and what we do.

To summarise what Jesus taught and did:

- A community formed the disciples – and it forms us;
- They received a gospel;
- They were given public works, a liturgy of prayer and thanksgiving;
- This all strengthens and forms a people who serve the poor and weak and needy and bring them Good News, fullness of life and peace;



- To ensure that there was unity he then called some to be a 'the rock', an overseer of the talents and the gifts and to preach the good news publicly;
- and then in the early church they chose others to look after the resources and the needs of the widows and needy of the community, to distribute from those who had to those who had need, within the community.

### Some consequences

I want to call these six separate offices 'communio', 'teach and preach', 'prayer and liturgy', 'service of the needy', 'leadership', and 'stewardship of the gifts'. What the church has learned over the centuries is that one cannot have one of these without the others.

All are required for Christian life and a Christian community to flourish.

I want to draw it all together into a simple model for parishes, school communities, for base communities and even for the structure of a diocese. Is it coincidental that there were/are six areas of ministry and mission; and Jesus arranged everything in pairs, so there were six pairs among the inner 12, and more than that, there were then six pairs of 12 among the 72. Here is a model for a parish or a base community (be it a school, a Marae, a religious community, a youth outreach, a JPD cell).

We organise ourselves so that there are two of us on the servant leadership group for each of these great areas of concern.

There are then at least six pairs of people who are focused on the leadership and organising of the ministry in each of the areas. And every baptised Christian has one talent in one of these areas, and it is for the service of the whole.

More than that, there is only one talent, one charisma that you are called to exercise for the good of the whole at this time. Therefore, when we are planning we need to decide what is the most important element for liturgy, or prayer, teaching or proclaiming the good news; who are the most needy we can serve; and having focused on that, we then 'send a pair out' to design, organise, ensure that this ministry happens.

In a small community it may be that they are the two who do the visitation of the sick, or are the musicians for Sunday gathering. And once we are doing all that we need to do to fulfil the basic call of a Christian community, we can liberate our resources to carry out the things we would love to do, or we can add more resources to the central tasks if we find they are overburdened. This model helps us to focus and to support a rich and vital ministry.

### The catechumenate

Here is an example. In any parish or church community that has ears to hear, there will be a call to seek out and welcome those who receive the Good News. This is called the RCIA (*Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults*). When prioritising what the call of the Gospel is and what the church asks us to do, the first thing is to go out and welcome people in – and then to “baptize them in the Name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit”. In each ministry stream this should end up the highest priority.

What we see is a pair of the teaching/preaching group and a pair of the liturgy/prayers and a pair of the service group and a pair of the community builders in strong debate as to who is going to take the lead in the development of the RCIA for the forthcoming year. And by the time we find that the cooperating communities of the Pastoral area are focusing on

RCIA and its preparation, we should be able to liberate the resources and build a warm, vital and rich outreach. We will have the best of our catechists engaged, the best focus on music and where are we called to serve, and a pair purely focused on the introduction to the community and to the celebration of new life in the church.

The Lord, when he called the disciples, asked them to “leave everything and follow me”. The message hasn’t changed. The Good News is such good news that we are impelled to serve and to give and to love unconditionally. But the difficulty many communities find is that a small group holds too many ministries in few hands. This model is predicated on the theory of ‘one person one ministry’.

Yet we are ALL gifted with one charism for the up-building of the church and one for the mission of the church. What is yours, what is your

son’s, your daughter’s, your wife’s, your husband’s? What do I know my neighbour is great at, and yet is not yet being called to bear fruit?

Finally, let’s celebrate when that talent is being gifted in the community, in the place you and I are called to serve and bring new life and the Good News to our workplace, our community and our daily life.

“Give us THIS day our daily bread... and may your Kingdom come!” ■

*Mark Richards is Manager of Pastoral Services Team in the diocese of Palmerston North and responsible for adult formation programmes*

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# The Future in Parishes

Alan Roberts

*In writing this, I have before me Mark Richards' article printed in this issue (pp.6-8). It is an article which makes sense to me and my purpose here is to comment from a practical point of view and hopefully expound on some points Mark has made. As I write, I am conscious that we in New*

*Zealand are looking at new ways of running our parishes, as we try to live up to the laity's right to be involved and as we find ourselves unable to supply a priest for every parish. Particularly affected are the laity who may be clinging to the model which leaves the priest as the focal point.*

## Community

Mark Richards begins his article by pointing out that Jesus formed his followers into a *community*. It is primarily through being community that we find the Risen Jesus to be life-giving. Cardinal Williams, when first beginning the *Launch Out* training programme for Lay Pastoral Leaders (LPL) in Wellington, made much of the fact that no parish would be closed. This brings home Richards' point that *community* is the all important thing, but thereby raises questions about supplying Eucharist, and questions about the role of a priest.

Should a priest be asked to stretch himself out and risk burning himself out? I maintain that this will almost inevitably happen, simply because he will miss the nourishment from the primary community he is called to serve? Looking back I realise, especially as a young priest, how much the communities I served gave me. I know I thrived because of the friendships, fun, challenge and the questions which came from so many in those early years. I met with small groups and I grew with these people as we struggled together to face issues in the church of the time. I was inspired by their commitment and desire to create a life-giving community.

Today, I realise that the stress I feel

is not in being asked to say an extra Mass or two but in missing out on what is happening in my home parish when I am away. As a priest I still need and enjoy community as much as the next person.

## Walking

Richards next explains the aspect of how Jesus lived his ministry. He walked. This point is made to emphasise Jesus' availability to listen, explain and be with others. Then, he sent out in twos those who followed him. In short, he wasn't rushing around being the Messiah!

What a model of priesthood this is! If Jesus came today, I wouldn't mind betting that many would label him "a lazy b!" Very quickly, it seems, Jesus let go of the idea that he was the only one who could pastor the flock. A priest, or a lay pastoral leader, has to understand this, and a parish also has to understand it. Evangelisation will never begin in our parishes unless this point is understood.

Just think: every person in our pews probably lives in close range to a Catholic who no longer practices their faith, or to someone who is searching for meaning through faith. In this light, believing that evangelisation is

the responsibility of only the priest or the lay pastoral leader is just ludicrous.

## Going out 'in pairs'

Then there is the point Richards makes of Jesus sending them out in twos. Some years ago *Team Ministry* became a popular concept – but possibly because a young priest had to endure years of being a curate! The fact that we had to dream it up as a solution to a problem says plenty about the way we were then operating in ministry!

I was fortunate to be part of a Team (another priest and myself) after eight years of ministry. For the first time in parish, we worked in twos. It was a very satisfying time in my priesthood and, dare I say it, possibly the most blessed time. But more importantly, the community recognised it and gave us enormous support. Particularly blessed was our Catechumenate, and it was the community who made it live.

Looking back over more than 30 years of ministry, when I have worked closely with others it has been refreshing, enriching and complete. When I have worked alone, it has been frustrating, tiring and lonely. When that was allowed to continue, it produced

burnout and cynicism. It is foolish to work alone. You may satisfy your ego, but you'll die in the end.

### Gifts within the community

The Australian Scripture scholar, Michael Fallon, made the point some years ago while in New Zealand that a primary work of a pastor was to help parishioners identify their ministry. How could each parishioner serve in their parish? Richards emphasises: "I can't be a follower on my own,.. that the Spirit is given to us in Baptism,.. that in the community we are given the gifts (charisms) that are special to us and *needed to create the whole body*."

Today we are more conscious of bringing out the gifts of each one and my concept of Team Ministry has moved on. What I once gained from working with another priest I must now find in my parishioners. The shortage of priests necessitates this, but even so, I wonder whether we should not still work to find ways for priests or LPLs to follow the model Mark Richards proposes, namely that there are two on the servant leadership group for each of the great areas of

concern, concerns which he identifies in his article.

Next, I want to refer to Richards comments on prayer. He explains how the disciples discovered that prayer was not just about joyful ecstasy but also the facing of reality and the pain of life. This is particularly worth noting because this kind of prayer is how we understand contemplation today. The distractions we experience tell us so much about ourselves.

The revival of Ignatian spirituality copes well with all this and encourages us to be before God as we are. Like the disciples in their master's hour of need, we fall asleep when commanded to pray. Our prayer is just a frail attempt to open up and be filled with God. Teresa of Avila got so bored in prayer she shook the hour glass! But we persevere because we know we cannot do without it. And this principle applies to the laity who desire to build the reign of God, just as it does to any priest. As we employ the laity to work as leaders, then perhaps at least one of their hours each day of paid employment needs to be set aside for prayer.

### Conclusion

I would note that at the present time our bishops are stretching priests out to provide sacraments for our parishes. I questioned the wisdom of this earlier. Is it not true that at some point we will have to ask what happens when we can stretch priests no further?

I think the model Mark Richards proposes gives us a clue, and would add that instead of leaving the smaller parishes without a priest, we consider leaving the larger ones where there is a greater variety of gifts to call upon. If we accepted the model Richards proposes, is it possible to set up and maintain life-giving communities which do not have a resident priest, yet still are very Catholic? I am not intending to negate the role of the ordained minister or the importance of Sacraments. But if the present trends continue, the day will surely come when we will have to choose to close parishes, or allow them to operate with only rare contact with a priest. ■

*Alan Roberts is parish priest of Blenheim*

## The Permanent Diaconate – *is it the solution?*

*Susan Smith*

Vatican II's document, 'The Constitution on the Church' (Lumen Gentium) stated that "...the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy." (LG 29). Canon Law legislates for two types of deacons, the permanent deacon and the transitional deacon: that is, the man who hopes to be ordained as priest after the diaconate.

In New Zealand the Hamilton Diocese has 11 ordained deacons, and currently Bishop Pat Dunn is preparing to establish the permanent diaconate in the Auckland Diocese. Other dioceses do not appear to have ventured down this path. Given that such a move can either be a source of hope or concern for Catholics, I would like to attempt a brief overview of origins of the permanent diaconate and the reasons for the contemporary revival of interest in it.

### History

The first written reference to a deacon in the early Christian community occurs in Paul's letter to the Romans written about 58 A.D. He writes: "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae" (16:1), a Scriptural reference usually overlooked in the various diocesan and Vatican websites that commend the establishment of a permanent diaconate.

Instead, a later text attracts more attention. Acts 6,1-6 relates how tensions between Greek-speaking Jews and Palestinian Jews over the care of widows and orphans led to the Twelve designating seven men as 'deacons' with responsibility for care of such people. The important text is 6:7: "They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands upon them." Apparently, it is the laying of hands on these seven men



that constituted them as deacons and because Paul does not add this rider to his commendation of Phoebe, she should not be considered a 'proper' deacon. This interpretation effectively excludes women from serving as deacons.

By the 3rd Century bishops were ordaining male deacons to serve in their various jurisdictions, but by the 16th Century the deacon's role was no longer significant in the Roman Church although deacons were still important in the Orthodox tradition. In its anxiety to refute the Protestant teaching of the priesthood of all believers, the Council of Trent (1545-63) emphasised the centrality of the ordained priesthood in the life of the church, and sadly this led to the belief that ministry flowed from

Ordination, not from Baptism, something that Vatican II later redressed.

### The present situation

Prior to and since Vatican II, there have been relatively few priests to minister to large numbers of Catholics in Africa, South-east Asia, or Latin America, a situation that is still there today. Thus in 2000, in Eastern Africa there was one priest for every 5000 Catholics; while in Latin America, the ratio was one priest for every 65,000 Catholics. In New Zealand, the ratio is closer to one priest for every 500 Catholics. In 1960, this scenario had significant pastoral implications for the bishops of Africa and Latin America (see Froehle and Gautier: *Global Catholicism – Portrait of a World Church*, Orbis Books, p.40). This meant that some third-world bishops saw the establishment of a permanent diaconate as a possible solution to their pastoral needs.

Although vocations to the priesthood have continued to decline in most places since the restoration of the permanent diaconate after Vatican II, the number of permanent deacons has increased tenfold since 1975, most markedly in the United States. Canon Law requires that married candidates for ordination to the permanent diaconate must be over 35. Often they are considerably older, and usually minister on a non-stipendiary basis.

At present the distribution of deacons is very uneven and mainly confined to first-world nations, despite the early hope that it would offer a solution to the pastoral needs of third-world churches. For example, today there are over 150 million Catholics in Africa. There are 47 million people living South Africa, of whom approximately five million are Catholic, a relatively small number; yet 64

percent of Africa's deacons are located in South Africa. "This is consistent with general worldwide patterns that show a correlation between large numbers of deacons and relatively wealthy countries with a strong European presence" (*Global Catholicism*, p.58). In effect, those countries with a reasonably high ratio of priests to Catholics seem to be the ones most likely to opt for the permanent diaconate.

### A pastoral role

A careful perusal of Canon Law concerning deacons makes it clear that while deacons do have a sacramental role, this does not include the capacity to celebrate Mass or grant absolution. What emerges most strongly from various diocesan websites is that their ministries have a predominantly pastoral orientation. For example, we read:

"This pastoral commission includes preaching the Gospel in Mass and assisting with Baptisms and weddings, but is primarily aimed at social service within the community, such as visiting the sick, house-visiting, catechetics and pastoral project management" (Archdiocese of Johannesburg).

"Deacons using personal gifts or talents to support lay ministries bring the grace of the order and personal gifts into the role which assists in development of lay ministries. Deacons using specialist skills within the church complement the existing skills of priests and laity. Deacons ministering to smaller Catholic communities, cultural, ethnic or professional groups or small rural areas, help foster and develop a vital and dynamic church" (Diocese of Hamilton).

In other words, the pastoral ministry of deacons, now confirmed by ordination, is precisely the ministry that has been exercised by laity – married, single and religious – for centuries. These ministries have their origins in the baptismal call to mission, not in ordination.

Ordination to the permanent diaconate means that deacons become part of the church's clerical hierarchy, and yet according to the above, most of the ministries they undertake have been and still are thoughtfully and generously attended to by lay women and men. At a meeting in Whangarei Bishop Dunn indicated that he was well aware that some groups in the church were concerned that further clericalisation of the local church would occur if the permanent diaconate were to be introduced.

These groups are right to be worried, given that since Vatican II ministries entrusted to laity in many dioceses and parishes could conceivably be transferred to male deacons. If lay women and men are further excluded from ministries and clericalism is further endorsed, the whole church will suffer. It is not difficult to see who will be the losers in this process. ■



# The well-being of priests today

Michael Dooley

What makes priests today sometimes seem like a threatened species is the fact that in our society religious commitment in general – and priesthood in particular – is seen as an anomaly. Priesthood has a low value in people’s esteem, compared with 30 years ago. This factor hasn’t been helped by the sexual abuse crisis. Therefore for someone to enter the seminary today, he has to be reasonably strong. There is no longer the positive reinforcement there once was. In one sense that’s quite a good thing because it purifies one’s motivation.

Priesthood for me is very fulfilling. I think after the recent gathering of priests from all over New Zealand in Blenheim, I would feel that morale is high despite today’s challenges. Stephen Rossetti, an American priest who deals with priests’ psychological problems, came recently to speak here. He warned us against being drawn into a mood of pessimism. He reminded us that never before have been there so many men throughout the world training for the Catholic priesthood. The problem of priest shortage is peculiar to the West: indeed there is a simple correlation – increased affluence meant fewer vocations.

## The stresses of priestly life

Surveys of the life of priests do not in fact report loneliness as being a major problem. I don’t think living alone *in se* makes you lonely. You have your friends who are necessary for your well-being. The main challenge is to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

However, Fr Rossetti noted that the most serious problems, with priests in crisis, are isolation and anger. Priests who leave often go because they feel disconnected. They have become isolated and may have withdrawn from the fellowship of their fellow priests. Anger could well be aggravated by a priest’s relationship with his diocese.

It is interesting that the Number One positive factor that a survey of priests gave was ‘satisfaction with the bishop’! Sometimes, however, the problem of anger may be deep-seated in the priest himself. Rossetti said to us: “Don’t expect the bishop to be the father you never had!” In other words, a priest with an authority problem will easily project it onto his bishop.

In counselling students or young priests I would stress three things:

- **importance of prayer** – not simply being ‘devout’. Priests will often say “I’m not very good at prayer”, but you find that first thing in the morning they will say their

Office and spend time with God. That gives a foundation and probably saves them from burnout by a heavy workload.

- **time off**: some priests don’t take enough time off. For that reason they can become blunted in their enthusiasm and less effective. Having a day off a week should be a regular part of a priest’s life.

- **spiritual direction and supervision**. Sometimes priests will do this together – simply sharing their problems and challenges. Some, however, value this ‘in theory’ but neglect it in practice. I have no doubt people are happier in their ministry if they seek regular spiritual direction. Sharing a problem with an outside person can help you deliberate on what’s the best thing to do, and can stave off future problems.

## Working in a team

My own experience here has been working on the parish with Religious. It has made pastoral care richer and also offered a feminine dimension. I think that gives balance. It won’t always be possible, but it’s a good model. The essence of good team ministry is working together, respecting each other and recognising the strengths of the other person.

In the seminary, the most important factor is how the students relate to others. When Archbishop Wilson came to the National Seminary last year, he said the main thing to work at is *human formation* – how students learn to relate. That is crucial to effective priestly ministry.

## A personal view

For me, the longer I have been a priest the happier I am and more fulfilling I find priestly ministry. That has little to do with how heavy the workload has been. You have to struggle at times, but that’s where growth happens, especially if you share your problem with someone else. Trying to cope with many demands and feeling you are not coping – that is debilitating. But knowing you have coped previously is always reassuring.

The onset of burnout is, I believe, an internal thing. A person gets to the point where he needs space, and someone has to come in and say to him: “take time off. We’ll look after things”. Once upon a time we may not have done this. But now, with there being fewer of us, we just have to look after one another. “You get away and we’ll organise things” is what we need to say. ■

*Fr Michael Dooley is parish priest of Mosgiel and Green Island. He was for a time spiritual director of Holy Cross Seminary, Auckland*

# Jesus and Mary

Enid Lagan

As far as I know, there are five occasions in the Gospels where Jesus either spoke *to* his mother or *about* her, and I have been seeing them in a new light in recent times.

There is no doubt that Jesus and his mother had a very intimate relationship, so intimate that they could have their little joke and some teasing too. I think of the *Wedding Feast at Cana*. For sure, the Scripture says, “Woman, what is that to you and to me...” But in our language, I hear Jesus say, “Look, Mum, aren’t you jumping the gun? You’re pushing me here” – with a twinkle in his eye. He knew very well he couldn’t refuse her anything; and she knew that too. She most likely gave him a smile, a pat on the hand and – maybe, a wink? – then went off to organise the water pots. We know the rest.

To the *Finding in the Temple*. The elders must have been gobsmacked when this young lad told his mother that ‘he was about his father’s business’. She knew who the Father was but they didn’t. I wonder, did they look at Joseph, silent, unobtrusive in the background, and puzzle how he could have any connection with the profound points of the Law being explained so expertly by this youngster. I see them metaphorically scratching their heads, all of them perhaps except one. Gamaliel (who later would be Paul’s teacher – *Acts 22,3*) is musing; ‘There’s something extraordinary about this boy. I’m sure we will cross paths again later.’

As the trio leaves the Temple, Jesus throws a look back at the elders. He had been trying to teach them to bring them to conversion of heart as



he would so often in his time of public ministry. Yes, he had been about his Father’s business all right.

Then there was the *woman in the crowd* calling out, “Blessed was the womb that bore thee”; and Jesus’ reply: “Nay rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.” This ‘nay rather’ was not downgrading Mary’s dignity as Mother of God but rather endorsing the fact that of all persons Mary had, at every step, ‘heard the word of God and kept it.’ This was kudos from her Son.

And there was the time Mary and his brothers were looking for Jesus. “Who are my mother and brothers? Anyone who does the will of my Father in Heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother.” Again, Jesus is lauding his mother. Right at the Annunciation, Mary had declared she was totally given to doing the will of God and that was to be her stance all her life.

Finally, we hear Jesus’ words to Mary on the Cross. Why did he address her as *Woman* as she stood – yes, stood – the quintessence of suffering at the foot of his Cross: she the Queen of Martyrs, the Mother of Sorrows? Surely, I used to think, a gentler term could have been used. Why not *Mother* or *Beloved*?

Ah no, not to Mary. The first title given her in the very first centuries of the church was *the New Eve*. The first Adam had named his Eve *Woman* because she was to be the mother of all the living, and here was the second Eve so rightly addressed as *Woman* because she, the second mother of the living, was to lead all of us, her children, safely home.

Well, that’s how I see it. . . ■

**The Maori Madonna** (pictured above) was painted in 1943 by Sr Julia Lynch, a Wellington Sister of Mercy (religious name – Sr Mary Lawrence).

The Madonna carries the baby Jesus on her back in the fashion of Maori mothers a generation ago. The model was Tira Rongonui, then a pupil at St Mary’s College (now Mrs Stevens). The model for the child was her little brother, David Christopher.

The Madonna wears a traditional Maori skirt, but with *Alpha* and *Omega* embroidered on it. Her cloak flows down joining heaven to earth via Jesus and his mother. The halo is the Moon; above is the Milky Way, symbolising the people of the South Pacific. The Milky Way contains the Southern Cross.

The original of the **Maori Madonna** is held at Hato Paora College, Parorangi.

Colour prints available from Pleroma (Freepost 609, Postshop, Waipukurau. Price: \$12.50. A4: \$20.)

# Arohanui

## ...blooming where planted

*Last month we printed an interview with a priest who created 'Chez Nous', a country retreat for stressed people (April pp 10-11). Tui Motu invited author and spiritual guide **Joy Cowley** to describe her own, local experience of Chez Nous*

The Marlborough Sounds has a reputation for healing. The prescription of calm water, bush and birdsong, untangles stress and restores exhausted lives in a remarkably short time. It did that for our family, and over the years we saw the 'Sounds balm' work for friends who used a little cottage in our bay. Well, the cottage was more of a hut really and in poor condition; but when my writing income peaked I was able to demolish the hut and have built, in its place, a solid pinewood house that overlooked the sea. I called it *Arohanui* because it was made possible by the huge spirit of love that nurtured us all in that place.

*Arohanui* was well used as a retreat house in the broadest sense. Occasionally people came in on structured religious retreats – Christian, Buddhist, Ramakrishna – but most of the guests were families or individuals in need of a holiday. The only criterion was need, and to make sure need was met people came by referral from care-givers and health workers.

Experience is an impressive teacher, and behind the planning for *Arohanui* was a time in my early life when the pain of loss made existence a day-to-day struggle. I used to think: 'if only someone would take this away for a week or two, I know I would be all right'. But that didn't

happen, and regaining strength was a long slow business.

How gratifying then to see the rapid change in people who came to *Arohanui*. Often they would arrive pale, trembling, depressed, and the bay would wrap itself around them in a soporific hug. They would sleep and sleep. One young man was alarmed because he couldn't stay awake, and wanted to contact a doctor. He was assured that he would be fine in three days – and he was.

The place was available free of charge. There were no rules, no locks on doors. Food was provided for breakfast and lunch at the guest's leisure. The evening



meal, though, was always in the main house, and it was a grace-filled time of sharing food, conversation, laughter and occasionally a walk afterwards to look at glow-worms or the moonlight on the water.

In those first years several dedicated young people in an employment gap came down for weeks at a time to help run the place. In 1989 Terry Coles and I were married, and Terry brought a new strength to guests, with his gentle, peaceful presence and his fondness for the sea. He bought a boat and we were able to extend guests' activities to trips to the outer Sounds for picnics, hiking and fishing.

There was no counselling offered. We believed that we all have within us our own inner wisdom and solutions to our problems, but sometimes we get so debilitated that we lose touch with ourselves. So all we offered was family care, relaxation and good nutrition. It was important that we accepted people without judgment or expectation. One or two weeks was the usual stay, and the guests knew that if they were in crisis again, they could return.

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*we offered  
family care, relaxation  
and good nutrition*

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School vacation times brought in families in need of time together. One family with four children aged 16 to 4, had never had a holiday. One morning the bay rang with shouts of triumph and we saw the father standing in the dinghy proudly displaying a large herring, the first fish he'd ever caught.

A woman with terminal cancer spent two weeks of quality time with her sister from England. A young man who had witnessed a brutal murder was sent in to recover from the trauma. People coming out of prison or drug rehabilitation programmes, regained their connection with the earth. A young woman with bandaged wrists

lost her suicidal depression when she rediscovered the pleasure of gathering kaimoana.

And then there was the mother who brought her 8-year-old son to the bay so that she could tell him, in a nurturing environment, that his father in hospital was dying. The plan was that she would talk to him in the evening, and I would take him fishing the next morning. The lad was quiet on the fishing trip but happy to catch some spotties. I took him back to the house to fillet the fish for his breakfast, and was not surprised when he collapsed on the floor. Poor lad. The shock had been too much for him. I picked him up and carried him in a dead faint to his mother. "Oh no!" she said. "That's not about his father. It's the fish. He can't stand the sight of blood."

A regular guest was a lovely young man with addiction problems. He would steal to support his habit, spend time in prison, go on a programme and then come to our remote refuge. On one occasion, this lad (whom we shall call Jason) was being released from prison in Dunedin. Although I knew better, I sent him money for a train fare because that was easier than a two hour trip to purchase a ticket. A few days later Terry and I met the train in Picton. Predictably, Jason was not on it, and I was not happy with myself.

Three weeks passed and we had four women in Arohanui on a spiritual retreat. They were at our house for the evening meal, when the door burst open and there was Jason. He had been sleeping rough for weeks, smelled like a pig yard and was high on just about everything including alcohol. He hugged us with great enthusiasm and then rushed, starving, to the table. As he scooped food onto a plate, he became aware of the four women and their body language. He beamed at the one next to him. "You want a spud, Sister," he said and with a grimy hand plonked a baked potato on her plate.

Well, we eventually got through the meal, and I escorted everyone back to Arohanui. The four women were sleeping in the cottage. Jason went into one of the bunkrooms. But at 9.00 pm one of the retreatants came over to say that they had barricaded themselves

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*he acquired four mothers  
and was thriving on  
their attention*

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in one room, afraid that they might be attacked. I assured them that Jason was not a threat, and indeed, they saw that for themselves the next morning when they discovered the boy with severe withdrawal symptoms. He was a pitiful, shaking mess. They got him into a shower, washed his clothes and over the next few days nursed him through the tremors.

As Jason recovered, he went out fishing and brought back snapper. It seemed to us that he had acquired four mothers and he was thriving on the attention. On the last day of the retreat, the weather changed to rain. I knew the women would not be going out on their usual prayer walk, so I took them a video tape called *Ways to God for Today* by Anthony de Mello. When I arrived at Arohanui, I heard great gusts of laughter. All were seated at the table and Jason was teaching them to play poker, using matches instead of money. I tiptoed away with the tape, recognising that there were more wonderful ways to God than had been described by Fr De Mello.

For nearly 20 years, Arohanui functioned as a house for people under stress. It could not go on forever. Its gift of being personal rather than institutional was also its limitation, but that's okay. If you have the privilege of blooming where you are planted, it will be just for a season. What remains permanent for us are the memories and the many friendships that have taken us into a larger place. ■



Trish McBride arriving at the Abbey of St. Hildegard above the Rhine Valley

I heard her glorious soaring music on the radio this morning – and yet it is over 900 years since Hildegard was born. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) would have been an amazing woman at any stage of history, but that she flourished in a Europe barely out of the Dark Ages is a testimony to the rich monastic culture that then flourished.

A journey across Germany a couple of years ago was steered by a wish to visit Hildegard in her home town on the Rhine. Exploration on the internet told us that the two best places to find her spiritual legacy now are the Abbey above the town of Rudesheim and the parish church at nearby Eibingen. She moved around various sites in the area, as has her foundation in the centuries since. The excellent Youth Hostel at Bad Kreuzenache proved a good base for our explorations.

On the Hildegard day, we drove a few kilometres to Bingen and crossed the Rhine on a car ferry, a delightful interlude. Then up the hill from Rudesheim to the brick Abbey, very visibly perched among the vines on the hillside above. A pathway led up to the entrance, which was covered with a cascade of luscious pink roses (*above left*). We had arrived!

Hildegard painting. – a detail of her picture of the *Cosmic Wheel*, showing the whole cosmos as a wheel within the bosom of the Creator

Hildegard shown with St Benedict. Hildegard and her religious followed the rule of St Benedict

This present complex, we learned, dates to just over a 100 years ago, when a rich prince, himself father of a Benedictine nun, undertook to endow the rebuilding of the abbey on this new site. It is here that one meets the cheerful spirit of Hildegard still manifest in the smiling and hospitable nuns.

We went first to the church where a wonderful icon of Jesus over the altar welcomes with open arms. Around the walls are paintings of Hildegard's life and scenes from Scripture. Another icon shows Saints Benedict and Hildegard with the family tree/grapevine of the monastic houses founded by Hildegard (*see right*).

Then there is the inevitable tourist shop – but what treasures! I came away with a CD of her *Canticles of Ecstasy*, a candle made by the Sisters with a Tree of Life design and a bottle of their very pleasant wine. The Sisters seemed surprised to hear she was famous in Aotearoa New Zealand. Maybe they hadn't been around for the 900th birthday celebrations when two Kiwi women, Ceridwyn Parr and Danielle Melton, performed their moving dramatised version of Hildegard's life. That had been my own introduction to her back in the 1990s.

Hildegard was given by her family to a Benedictine double monastery (both male and female) at a young age (14, according to the biography from her Order, as young as eight from other sources). She took vows at 15. This was at Disibodenberg, another town on the Rhine. In 1136 she took over the spiritual leadership of her small community. Her education there had given her a broad knowledge of the Bible, theology, philosophy and natural history. Through the monastic life she was also well-grounded in liturgy, the rule of St Benedict and the writings of the church and desert fathers.

Her own description of one of her powerful visions goes like this: "In the year 1141 of the incarnation of Jesus





# Hildegard

Trish McBride



Christ, when I was 42 years and seven months old, a fiery light accompanied by lightning came down from heaven. It flowed through my brain and glowed in my chest. And suddenly the meaning of Scripture was disclosed to me.” And she heard the words “Write down what you see and hear.” And a monk depicted her visions pictorially under her direction.

From this mystical experience and a number of others flowed her beautiful musical compositions, her three major theological books, her lyrical drama and her prophetic dealings with her Order, the church and the world. In 1150 Hildegard and 20 nuns moved to a

new abbey at Rupertsberg where she continued to write and compose.

Hildegard understood God, the world and humankind to be one fabric. The cosmos is God’s work of art and human beings are a microcosm of the whole. Divine Love wills for us both salvation and good health; so one book is about healthy eating and the cure of illnesses. Modern health practitioners have been amazed at the

Statue of Hildegard holding her quill, in the church at Eibingen, where her relics are also held



validity of her insights. She was also a committed letter writer: 390 letters are extant, and they went to abbots, kings and even popes, encouraging and, where necessary, pointing them in a better direction!

At the age of 60 Hildegard went out from her abbey to preach in the market squares and cathedral precincts of at least half a dozen towns. What she had seen and heard in her visions was passed on prophetically to the people. Some modern commentators wonder whether migraine headaches were responsible for her illnesses and ‘bright lights’. Who knows – but the fruits of it all are truly wonderful!

Unsuccessful efforts to have her canonised were made in the 13th Century. In 1978 the German bishops asked for her to be declared a ‘Doctor of the Church’. This has not happened either. But her Sisters claim both titles for her by *vox populi* recognition.

More time at the abbey that day would have been wonderful, but we had to keep moving, so it was off down to the plain little Eibingen parish church. There was no-one else there. There is a beautiful statue of Hildegard, pen in hand (*above right*). Her remains are housed in a gold reliquary on the main altar. It was time to touch it reverently and be silent before this amazing, prophetic woman who had achieved so much for the God she loved. ■

*Trish McBride is a Wellington spiritual director and theologian with a special interest in women’s faith journeys for the next one.*

## Viriditas

Hildegard grew up and lived amid the lush pastures of the Rhine Valley. The present Abbey church (on the site of her monastery) looks out across this beautiful land (*see right*). Hildegard coined the word **Viriditas**, or ‘greening’, to describe the continuing creative power of God in the world and in humanity. She saw herself as a “branch full of the greening power of springtime”. Sin, for her, is a ‘drying up’. A dried up person or culture has lost its creative spark. Salvation comes through the waters of rebirth. It is like a re-greening, the end of a spiritual drought.





# A Terrorist Base?

Peter Murnane

Why are we not shocked that there is a terrorist base in New Zealand, fully controlled by the United States of America, though nominally under our Government *Communications Security Bureau*? This base, at Waihopai near Blenheim, is one of six in the world-wide *Echelon* spying network.



But 'terrorist'? Yes, it can be truly called this, for it gathers immense quantities of information that may be put to many uses, but sometimes leads to people being imprisoned without charge or fair trial in prisons like Guantanamo Bay or 'renditioned' to be tortured abroad. To name only those close to us, several Australian residents have been so treated recently, but there are hundreds of other examples. These abuses of people's rights are nothing less than government-sponsored terrorism.

The activities of this base, and the cruel operations that sometimes follow, are quite consistent with past activities of US governments. Mark Twain in the 19th Century strongly criticised the growth of this new 'Empire', which seized Texas, California and the Philippines by force. But since then – to support its business interests – it has again and again abused and massacred whole populations. This happened in Guatemala (from the 1950s), Nicaragua and El Salvador (1970s).

The USA has also helped overthrow legitimate governments, among others those of Iran (1953), Chile (1973) and Haiti (1994). Consistently, these

Latin American interventions have been aided by government terrorism, using agents trained in torture at the *School of the Americas* at Fort Benning, Georgia. Sr Dianna Ortiz, speaking at a recent Auckland Eucharistic Congress about her torture in Guatemala by the CIA, gave powerful witness against this system.

The Waihopai base spies on satellites carrying the private communications of individuals, businesses and governments. A vast volume of information is put through powerful computer 'dictionaries' that select specific words or phrases. No doubt the New Zealand government joins the US in trying to justify this blatant invasion of others' privacy under the pretext of 'national security'. But are there no limits to what can be done under this excuse?

Besides having access to any international messages that pass through the local geo-stationary satellites, the Waihopai base also gathers information from the private communications of Pacific nations. One effect of this is to further tilt the 'level playing field' of trade and finance which has always been biased

in favour of the wealthy minorities.

It is not accidental that the majority of the six billion people on our planet constantly suffer from lack of resources. Their massacre and starvation began in the colonial era, but continues today by the decisions of those who wield power over land and resources; who

determine prices for raw materials and for the labour of the poor; who 'dump' subsidised products so as to rob small producers of their livelihood.

Do we Christians have any obligation about this? If we heed Jesus' warning that whatever we do to the least human beings we do to Him, can we shut our eyes to the presence in our country of this essential link in the huge network that perpetrates such horrors? Why do we continue to host on our soil this base which continues to feed the corruption of an Empire that is doing such damage to the world? ■

*Peter Murnane is a member of the Dominican Preaching Team working out of Auckland*

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# Seven deadly sins – a Gandhi series



*In the final article of the Gandhi series physicist Richard Dowden examines what Gandhi might have meant by ‘without humanity’ – and is invited by the editor to go further*

## Science without Humanity

### What did Gandhi mean?

Mohandas Gandhi named *Science without Humanity* as one of the *Seven Deadly Sins* of modern society. By *humanity* he must have meant the non-material aspects of humanity – human values, the moral code, the Golden Rule, love, religion in general.

What did he mean by *science*? Did he mean science such as physics, chemistry, biology, etc. Or did he mean technology such as TV, cell phones, jet planes etc? He maintained that dependence on British technology (the cotton mills) was a hindrance to Indian independence, but I think, if that is what he meant, he would have entitled Deadly Sin Number Seven as *Technology without Humanity* – so we may assume he really did mean *science*.

Did Gandhi see science, particularly physics, as cold and unbending, with no human ‘give?’ If so, he was correct, but that is not a sin. Humans, scientists at least, have curiosity. They

seek the truth. Christians who recite the Nicene Creed believe that God created *all that is* (all that exists), *visible and invisible* (all that we know about as well as all that which has not yet been revealed). It is God’s truth and cannot be bent to produce warm fuzzy feelings.

Gandhi was a devout Hindu and used ‘God’ in the sense of the supreme being or *Ishvara*. This suggests that Gandhi used ‘humanity’ in an all-embracing sense of spirituality. In this case, we might rephrase Gandhi’s naming of this deadly sin as *Science without God*. Bearing in mind the deep conflict in the 19th Century between religion (mainly fundamentalist Christians) and science (mainly Darwin’s evolution theory), this interpretation of what Gandhi was getting at makes sense. Albert Einstein said something similar: “Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.”

There should be no fundamental

conflict between science and religion since both are seeking enlightenment about the same truth. The difference is that unlike a scientific hypothesis proposed to explain an apparent discovery, religion based on supernatural revelation cannot be tested by a series of experiments – although it requires verification, which is the job of theologians. Yet everything about the physical Universe, from the fundamental particles to the origin of the Universe, is also revealed by God – but through science.

In the case of scientific discovery, the ‘revelation’ also requires detailed investigation, such as further observations and tests of hypotheses based on the original discovery. The essential thing about the process of discovery is that it is not invention: it is the un-covering of something (particularly in physics) which has existed from the beginning of time. It was created by God but remains hidden until revealed by God in our research.





*At this point we break off and report a debate between Professor Dowden and the editor, who asked for the discussion to be moved in a different direction.*

### **Conversation (above) between the editor and Richard Dowden**

**MH:** I would like you to consider the attitude of the scientist who claims autonomy in research without being concerned about the possible consequences – or the possible harmful use of his discoveries. “My job,” he might say, “is to discover new things, not to worry about the human cost”. Is that right?

**RD:** The scientist is seeking to understand something, not to design it. Take the nuclear bomb. Einstein warned the Americans about the terrible effects and was concerned in case the Nazis got there first.

**MH:** But didn't these theoretical physicists like Neils Bohr and Oppenheimer in the United States suddenly realise that in their research they were opening Pandora's Box? Isn't

that precisely what Gandhi means by 'humanity' in the title? He is saying 'human' wisdom is warning that you cannot go on along this line of work because you are producing something too dangerous and destructive.

**RD:** The trouble is you cannot keep the secret. Once the Americans found that the thermonuclear bomb would work, it was easy enough for the Russians to discover how to make one. It was simply harnessing a process which takes place in all the stars anyway. It could make a bomb – but it could also make a power generator.

**MH:** But isn't Gandhi saying to us 'unless you have humanity, then science becomes evil'? Isn't it 'humanity' which asks: “is this for the common good or isn't it? Is it bringing people closer to God, or not?”

**RD:** I maintain that science itself *is* bringing us closer to God, because it is the pursuit of truth.

**MH:** But if we talk about 'humanity' as a virtue, we mean something which

enhances the dignity of the human person. Now the atomic bomb simply doesn't – and it is dubious whether thermonuclear power does either. It is so dangerous and so expensive. Can we really ever morally justify that kind of research?

**RD:** If this scientific knowledge and understanding is God's truth, then this is how the Universe is revealed to us – how it began, how it continues. If that is God's truth, then it cannot be evil.

**MH:** Let's take another example. A chemist produces the drug P; the intrinsic structure of the molecule might suggest to him that it will be hallucinogenic. His research has become so risky, it may have appalling consequences. The modern drug trade depends on such scientific developments.

**RD:** A lasar was produced because of research into light amplification. This was first produced as a tool for researching atomic structures. They



had no intention of producing it as a weapon. It is like designing a knife which the butcher needs for his trade but can also be used to kill people.

At what stage does the scientist realise that in his research he is about to open Pandora's Box?

**MH:** I want you for a moment to imagine you are Lord Rothschild, appointed to be a member of Churchill's 'think tank'. You know, more than the politicians and captains of industry, what might be the possible outcome of the research you are managing. You must take responsibility for the decisions that are made.

The other members of the committee will look to you as the scientific expert to be the final authority. I think what Gandhi is saying to you is: *as a scientist you can't just abdicate the responsibility for what you are producing.*

**RD:** A pure scientist never really knows until he tries it what the outcome is going to be. He can't see the future so as to be able to say: "we cannot go in that direction because it is liable to lead to such-and-such. That isn't the way scientific investigation works".

A scientist in his research arrives at a crossroads. He cannot predict exactly which is the right way. He is always 'seeking understanding'.

**MH:** Consider the geneticists at this present time. They are actually creating new forms of life. They seem to be driven primarily by the desire to see whether it works. They are less inclined to be concerned that they are interfering with human life.

**RD:** It isn't the science, though, which is the prime consideration there. For instance chemists produced Valium, a drug with therapeutic uses. But an overdose might do terrible damage. It is the misuse which is the problem.

**MH:** Let's go on to a final point.

Richard Dawkins, the evolutionist, is rabidly anti-religious. He says science will eventually explain everything. All

that religion does, he reckons, is to offer false solutions to queries which in time science will answer. The 'religion' of the future must be pure science. If we follow that, we shall eventually create a utopia on earth.

What would you say to Richard Dawkins?

**RD:** Dawkins has no evidence for his rejection of religion. To follow the ideal of 'science without God' is, I would say, a contradiction or an absurdity.

Science is 'seeking understanding'. This is a basic human goal and is a worthy thing. It cannot be evil. Since it is seeking God's truth, then there is only one ultimate truth. There cannot exist opposing truths. And it is an absurdity to say that God's truth can explain everything – without God!

**MH:** If I were Gandhi I would say this to Dawkins: "You are obsessed with your own power and gifts. It is an immoderate obsession and needs to be balanced by 'humanity'. There is a philosophical framework in which you live and work, and the majority of the people living also in that framework believe in God.

"It is their belief in God which motivates them to love one another. They don't deduce that from the law of evolution: indeed evolution talks about 'nature red in tooth and claw', which is the precise opposite of love. If you don't have the moderation of 'humanity' – or of God, then as a scientist, you can become a tyrant or a beast!"

**RD:** That is pride – which is the deadliest of the real 'deadly sins'. But if a scientist ceases to be objective in his research, he will soon start taking the wrong turnings. The astronomer Fred Hoyle, for instance. He was so certain his steady state theory was right he started saying things publicly which were contrary to what scientists were beginning to believe because of

the evidence. Hoyle was basing his statements on how he would *like* things to be, not how they actually were.

He then discovered eventually that the evolving universe produced more carbon than seemed to be warranted. And carbon is necessary for life. So he said: "Someone has been monkeying with this!"

I think this is the answer to Dawkins: There are a billion stars in our galaxy – the Milky Way. We now know there are at least a billion galaxies, which means a billion billion stars, most of which will have planets. This means that the conditions for producing life like ours are reproduced many many times in the Universe.

Yet however many intelligent beings there are in the Universe, they will all discover the same physics. We know there is a consistency throughout the universe and throughout time since the Big Bang in what matter is and what are the laws governing it. The elements are always the same. Physicists now have an unshakeable faith in this consistency. The mysterious thing is not the size and age of the Universe, but the fact that it is always and everywhere governed by the same laws. Einstein said the most incomprehensible thing about the Universe is that it is comprehensible!

The Universe is intelligible because it is totally governed by a single Intelligence. We have learned this because science is nothing more than revelation. The theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking claims with his *Theory of Everything* to be on the brink of discovering the fundamental equation. But that discovery won't do away with the need for God.

Hawking may find the final solution to the puzzle. But the question still remains: *Who wrote the puzzle?* ■

*Richard Dowden is retired professor of Physics at the University of Otago and a regular contributor to Tui Motu*

## A mother's Journal

Mothers do well to take a rest – and even Journals of mothers – but before too long I get itchy to get back on my feet, back to action, getting on with jobs that are waiting and work which gives meaning and sense.



Kaaren with Shar and Shanti

Returning to New Zealand for some months has been a welcome break from the vibrancy, tangle and action of life in India. New Zealand has so many great things about it. Some that I particularly noticed when we arrived back were footpaths to walk on, our relaxed society where it's OK to go out the door without freshly brushed hair – even with bare feet (five-year-old thinks this is *Very Good*). I've noticed too the playfulness of parents with children, litter-free parks and beaches, excellent government health and education facilities and trustworthy interactions with authorities and *Trade Me* sellers.

Our children have leapt into the creative and fun schooling on offer, gymnastics club and swimming lessons. All three have commented many times how lucky we are for the opportunities we have while we are in New Zealand. And we've all wished that just some of this abundance could be available for children in Jibhi – who have never seen a swimming pool, a footpath and pedestrian crossing or a tousled teacher daubed with paint and laughter.

I've come and gone from poor to rich lands many times. But I've found it hard returning to New Zealand this time. The differences can seem obscene. In our nutrition programme with mothers and children in India we encourage and support more food, more oil and butter – all more frequently. I wish there was an option for skinny school children in Jibhi to sometimes catch a ride home up the hill, to save them the one and a half hour walk.

I return to work with the *Physical Activity and Nutrition* team at our District Health Board in New Zealand, and every social marketing ploy is promoting fewer calories, less frequently. There are incentives to get parents and

children walking even small distances to school – and still it is too hard for busy and stressed parents. Opportunities, education, health services, road safety, lack of corruption – I feel angry that Indians just for being born somewhere else, get none

of this. The inequalities are glaring and very unjust. Efforts to address the global inequalities seem ineffectual and tiny against huge corporates who drive the trade and politics that keep the status quo.

I know too that New Zealand is not all a land of milk and honey. James around the corner from us in central Christchurch has had to move house four times while we've been away due to rising rents. He is lonely and has few friends. New Zealand doesn't offer him a happy place of belonging. Inequalities here are also grotesque – what systematic racism plays out in our society which results in Maori men and women having ten years less life expectancy than non-Maori?

So all these observations are nothing too new – but highlighted again by the sharp transition from one world to another. My children give me hints on how not to collapse in indignant talk-fests or helpless complacency. Embrace the good – eat lots of the yummy autumn produce, enjoy the beauty and stillness of our hills, and wear your new soccer shin-pads to bed the night before your first game. And keep talking about and with friends living on *This Side* and *The Other Side*. Somehow I want to believe things can change enough to keep working to bring structural changes – or even just pavements and creative primary schooling for all. So God help us.

*Kaaren Mathias is a mother and doctor, who has been living and working in a health project in Himachal Pradesh for the last two years. She has been enjoying some months home in New Zealand, with husband Jeph and their three children.*

*A poem by Maura Toomey, untitled and undated, written after having travelled through the Sahara Desert (and after having stopped at the hermitage of Blessed Charles de Foucauld in Tamanrassat)*

The street is hot and bare  
Dusty with feet and form passing  
I stand alone  
Along the way houses high-walled  
brown and flat in  
the sun  
The doorways stand open.  
Often I am greeted  
and asked to come in  
For a while I go  
Hoping this will be  
the resting place  
Cool, green yet warm  
with laughter  
And so it is for a while  
Then I am called  
Or politely shown the door  
Even without knowing  
Once more I am back in  
the street  
Looking down the road  
Wondering a little how  
I got there  
And where to now  
Hoping for a door  
To open and a lasting welcome

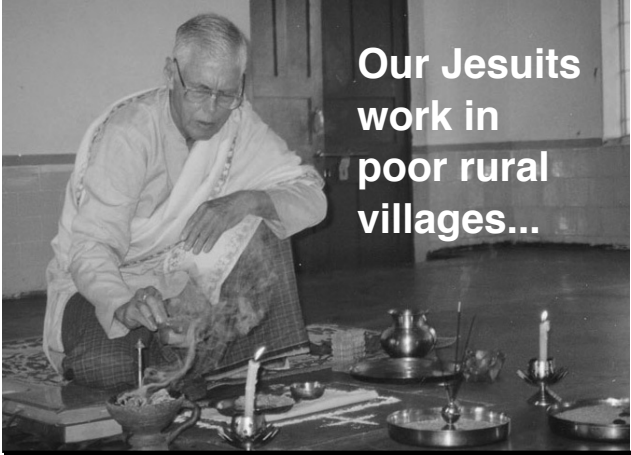
Yet this has become clear  
Perhaps there is no home  
Here  
As there was not on that  
hot, dusty street  
Ten thousand miles (from  
Here)  
Perhaps I will always stand  
In the street, alone  
It is a marvellous place  
For I don't know who I'll  
see a few steps on  
Who will yell Hey, remember me,  
Or it's good to know you  
A bond  
created, never to be broken.  
On that street of figures  
hurrying past, in an alien  
land, I met my home travelling  
companions  
Now memory calls me back  
Urgently  
To a street, a town, a continent  
I call home  
For there I found I could  
stand

In this place of my birth  
Now I feel a stranger  
For I have seen  
The alien town  
friends, husband, lover  
Surround me here  
My soul yearns for that street  
For the unity of heart soul  
and mind found  
Among an ancient people  
And on a mountain top  
In the desolate Sahara.  
Here we touch and go to business  
Living we call it  
There they know better  
The earth communicates  
Its message  
Here and now is all you have.  
Savour it, love it,  
Savour them, love them,  
Listen look and see the open door.

(Underneath is written:  
"Pity I can't and don't...  
but at least sometimes  
I glimpse the answer as we  
all do in our own way.")

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# Open your eyes

Daniel O'Leary

*When we love someone, we draw out the beauty that is within them, our tenderness persuading their true loveliness to emerge. Similarly at Easter, falsehood melts away and things appear as they really are*

A friend of mine entered for last year's *Britain's Got Talent* auditions. I tuned in to one of the first episodes. The panel judges were finding it all rather boring and predictable. During the interval they said so. Paul Potts, a sad-faced young man from Wales, was next up. He said he would like to be an opera singer. I noticed two of the three judges throwing cynical glances at each other. Then Paul opened his mouth, and a voice of power and beauty soared through the auditorium, capturing our hearts.

Paul went on to win the national competition and to reveal a talent worthy of any of the 'three tenors' themselves. At the *Royal Variety Performance* before the year ended, the three chastened judges more or less publicly apologised to Paul, who was performing that night. In the beginning, they were looking at him, but they had not 'seen' him. They had forgotten that people do not see things as they are; they see things as *they* are. But now their eyes were opened. They finally saw the real Paul Potts.

I have long wondered why the risen Jesus was unrecognised by Mary and the disciples. But something clicked in my heart as I recently listened to the Dominican Timothy Radcliffe. It wasn't, he said, that they knew Jesus before and did not recognise him now. It was more that they never really knew him, or rather, as Herbert McCabe put it, "they thought they knew him", and now they were meeting the real Jesus as if for the first time.

The miracle of Easter was already opening their eyes. The blindfold preventing them from fully recognising him before was now being removed. Love was bringing clear vision. It was transforming the blurred, the false; it was revealing the real, the beautiful. For one bright moment they glimpsed pure truth.

In one of John O'Donohue's last poems he speaks to the mother of a young criminal:

*No one else can see  
beauty in his darkened  
Life now.  
His image has closed like  
a shadow.  
But he is yours;  
and you have different eyes  
that hold his yesterdays  
in pictures no one else  
remembers.  
He is yours in a way no  
words could ever tell;  
and you can see through  
the stranger this  
deed has made him  
and still find the  
countenance of your son.*

The gift of true seeing has always been at the heart of Christianity. Easter is about taking away rather than about adding on; more about

subtraction than addition; more about unblocking than increasing. It happened to those on the road to Emmaus.

Pope Benedict, in *Spe Salvi* writes, "Before (the risen Christ's) gaze all falsehood melts away ... The holy power of his love sears through us like a flame." No wonder their hearts burned within them. And then, before their very eyes, the fierce invincibility and utter vulnerability of our human God were constellated in a fistful of bread on the rough surface of a stained table in a country inn.

Easter is the death of illusion, the window of recognition, the work of restoration. Redemption is the clear courageous vision of what happens, of what is. Too often, in our fear of naked 'isness', we shrink from it. While we are created for truth we cannot bear too much reality! "We would rather be ruined than changed," wrote W.H. Auden. "We would rather die in our dread than climb the cross of the moment and see our illusions die." Thus, as Francis Thompson knew, "with our estranged eyes we miss the many-splendoured thing."

"Something prevented them from recognising him." What a striking way of putting it. Maybe the "thing" that prevented them wasn't a thing at all. Maybe it was an absence that still blinded them – the absence of a fully purified vision. Love fills in the gaps and heals the flaws. It sees perfection from within, the beauty already there. We call it the sacrament of presence – of real presence.

A young monk was returning to the monastery after his annual retreat. Waiting for him was the older monk who always criticised him, belittled him. "Out skiving again," the young monk was cuttingly greeted, "and in spite of all your costly retreats you still look no different to me." The young monk paused, smiled a small smile and murmured, "Ah, maybe; but you look different to me."

A few weeks ago the theologian Gerald O'Collins told a group of us a story about the journalist who was picking his way, at dawn, along the severely bombed streets of Second World War London. The smoke and smell of the previous night's devastation still hung heavily in the air. A young woman emerged from a blacked-out flat. "Terrible night!" he called out. "Yes," she smiled, cradling her wide-eyed baby, "but what a wonderful morning."

Only love can catch the truth. The hidden Christ, in the sightless tomb, had embraced and transformed all that blurs and blinds. Everything around him that morning was epiphany. It was about recognition. What was

until then partially perceived now found its fullest definition. Those who loved and suffered most recognised him first – the beloved disciples John and Mary.

Only with the painfully purified heart do we see rightly. There is an apprenticeship to the vision of love. The disciples heading for Emmaus had to learn the steps. So must we. To be sure, it is gift. But gift, like surprise, favours the prepared heart. First, the wise one counselled, try to see and love a stone. Then try to truly see and love a cloud. Wait a while and begin to love a petal, a bird, a star; and then, and only then, try to see and love a human being. "Christ", Thomas Aquinas insisted, "is rising."

Anything, anywhere, any time can be the beginning of this apprenticeship into the really real. Nothing is too insignificant to be an epiphany of eternity. And when it happens, like the first Easter, it stays forever. "You must know," wrote John Paul II, "that there is no return from this vision." In "Memory", Thomas Aldrich writes

about the moment the eyes of his heart were blessed with true sight:

*My mind lets go a  
thousand things,  
Like dates of wars and  
deaths of kings,  
and yet recalls the very  
hour –  
t'was noon by yonder  
village tower,  
and on the last blue noon  
in May –  
the wind came briskly up  
this way,  
crisp the brook beside  
the road;  
then, pausing here,  
let down its load of  
pine-scents, and shook  
listlessly two petals from  
that wild-rose tree.*

*Daniel O'Leary is a priest of the Leeds  
Diocese in northern England*

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# The Gospel of Matthew

*2008 is the Year of Matthew. Later in May the lectionary reverts to following the Gospel of Matthew week by week. Biblical scholar Elaine Wainwright gives an overview of this year's Gospel.*

## Why were the Gospels written?

For the first generation of the Christian Church, the faithful depended on oral tradition for the story of Jesus Christ. But then something cataclysmic happened. The Roman armies destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its Temple. This event may have prompted the developing Christian communities to put the Gospel story in writing. From now on it would be in the inspired word, as written down by the evangelists, where Christians would meet the person of Jesus, Son of God.

This in fact is the traditional Biblical process – the old being retold in the new. The living texts were rooted in the experiences of people. So, when we immerse ourselves this year in the Gospel of Matthew we will come each from our own personal perspective. For example the violence of our times, whether it be happenings in the Gaza strip or on the streets of our own city, can be taken to the Gospel text for an answer.

## What are the main issues in *Matthew*?

We can imagine that this community of Matthew met regularly in a house-church just as their non-Christian Jewish cousins met in a similar environment – the synagogue – across the road. Here might have been some of their special concerns:

- their conflict with the neighbouring synagogue.
- who had authority in their community: who could ‘bind and loose’?
- how the ‘reign of God’ as preached by Jesus meets the Graeco-Roman world.
- what sort of ‘household’ is the basis of this new community.
- how to deal with ethnic and socio-economic differences.

## The call of Matthew

Jesus’ first words (*Third Sunday*) are “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand?” (*Mt 4,17*). It is an invitation to change one’s mind, heart, and allegiance. It is a radical call to change one’s life.

What Jesus proposes threatens not only the Jewish establishment and the Roman rule under whose iron yoke the Jews lived: it is also a summons to the first disciples to leave their homes and jobs. “Follow me”, Jesus says to the Galilean fisherman, “and you will become fishers of people!”

What Jesus is setting up is a new household of God quite distinct from anything his listeners knew. The *basileia* – rather misleadingly translated ‘kingdom’ – has connections with the Jewish past, yet it is also startlingly new. Prophets who speak this way and challenge the establishment usually attract persecution, if not death. That happens to Jesus and his followers.


Jesus starts by doing three things “...he went about Galilee teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease...” (*Mt.4,23*). So the first disciples would become teachers, preachers and healers.

## The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew’s Gospel is organised round five ‘sermons’, forming the basis of the teaching of Jesus. Jesus is presented as a teacher who supersedes Moses. They take the place of the five Books of the Torah, the Mosaic Law.

The first of these sermons, the *Sermon on the Mount* (*chs 5-7*), is a collection of many sayings and moral teachings. It starts with the *Beatitudes*, corresponding to the Ten Commandments of the Law. Jesus blesses his new community with eight statements, framed between two explicit references to the *basileia*: “Blessed are the poor... theirs is the kingdom of heaven”; and at the end: “blessed are those persecuted... theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

Jesus declares ‘blessed’ situations familiar to his listeners. If God calls you to leave your home and family, you will *mourn* because you will be bereft. People will resent your radical response: you must accept this attack with *meekness*. Early Christianity was seen as disruptive of contemporary society both Jewish and Roman. For instance, the first Christians were pacifists and were forbidden to be Roman soldiers. Blessed are the *peacemakers*. Such a radical stance is still unpopular.

The community of Matthew met together in a house, a house-church. The word ‘house’ is crucial. It is a revolutionary sort of household they are setting up: for instance, women and slaves will have their place here. This is part of the *righteousness* which Jesus imposes, which must “exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees” (*Mt.5,20*). The house is a “house built on rock” and stands in contrast with those who hear the word and do nothing, whose house is “built on sand” (*Mt.7,24-27*). 



# God shows no partiality

(Acts 10)

In Acts 10:34 Peter learns that *God shows no partiality*. This insight comes after a vision in which a heavenly voice informs Peter that the division of food into clean and unclean is prohibited, as all that God has created is good. Peter proclaims: “God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.”

Prior to this, there is another vision in Acts 10. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, seeking to become a follower of Jesus, is told by God to send two men to meet with Peter. The two visions are intimately related, since so far only Jews have become followers of Jesus, not Gentiles. God is telling Peter how to respond to this new situation.

In the preceding chapters, Luke has emphasised Peter’s spiritual authority and charisma. Peter has healed people, he has fearlessly preached the good news, but he is still aware of the importance of the law regarding contact with Gentiles. His religious parochialism prompted him to divide people into ‘clean’ (repentant Jews) and ‘unclean’ (uncircumcised

Gentiles). Now he learns that *God shows no partiality*.

Many of us spend time in categorising people as ‘white’, ‘Maori’, ‘unemployed’, ‘gay/homosexual/lesbian’, ‘straight’, ‘conservative’, ‘liberal’, ‘divorced’, or ‘separated’, and so on. We are members of a church that has canonised partiality in laws regarding sacramental ministry and life, and yet, as Peter later realises, “he (Jesus) commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead” (10:42). To label people means that they can be effectively disenfranchised. Women know this, people of colour know this, and in the Catholic tradition, lay men as well as lay women often have known this.

Traditionally, the important Petrine text for Catholics has been Matt 16:18-19: “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in

heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” This is a text which proved foundational for the Catholic teaching on papal infallibility.

Perhaps we Catholics should begin to concentrate more on this other important text attributed to Peter. When Peter uses the expression “no partiality”, he is not suggesting that we make judgments in a moral vacuum. Rather he is recognising that laws that disenfranchise on the grounds of gender and ethnicity as occurred in Jewish practice were discriminatory.

It did not take long for the young Christian church to also make and embrace laws grounded in discriminatory practices. Governments soon followed suit. Today, civil society in New Zealand seems more enthusiastic about overcoming such discrimination than does the church. This may explain why I keep wondering what surprises the proposed liturgical reforms coming from Rome will mean for women. ■

Susan Smith

*Susan Smith is a Sister of Our Lady of the Missions and teaches in her congregation’s Asian provinces*

## Questions to ask yourself

When we read the gospel text each week we need to:

- note our reactions to the story? What feelings?
- who are the characters?
- what actions are taken and by whom?
- what is the setting, the context?
- what literary forms are used? Parable, healing story, pronouncement.
- what symbols are identified? Symbols are clues to meaning.
- where does the passage fit in the Gospel as a whole?

Sr Elaine Wainwright is Professor of Theology at the University of Auckland. These excerpts are taken from workshops she gave in Otago in March

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## Recovering the true meaning of Easter

*Surprised by Hope*

by Tom Wright

Published SPCK, 2007

Price: \$34.99NZ

Review: by Mike Crowl

Wright has several things he wants to put across in this book, but there are two particular ones that stand out for me. Firstly he wants to encourage the church to change its view of what happens to us after death, and secondly, and even more important, he wants us to realise the extent to which we're affected, in every aspect of our lives, by Jesus' resurrection from the dead, and our own future resurrection in the new heavens/new earth.

I must confess I'm a person who likes to read books that speculate as far as possible on where (and what) we'll be in the post-death future. I sometimes feel a little alone in this, as, to my surprise, many Christians don't appear

to care overly much. For them vague thoughts of 'heaven' are enough. However, Wright isn't prepared to let us away with any kind of vagueness. He spends a good amount of time dealing to the usual idea of 'heaven,' which he says is not only inaccurate, it's not even Scriptural.

For him the resurrection of Jesus is of utter importance in relation to our future. The resurrection will sweep up everything in this world and recreate it in the new. For Wright, everything that's of value here will have value eternally, and he's not just talking about 'spiritual' things, but about creative things, about work and love and kindness and relationships and all manner of other aspects of our everyday lives. The 'first' resurrection happened here, in this world, and it will ultimately affect everything in this world. The new creation will incorporate the old, making all the old of immense value.

But this is just part of the message in the book. Wright presents a wide-ranging and accessible theology of the resurrection, of Easter itself, of the Christian's hope as it was understood in the early church, of what Jesus' judgment of this world means, of whether Purgatory and Paradise have any relevance to us.

And in his final section, where some of the best material lies (in a book full of good material), he writes of hope in practice: how the resurrection affects the mission of the church.

If you've ever felt that we've lost the point of Easter, that the resurrection was a one-off and rather odd event, and that our deaths are fairly irrelevant in the scheme of things, read this book. Even if you don't agree with all Wright's theology – as some (plainly misguided critics) don't – I'll be surprised if you're not inspired by at least some of what he has to say. ■

## Democracy corrupted by capitalism in Fiji

*Thinking about Democracy Today*

Kevin J Barr

Ecumenical Centre for Research

Education and Advocacy

Review: John Honoré

For Kevin Barr, having spent 28 years in Fiji, is certainly qualified to write of the current political and social situation there and his slim volume *Thinking About Democracy Today* is timely. This short treatise on democracy, in relation to the 2006 military coup in Fiji, opens with the disastrous presidency of George W Bush and his perverted dogma of freedom and democracy.

Arundhati Roy, an Indian activist, is quoted on Page 1 suggesting that Americans themselves are the most

vociferous critics of their government policy. Indeed Naomi Wolf, an American, gives ten good reasons for describing America, under Bush, as a fascist state. But for political and economic reasons the rest of the world often follows America's self-serving policies under the mistaken belief that one size fits all. Barr points out that New Zealand and Australia, as Bush's deputies, were quick to condemn the Fiji coup for being undemocratic.

The chapter, *Democracy in the US Today*, points to the fact that it is the rich who create and support political parties with no regard for the poor. This is not an egalitarian system and the poor have no political voice. Further, democracy is promoted as a vehicle for capitalism, a point repeated in several

sections. In this regard, financial institutions such as the *World Trade Organisation* are controlled by the US for increasing their market share. There is no allowance for the rights of poorer nations. The expansion of US cultural values through the fundamentalist churches serves the same purpose. This could have been pursued further.

The Qarase government of Fiji "was strongly pro-business and seemed unable to listen to the voices of the poor", the reason for Bainimarama's coup which was immediately labelled as undemocratic and against the rule of law. However, Barr suggests that Fiji could be better off as a result of the coup. He advises a modified form of democracy. One size does not fit all.

The chapter on *Fiji, Violence and Human Rights* is repetitious and relies ▶

## A great way of 'praying' the gospels

### *Come and See*

Joy Cowley (with photos by Terry Coles)

Pleroma Christian Supplies 2008

Price \$25

Review: Michael Hill

Joy Cowley's books on prayer and spirituality have been best sellers in the New Zealand religious books market for many years and with good reason. So a new title is always welcome, and I have no doubt that *Come and See* will be as popular as its predecessors.

The format here is straightforward. There are 64 reflections following through the life of Jesus, starting with the Annunciation and concluding with post-Resurrection appearances. Each reflection occupies two facing pages, and consists of a quote from the gospels, a spiritual commentary by Joy, sometimes in the form of a prayer. Opposite is a black-and-white photo taken by Joy's husband, Terry. Concluding with a short, pithy 'thought for the day'.

You could very easily use this book for daily meditation – one reflection

per day. You could happily spend a few moments in the morning with the main text, and return to the concluding thought at intervals through your working day. The book would then become a very pleasant companion on one's spiritual journey.

Joy's writing is always 'easy reading'. One might even say 'deceptively easy'. Her prose style is simple and engaging. Her examples are authentic. Her interpretations are often original and invariably thought provoking – and often 'prayer provoking'. Which is what this little book is all about.

For example Martha and Mary are presented as complementary facets of human nature. There is no sense of competition or of passing value judgments on one human condition over the other. Indeed Joy compares it with the rhythm of breathing. In a busy routine, moments of stillness and reflection are not merely oases of delight; it is the Mary moments which make you a more effective Martha.

The focus of each reflection is usually a gospel incident, but it may be a parable or a gospel phrase. The

reader, providing the exercise is done quietly and reflectively, is drawn into the narrative and is led to apply it to a situation in everyday life. This is a typically contemplative way of praying – the gospel 'template' is being applied to the realities of our existence.

For those of us who are helped by visual stimuli, simply looking at the accompanying photograph can trigger a line of thought which will lead us into prayer. If you buy this book and use it, I can guarantee you will not only find it a fruitful way of praying the gospel but you will also enjoy it. What more can one ask!

One minor gripe. Like so many modern paperbacks this book will not lie open at the page unless you hold it in both hands. This isn't always the most comfortable way when you are spending time in reflective prayer. You like the book to stay open unaided. This seems to be the way paperbacks are bound these days. Perhaps when this book is reprinted they will find a better way.

That is no reflection on the contents which are superb. ■

▷ too heavily on the rhetorical question. Nevertheless, it signals the passion with which Barr presents his case. There is a need for a better understanding of democracy as it applies to Fiji and to all citizens disadvantaged by the US model, governed as it is by neo-liberal capitalism.

The bibliography points to wide reading. Perhaps the writer could have used less lengthy quotes and relied more on his own observations – a minor quibble. It is a good introduction to the unfolding political and social situation in Fiji. ■

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Joy Cowley And Terry Coles

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## In praise of independent journalism

Last month's editorial, *The Prophetic Voice*, puts the future of *Tui Motu* in the hands of readers. Its survival depends on the propagation of the magazine and the support of all who believe in a free and independent press. It is a call to rally round and support the democratic right to express a range of opinions.

The importance of independent magazines is evident, yet the way to keep them alive is less obvious. Most small publishers cannot afford to pay their chief editor. This is not an ideal situation and it cannot last forever. But it does mean that an independent publisher needs only modest support. The financial balance of the magazine, which depends on sales, is tight but, considering the decline in all newsprint publications, the intrinsic value of *Tui Motu* is heightened. In this age of rapid change there is even more reason to demand an honest and impartial coverage of unfolding events.

*Tui Motu* contributes in its own way to an intellectual debate by trying to provide a better understanding of the realities of the modern church and it plays an important part in the current discussion of ideas. The church must be considered as being better off and more wisely led if its policies are subject to unstinting scrutiny. *Tui Motu*, in New Zealand, performs this task and, in many respects, is alone in this field.

To subscribe to *Tui Motu* is the best way to show your support for independent journalism, thereby appreciating the ideas and views which the editor has fearlessly presented for the past ten years – the *raison d'être* for this publication to continue for another ten years.

### Selective protest

The Olympic Torch, on its way to Beijing, created protests

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### Crosscurrents

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John Honoré

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against China for its harsh treatment of Tibetans who continue to seek autonomy from Chinese domination. Accusations of demographic aggression and cultural genocide have thrown another cloud over the Olympic games in August. These descriptions could well be applied to Israel's subjugation of the Palestinians and the systematic destruction of their communities.

The demonstrations could well prove to be counterproductive. China is not the Western model of democracy but it is attempting to recover from two centuries of social unrest and foreign invasion. Further disruption to its staging of the Olympics will alienate it from the West. The protests seem disproportionate to the lack of criticism towards Western powers which currently occupy, persecute and threaten states in the Middle East.

However there is one voice being heard, strongly criticising Israel for its treatment of the Palestinians. In April, former US President Jimmy Carter labelled the blockade of Gaza an atrocity and called for the recognition of Hamas in any peace talks with the Israelis. Since the 2006 publication of his book, *Palestine: Peace not Apartheid*, he has been unrelenting in his attacks. Not surprisingly, he has attracted to himself personal abuse from Zionists world wide and the Washington Republicans. He is *persona non grata* in Israel.

Jimmy Carter pointed out that a truce proposed by Hamas was rebuffed by both Ehud Olmert and Ehud Barak who boycotted his visit to Jerusalem. The Jerusalem daily newspaper *Haaretz* however, wrote against the boycott and the group, *Israeli Peace Bloc*, praised his efforts to end the suffering and

bloodshed in Palestine. His is truly a voice in the wilderness but more and more Israelis are beginning to listen.

### Canyoning tragedy

Last month six teenage children and their teacher lost their lives on the Mangatepopo River as it rampaged through the deep gorge in a wall of destruction. Within a half an hour, the river was back to its normal flow demonstrating the power and the unconquerable forces of nature. All New Zealanders mourned their death. All asked how and why.

New Zealand is blessed with mountains, plains, rivers and the sea that are all a challenge and a danger to adventure seekers. It is in the spirit of Kiwis to accept this challenge knowing full well that they must be prepared. Children from an early age are introduced to the joys of adventure in this land of opportunity and risk. The character of the nation has been formed in these natural open spaces. Visitors come from afar to enjoy them.

The media quickly sought to blame someone or some organisation. There will be enquiries and endless questions asked. Committees will be formed and data sifted through. No blame should be apportioned indiscriminately. Rather accept the fact that we are powerless in the face of the enormous energy of a natural world forever in a state of flux. So it has been for aeons.

This is to argue that these adventure trips should still be part of a school's curriculum. They should continue with scrupulous preparation and a firm resolve to give future generations the same opportunities as their forebears have enjoyed. This is the lesson from this terrible loss. And one can only feel the deepest sympathy for their families, friends and classmates. The organisation under whose aegis these children were placed is named after one Sir Edmund Hillary. Enough said. ■

# The Deadly Sin of Greed

Much to my surprise, a recent *New Zealand Herald* piece by columnist Garth George was devoted to the Easter Sunday sermon of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams. Sermons of archbishops rarely figure on the main pages of that paper. Even more to my surprise, while the sermon also dealt with various aspects of the Paschal event, the section that caught the columnist's eye dealt with what is not usually a Paschal topic, namely greed, which is one of the seven deadly sins.

Dr. Williams dealt with greed when speaking of the inevitability of death. Before reminding his listeners that the true answer to death is to share through faith in the new life Christ won at Easter, he spoke first of the attempt many make to provide for the inevitability of death in other ways.

"We face a culture", Dr. Williams said, "in which the thought of death is too painful to manage. Individuals live in anxious and acquisitive ways, seizing what they can to provide a security that is bound to dissolve, because they are going to die.

"Societies or nations do the same. Whether it is the individual grabbing the things of this world... or the greed of societies that assume there will always be enough to meet their desires – enough oil, enough power, enough territory – the same fantasy is at work. We shan't really die – we as individuals can't contemplate an end to our acquiring, and we as a culture can't imagine that this civilisation, like all others, will collapse and that what we take for granted about our comforts and luxuries simply can't be sustained indefinitely."

Garth George went on to look at the tragic fruits this greed will have for society. What he wrote is well worth reading. Go to [www.nzherald.co.nz](http://www.nzherald.co.nz) and search out his article (the date is given in one place as March 26, in another as March 27).

My reflections on Dr. Williams's sermon deal with a more personal issue. Most of us would judge ourselves as not committing on a regular basis any of the deadly sins. While not free from temptation, we do not see ourselves as dominated by envy, wrath or lust. But the question must be asked as to whether each of us may, almost unwittingly, be guilty of the deadly sin of greed.

Our life style has changed enormously from that of earlier ages, even from that of our grandparents. We have washing machines, dryers, gas or electric stoves. We have at our disposal vehicles in which we can at any moment transport ourselves across city or district. We can, at least on occasion, be carried swiftly by air to a distant destination.

In all of that there would seem at first to be no sin. But citizens of the First World reap these benefits at the cost of those living in less favoured lands. There is a gross imbalance in the access that various peoples have to the resources on this planet. We are riding on the backs of less fortunate folk. To enjoy these benefits while doing nothing to lessen that imbalance is surely to be guilty of the sin of greed.

It will not be possible overnight to bring about a change in this situation. But both personal support for worthy charities that assist those in the less developed world and activity as citizens to have our government address these imbalances are called for.

We must not be thoughtlessly sinful. To take whatever comes to us without consideration of those at whose expense it comes would surely be greedy. ■

*Humphrey O'Leary*

*Humphrey O'Leary is a canon lawyer and Rector of the Redemptorist community in Auckland*

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**M**aura Toomey was a perennial teacher and student. She taught in classrooms, yes. But she also readily found students outside the classroom, sharing her love of politics, social justice, history and literature, her understanding of significant events like Bastion Point and the Springbok Tour, and authors like Janet Frame and Patricia Grace.

Maura also shared her own history, but the task of keeping track of the family was sometimes too daunting even for Maura. At a party once, she introduced a few people near the door, then waved her arm vaguely toward the dozens of people in the house and said, "And the rest of them - they're all Toomeys!"

Maura was a wonderful story teller. She recounted stories of her and Kevin growing up; summers with the cousins

at Karitane; long periods of illness at many times of her life; days at St Phil's and university; teaching years at Gore, Lawrence and elsewhere; her time in Vanuatu and at Teschemakers; trips to Australia, Europe, Africa, India and North America.

Her sense of adventure and challenge came home with her too, overflowing into a love of learning. When she wasn't teaching or having adventures, she was reading or studying – literature, theology, spirituality, history, psychology, counselling.

For many years Maura went everywhere with her canine companion, Bozo. Like Maura, Bozo had a mind of his own. Unlike Maura, he had not an ounce of discipline, commonsense or any notion of delayed gratification. He once escaped near Chingford Park making a beeline for the ducks in the creek, with Maura running after him, swearing in such colourful language that an on-looking neighbour felt compelled to tell her off.

Maura's Christian virtue may not always have been apparent in her word choice, but it was clearly evident in how she spent her time and in her overall perspective on life. She had a strong sense of justice that permeated her personal relationships

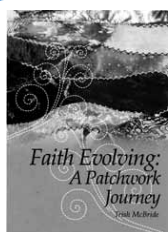
as well as her perspectives on society and church. She involved herself in Amnesty International, liturgical ministries at St Alphonsus, a Catholic women's liturgy group, Dominican summer schools, lectures by visiting theologians, driving St John's Ambulances, volunteer counselling. She also felt passionately about the right for Catholics to speak about theology, spirituality and justice. It was in large part her promptings, through the Dominicans, that sparked the birth of *Tui Motu*.

Maura's home was in some ways a metaphor for Maura herself - unpresupposing, welcoming, homey, accepting – its inner walls and shelves full of beauty and an appreciation for literature, art and music. Its rooms were for years Maura's work-in-progress – she was not to be rushed into decisions or completion, she was open to new ideas and change.

Maura will be remembered for her faithful friendship, generosity, irrepressible forthrightness, inner strength and forbearance in suffering. She worked for and yearned for justice, love, truth, healing, freedom and peace - all values which are signs of God's reign - all of which she now richly deserves to enjoy in their fullness. ■

*in memoriam –*

## Maura Josephine Toomey



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