

Tui Motu

InterIslands

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O maiden Mary, why are you grieving?

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Cover: To celebrate the August patronal feast of the *Assumption of Mary*, we are reprinting Donald Moorhead's magnificent graphic from a 1997 *Tui Motu*.

"O Mary, why are you grieving. I never found fault in you..." says Joseph; inviting Mary to reveal God's promise to her through Gabriel.

(from an early English poem)

A church not credible

Why, asked the parish priest, is the word of God not being heard in our time by our people? He fixed his beady eye on me sitting in the bench. "For the answer, you must read the next editorial of *Tui Motu*!", he said.

A slightly flippant comment – yet sowing a tiny seed in my unconscious. Some of the articles in this issue prompt me to hazard a response. Take popular music. "Why," asks Mike Marshall (p 19) "does the devil have all the good tunes?" Music has always spoken more profoundly to the human spirit than words, yet nothing may seem more secular than contemporary pop. Or is it? John Thornley's study of Kiwi songwriter Dave Dobbyn (pp 20-23) suggests there is at least one contemporary lyricist who touches profoundly on the great perennial themes of life and love, of pain and social sin just as much as the troubadours of earlier, so-called ages of faith.

One reason why modern man and modern woman are put off religion is because much of the message they hear from the churches sounds irrelevant to them or so judgmental as to be actually repellent. There are huge contemporary ethical issues: issues of life and death, of sexual behaviour, of power and greed, of the survival of the planet itself. But the churches are often preoccupied with liturgical minutiae, internal squabbles or with a sexual ethic which makes no sense to the contemporary mind. See Pat Maloney (pp 10-11). The people ask for bread – and we give them stones.

Another major problem, of course, is the profound agnosticism of our society. Bishop Richard Randerson observes (p 8) that the one argument which could make sense to people evaluating the

Prostitution Bill is the pragmatic one: its outcomes will harm more people than it might help. Whereas arguing from the Christian moral ethic is for most a huge turn-off.

Likewise the GE debate: Sir Peter Elworthy recently came out against marketing GE foodstuffs purely on economic grounds. It would harm our markets both at home and overseas. The fact that it violates the sacredness of created life is not mentioned – even though in the final analysis it is the one compelling ground for rejecting GE.

A popular spiritual writer of the '80s once observed: "Christianity is not a moralism, but a mysticism." Meaning that even though faith should motivate our every thought and action, ultimately religion is a relationship. Christianity is about a Person – how we meet Jesus. And how he leads us to relate to God and learn to bask in God's creating and forgiving love.

Therefore the ultimate answer to my parish priest's challenge is to be found, I believe, in this month's focus (pp 12-15), difficult though that may seem. The church has a rich and splendid tradition of spirituality. This wealth is there to be shared around. The process described, based on the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius, is like a pebble thrown into a pond. It is so simple to do, yet its effects can spread and spread. Another writer wrote that there is an aching void in the heart of contemporary man and woman that only the love of God can fill.

And this, surely, is the Church's essential task. It is to teach people how to reflect on the predicament and beauty of their lives. And somehow to find God there.

M.H.

The next issue of *Tui Motu* (September/October issue) will appear mid-September. All subscriptions will be moved forward by one month. (See page 4)

Moral Messages

Paul Freedman

So much for prostitution! Now to man the barricades and oppose any softening on euthanasia (probably as we usually do, via petitions, pressure groups and lobbying)... But, hang on! is our protesting and indignation really what God wants? Can we learn from the recent prostitution debate? Many conflicting views were aired, but, as so often happens when passions are high, neither side really listened carefully to the other.

There is a perception among non-Christians that many who oppose law change are inflexible, unattractively self-righteous. We can seem dedicated to laws which force others – whether they accept our moral viewpoint or not – to behave as if they did. Occasionally, a clear overlap between legal and moral boundaries exists; theft, trespass and assault are examples. Yet, if we suggested making adultery a criminal act, there would be a huge outcry. How many Catholics would champion such a law as persistently as we have those on prostitution? Are we clear about the difference?

Euthanasia raises deeper questions. We worry that sick, weak, elderly people may cave in to pressures that they be tidily ‘disposed of’; suggestions that pain is always meaningless or that all suffering can (and must) be neatly averted. The overlap of moral imperative and justice is slightly clearer here. However, the tendency is still to argue *ad hominem* rather than focussing on the facts.

We must be clear why we oppose reform. Do we believe, somehow, that God is better pleased when individuals produce ostensibly ‘moral’ behaviour, merely through fear of legal consequences? Our heritage suggests, rather, that God is far more concerned with an individual’s motivation. Consider Christ’s warning about the man who “looks lustfully” after a woman. Jesus condemns this as producing exactly the same moral injury as if he had physically committed the act. (*Mat. 5:27*) With the Samaritan woman at the well (*Jn 4:1-42*), with the adulterous woman (*Jn 8:3-11*) Jesus is similarly focussed on inner conversion, not outward behaviour.

God never makes it impossible for us to transgress. Among our greatest gifts is free will. By seeking to master our actions – despite temptation – we can express (through grace) our

commitment to the behaviour we believe God expects. Free will, alone, enables us to become unique, individual human persons. Without it, we would be simply robots.

Ought we, therefore, to participate in fax-attacks and lobbying that may reinforce the stereotype of the religious zealot? In the abortion debate, the pro-life cause was irremediably discredited by maniacs who murdered staff at abortion clinics. Where is the boundary?

If we truly seek the wellbeing of those who suffer under liberalised laws, let’s consider whether superficial activism achieves anything worthwhile. Better, surely, to try and help everyone attain a more Christ-like understanding of these issues; aim at better-formed consciences and more creative encouragement to obey them. Let’s speak out powerfully on the wonderful palliative care available now, publish more stories on the life-enhancing encounters that often happen when someone at death’s door receives excellent hospice care and can work through end-of-life issues with family and friends.

On not just prostitution, but also homosexuality, marital fidelity and family life, let’s do more to underline the equality of women and men; to depict the beauty and sacredness of sex in its right context, a unique building block of love within a committed relationship. If God leaves humans free to perform immoral acts when so determined, have we any right to impair that moral (but not legal) freedom?

Have we considered the effect on the non-Christian community when we merely trot out knee-jerk formulae, as spokespersons like Graham Capill so often do? (Am I the only believer who cringes when he is wheeled in to tell the world ‘what Christians think’?) We must, of course, oppose evil. But it is the evil we oppose, not the people surrounding it. Let’s make that clear.

Above all, let us try to make our views known creatively, lovingly, attractively. We must, as Christ did, use reason, persuasion and conversion. Our mission is to help usher in the Reign of God – not a job for lawyers or lobbyists, primarily, but for witnesses.

Paul Freedman was editor of Auckland based New Zealandia magazine



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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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Survivors of clergy sexual abuse

I'm writing from the viewpoint of a survivor of clergy sexual abuse. I have to say it hurts me there are rarely any stories of survivors. It just makes me feel invisible. I've been searching through back copies of your magazine, and I haven't found anything written of the survivors' stories, apart from a few letters, and almost nothing from a woman's perspective.

There is little recognition that clergy sexual abuse is not only about paedophilia – adults also fall prey. The effects of clergy sexual abuse on the survivors are not well known nor have they been widely studied, particularly in New Zealand. But a brief list would include feelings of alienation from the church community, loss of the practice of faith – if not faith itself, loss of a sense of identity in one's church, loss of trust in clergy, etc.

In addition, there are broader, deeper issues including bouts of depression, confusion about sexual identity, effects

on career development, difficulties in personal relationships... These stories, too, need telling. (abridged)

'Tui Motu reader' Wellington

letters



Give males a fair deal!

While I was flattered to find Sr Elizabeth Julian quoting from comments I had made to a *North and South* reporter on the issue of priestly ordination for women, I thought it unfortunate however that she had to adopt such an 'anti-male' posture to argue her case. She spoke of the difficulties 'male clerics' have in following arguments to their conclusion, the limitations of the 'male mind', and the need to continue to challenge the 'male imagination'.

The reference to the wearing of liturgical vestments as an example of 'cross dressing' is one that always leaves me cringing with embarrassment for whoever makes the comment. Although I know that Sr Elizabeth is not in this

category, people who say such things about clergy usually say the same things about Samoan men in lavalavas, Fijian policemen in uniform, and probably women wearing slacks as well.

I know that we males are frail and flawed creatures, but one of the tenets of our Faith is that we too, like women, are made in the image of God. In varied ways both men and women reflect something of the beauty of the Divine Nature. The question of whether or not women should be ordained to the priesthood hinges, for me, on the significance of gender, and the differences between what it means to be male/father/masculine, and what it means to be female/mother/feminine. The debate, no doubt, will continue.

But as a male, can I ask that we men be treated with the same respect that many of us do sincerely hold towards women whom we love and admire greatly, and which I certainly have for Sr Elizabeth too?

+Patrick Dunn, Bishop of Auckland

Edinburgh. Cardiff. Rome

The *Tui Motu* board of directors has asked me to share some mixed news with you: mainly good, I hasten to add.

2003 is something of a golden year for our editor. Along with five others he became a Rosminian on September 15th, 1953; so did Fr. John Bland, parish priest of Glenfield in Auckland, and they are both very well known for many decades of service to the church in New Zealand. At St Peter's Rosminian parish church, in Cardiff, 50 years later, there will be occasion to rejoice and a reunion not to be missed – a view I am confident that *Tui Motu* readers would strongly support. But there's more.

In August Mike Riddell's play *Jerusalem! Jerusalem!* will be staged at the Edinburgh Festival from 4-17 August, and at Belfast and Cheltenham, as the Antipodes way of introducing James K Baxter to the land of his fathers, "bringing him to life again in a riveting dramatic work which continues to shock and engage audiences" (N Z *Listener's* choice for 'Best New Play' 2002.) And, yes, you will recall that our editor is immersed in the production as the "priest", witness to his versatility and energy.

In any case there is a General Chapter of the Rosminian Order that normally takes place every ten years. Our editor is in demand again; he is expected to be in Rome for the month of October as one of the elected representatives for the English Province (which includes New Zealand).

There are some minor downsides. It will mean that two instead of three issues of TM will come off the press during this period. In this respect we will all have to make some sacrifice. Strictly speaking subscribers could feel short changed, but it is the only way to make the celebrations and commitments feasible. Without some sacrifice on our part the editor would not go at all. We owe him too much to let that happen. Trying to sustain the usual output is impracticable. Even the reduced workload will leave our talented assistant editor with more than enough to do.

To conclude on a brighter note, a laptop computer will ensure that Michael is not entirely divorced from TM and he has 'promised' us that some columns will appear in TM as a way of sharing the experiences he is soon to enjoy.

Ad multos annos!

Tom Cloher

Earth in transition

Diane Pendola

The earth turns. The solar energies are waxing towards their peak. The summer solstice marks one of the great transitional moments of the year. Primal peoples have celebrated such seasonal cycles of change and renewal throughout the world, and throughout time.

But something new is breaking in on human consciousness. For the first time, our modern scientific view reveals a universe with a *beginning*, some 13 billion years ago. We learn that the universe has gone through a series of transitions and transformations that are not cyclical and ever-renewing, but rather are one-time events – irreversible events.

We are in the midst of such a crucial transition at this, our moment in time. The earth is going through the greatest transition of her last 65 million years of evolution; Thomas Berry would say – the greatest change the human race has ever known. We are passing from one age to another. Berry maintains we are in the terminal phase of the Cenozoic era, that ‘lyric’ period of the earth’s history during which “we have the full development of the flowers; we have the wondrous development of the birds and insects. Many of these existed before the beginning of the Cenozoic but they had their full flowering only in the past 65 million years”.

This has been the time of evolving earth’s awesome beauty: butterflies, hummingbirds, all the wonderful variety of flowers, the eagle and the salmon, the polar bear and all the wondrous diversity and splendor of life, including human life. Yet we humans are actively terminating this ‘lyric’ period. We have actually changed the chemical make-up of the planet. We are setting a reversed sequence of forces into operation. The whole Cenozoic process is to some extent being negated. And it is happening on a planetary scale.

The mayor of Hiroshima, commenting to the *Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty* review committee last April: “The present leadership of the United States is pursuing the development of small useable nuclear weapons... (it) relentlessly and blatantly intends to maintain, develop and even use these heinous, illegal weapons. Given U.S. intransigence, other nuclear weapon states cling to their weapons, and several non-nuclear states appear to be re-evaluating the need for such weapons.” (See *Tui Motu* 2003 June p 5)

That is but one of the many threats already bringing the ‘lyric’ period to its end. The American Dream perpetuates the illusion that our economy can grow forever; that the earth’s resources are unlimited; that the entire world can somehow be ‘developed’ in such a way that everyone can enjoy a ‘first world’ standard of living? We collude with each other like addicts in denial of our common pathology.

Berry counsels us to remember another kind of dream,

manifest particularly in the dreams of our youth. “Go back to the dreams that you had when you were excited by life, when you spoke about what you would really like to be. Consider those dreams as your basic guide. Our night-time experience is needed for communion with those numinous powers from which the daylight forms themselves come into being.

What are you most happy with? What are you most delighted with? What are your competencies that give you joy and delight and relatedness to others? These questions are what we have to ask ourselves. And then we must listen for the answers.

Thomas Berry suggests we have been autistic in regard to the natural world, locked up in ourselves, isolated from the great conversation in which this ‘listening’ needs to occur. We need to be listening to the forests, the rivers, the winds, the seas. We need to become intimate again with the larger Self, with the great dream of the Earth.

I had a night-time dream recently. In it I am with a woman who is weeping, lamenting: “What difference do my choices make? I make small choices every day and what difference do they make?” And I respond, also in tears, “If there is one example of the power of particular choice, it’s the example of Jesus Christ, who made the same choice every day of his life.”

My choices seem so small and insufficient. I plant trees while the tropical rainforests are extinguished at the rate of more than an acre a second. Global warming makes tinder out of western American forests. I wanted to change the world and now the world changes me. I am the woman who champions the power of choice, ‘particular’ choice, embodied choice, choice that has a mind and a heart, hands and a will. Yet I weep in compassion for my sense of insignificance, of dread, of despair and for the suffering that can conquer us.

And I am the Christ, who makes the same choice every day of my life. A choice for life. A choice for love:

I have given you an example so that what I have done for you, you may do for one another. Love each other. Serve each other. Find your Self, find God, find the Universe in your love for all beings.

Do not be concerned about insignificance or greatness. Concern yourself only with love and the small every day choices that embody love in the particular circumstances of your life. And you, too, will be led into the depth and breadth of your True Nature, your Christ nature, into the Great Communion of Being. ■

Genetically modified crops?

Not in my backyard!

*Americans are already free to sit down
to a complete GM dinner, but do we want the same choice?
Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall comes out fighting for nature.
This recent British report is equally relevant here*

Of course we should be opposed to GM. It is about some of the biggest, richest, most powerful companies on the planet seeking to own and control global agriculture, and who would want to support that?

It represents the final theft of the means of food production, away from local, regional and even national communities, into the hands of a few inter-national corporate giants, based in America, who will quickly come to dictate, without opposition or discussion, what kind of seeds and what kind of chemicals will be spread over every cultivatable inch of the world's land surface. And if I overstate fractionally the reach of their capability I fear I exaggerate not one iota the extent of their ambition.

It is utterly, inescapably obvious that we don't need GM in the UK and in Europe. Our agriculture is already over-industrialised and over-productive. We have millions of acres 'set aside' for non-production. What possible benefits could accrue from another step down the road of 'efficiency'? The good news is that most of us are already persuaded by this argument – and by fear of GM safety, of which more in a moment. In Europe at least, democracy has said 'no' to GM.

The only conceivably acceptable pro-GM argument – that it might help us feed the starving in the poorer parts of

the world – turns out to be the most cynical and reckless of all. Far from offering hope and independence to Third World farmers and growers, GM represents the new economic enslavement of the Third World – neo-colonialism by proxy.

Everybody who works at the hard end of the aid business will tell you that it is politics, war, poverty and drought, and most often pernicious combinations of these factors, that conspire to create famine. Which of them precisely can be cured by a genetically modified seed? I believe they don't yet have one that grows without water, or produces fruits that pacify dictators.

The fact is that if you want to feed

the starving, you must dodge bullets, negotiate with warlords, and rebuild infrastructure. If you want to help the starving feed themselves, you must give them ploughshares and irrigation. If you want to help them compete effectively in the global food marketplace, then give them access to markets and a fair price for the products of their labour.

If, on the other hand, you want to own them and control them and make them mere pawns in your industrial empire, then sell them a strain of genetically modified seed and a patented production system that means the seed cannot germinate without your additives, cannot grow without your fertilisers, cannot prosper without your weedkillers, and

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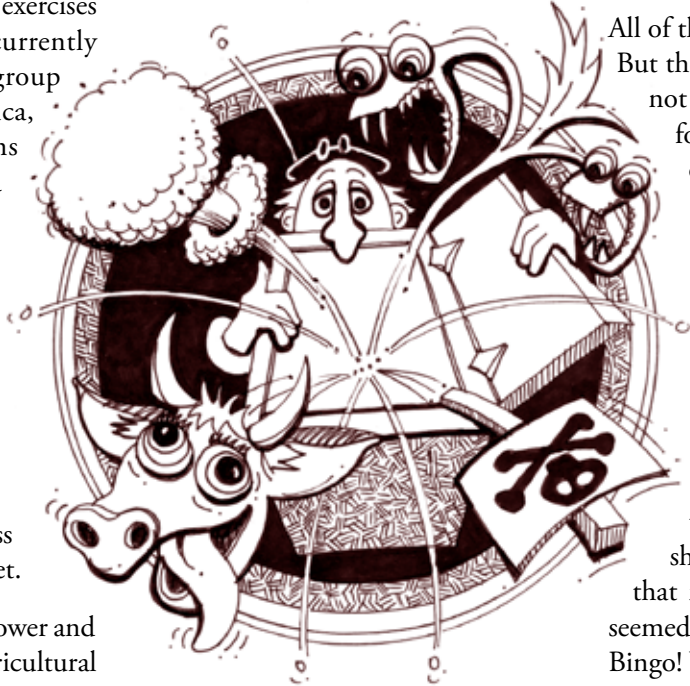
cannot even produce a viable seed for the following year's harvest. You will effectively then own these farmers, and their crops, even to the extent that you will be able to tell them who to sell to and how much for.

Not that GM companies wouldn't go to extreme lengths to convince us of their benign intentions. In one of the most cynical public relations exercises of all time, Monsanto are currently flying around the world a group of cotton growers from Africa, who have for several seasons now been participating in a pilot project growing cotton using Monsanto's GM seed. They are giving interviews to the world's media, telling them that GM cotton has increased their productivity, their wealth, and boosted the prosperity and facilities of their community. Yet all this on a pilot project whose success was guaranteed from the outset.

Of course Monsanto has the power and wealth to transform a small agricultural community and ensure its short term prosperity, just as it has the power to give them a fabulous all-expenses paid trip to charm the world's press. It tells us nothing about their ability to improve the lot of the subsistence farmer and everything about their lack of corporate integrity and cynical opportunism.

So, GM to feed the world? Pull the other one. In fact, the exact reverse is far more likely. A GM-dominant agribusiness in the third world will create the classic preconditions for hunger and famine: firstly ownership of resources will be concentrated in too few hands (this is inherent in farming based on patented products), and secondly the emerging food supply will be based on too few varieties of crops too widely planted. These are the worst possible options for Third World food security. No wonder there is not a single aid agency or famine relief charity that thinks GM holds significant answers to Third World hunger problems.

But of course, given an almost inexhaustible supply of Western apathy about the plight of the Third World, the above arguments are perhaps less likely to engage the man in the street than the other Big Question about GM. Its safety. So it's worth knowing that here too, large lies are being told by men with remarkably straight faces.



Perhaps the biggest lie is that 'science' has 'proved' GM to be safe. In fact science has done no such thing. The astonishing truth is that science has shown a marked reluctance to undertake any worthwhile investigation of GM safety at all. And as Craig Sams, the chairman of the Soil Association says, the few studies involving safety testing – by feeding GM foods to animals – has produced disturbing results.

Here are a few examples: Tests on GM 'FlavrSavr' tomatoes resulted in lesions in rats. Scientists at the US Food and Drug Authority even asked for it not to be approved. Dr Arpad Pusztai's notorious experiments with GM potatoes and rats showed severe gut problems in the test animals compared to those fed non-GM potatoes. Despite the largely successful attempt to discredit him publicly, Pusztai's paper had been peer reviewed six times prior to publication. Compared to most GM

research sponsored by GM companies, it remains a model of experimental propriety and credibility.

In GM chicken-feed experiments, twice as many chickens fed GM maize died as those fed the conventional crop. Despite this, the GM maize was approved by the Government but later withdrawn following public pressure.

All of the above should make us worry. But the bottom line, of course, is that not nearly enough time has elapsed for us to be in the least confident of GM safety. Meanwhile, what's the best comparable example that the kind of trans-genic tampering that is the essence of GM might eventually lead to some pretty grizzly consequences? Well, for about 30 years there was 'hard scientific evidence' that feeding high levels of animal proteins to grazing ruminants (i.e. dead sheep to live cows) was 'safe', in that no significant health problems seemed to have arisen. Then suddenly, Bingo! We had BSE.

The production of GM foods is in many ways comparable. It involves combining strands of DNA, often animal derived, that could never naturally come together, then introducing these mutant strains to both the animal and human food chain. Such unprecedented and unnatural steps are producing entirely new materials for both the biosphere to contend with on the macro scale, and the human gut to deal with on the micro scale.

Why should we be in the least surprised if at some point, something very nasty happens? ■

*From the Observer newspaper,
8 June,
2003. The article is*

Why the Prostitution Bill is bad

Richard Randerson

Recently the Anglican Church has been involved in two controversies on sexual morality: the Prostitution Reform debate in this country and the proposal to appoint a gay priest as a bishop in England.

Prostitution here has never been illegal in itself. The Bill sought to provide protection for prostitutes against exploitation, health risks or violence, and the church leaders endorsed that intention. But having listened to a representative of the Prostitutes' Collective speak on the topic earlier this year, I was not convinced the Bill would offer a great deal in that regard. In Australia, decriminalisation has still left many operating outside the legal framework, as recent reports on the trafficking of Asian women in Victoria have graphically shown.

Media reports indicate that the new law has been condemned by a United Nations committee aimed to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. The UN committee likened prostitution to pornography, and classed it as oppressive and humiliating of women.

*like pornography,
prostitution is oppressive
and humiliating of women*

Some MPs supported the Bill from the classic liberal position of the freedom of consenting adults to do what they like in private without State intervention. They classed prostitution as a victimless activity which should not be subject to official restriction. There is a *prima facie* case to support such an approach: individual freedoms should not be curtailed unless it is necessary to prevent harm to others.

But it does not appear that decriminalising brothels would be a victimless act. On the contrary, prostitution would

more likely become a normalised form of recreation which would attract more clients, and hence more young women, into prostitution.

I was twice asked about the ethics underlying the Church's stance, and replied that ethics should be based on the outcomes of any activity. The approach we took could be described as that of utilitarian ethics, which seeks the greatest good for the greatest number.

A lesser good (limited protection for some prostitutes) was balanced against a greater evil (the drawing of more people into the web of prostitution, both damaging the individuals concerned and undermining key elements of the wider social fabric such as committed relationships and stable family environments). On this assessment the Bill would do more harm than good.

While it is not always appropriate to offer an overtly theological perspective in a public debate, yet theology is an essential underpinning for the Church's approach to sexual morality. One theological plank in respect of prostitution is that of care for the wellbeing of individuals, and Jesus' love for all people, especially the poor and marginalised amongst whom many prostitutes are numbered. But, as indicated, it was necessary to balance the wellbeing of one group against that of others, and to make a judgment as to where the greater good lay.

A broader theological principle lies in the Church's understanding of the relational nature of sexual expression. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, established at Oxford in the 1980s an institute for the study of Christianity and sexuality. His research led him to conclude that Biblical teaching on sexual relationships puts as much emphasis on bonding, with its

essential ingredients of love and fidelity, as it does on human reproduction. By contrast the casualisation of sexual activity, or any form of sexual abuse, falls short of Christian standards for the well-being of individuals and society.

An emphasis on bonding between two people, and between parent and child,

*the Bible
emphasises love and
fidelity as essential*

undergirds church teaching on marriage as being lifelong in intent, and as providing a secure environment for the raising of children. Pastoral and psychological evidence supports such a view.

The issue of human sexuality is not an easy one for the Church to speak on. We are fearful of being accused of Victorian morality, or being anti-sex, or unprogressive, and hence have too often said nothing. Yet the Church's teaching on commitment in relationships is not based on some archaic set of rules which are disconnected from reality. Commitment in relationships leads to fulfilment in living, and security for children where children are involved. There is solid social and psychological evidence to support this. Our morality is not prescriptive (prescribing a set of rules to be obeyed), but descriptive (describing what works in human life and relationships), and offering a vision for all to seek.

It is in line with our understanding of the Trinity which symbolises a community of relationship within the Godhead itself, and sets the pattern for all of life. ■

Bishop Richard Randerson is Anglican Dean of Auckland

Dying with dignity



Bishop Penny Jamieson

I have been wondering about the introduction of the *Dying with Dignity* Bill. When this bill emerged from the random process of the parliamentary ballot of backbenchers' bills, the hope MP Peter Brown expressed was that consideration of the Bill would generate some real debate in this country about the important and universal issue of dying. But there seems to be little likelihood of this happening.

So what is this Bill? The Bill would allow a terminally ill person to request a doctor end his or her life. There would need to be two doctors to diagnose the patient, to give them alternatives and ensure the request for death was voluntary. Patients would be referred to a psychiatrist and a counsellor and their requests could not be activated if they were depressed, or suffering a mental disorder. Next of kin would have to be informed.

The Bill at present provides for a referendum on whether people should be able to choose their time of death. The present position is that, under the *Code of Consumer Health Rights*, every New Zealander has the inalienable right to refuse medical treatment. This gives some real options to dying people.

There are those, probably most, on both sides of the 'debate' who are quite clear that this is very simple, even if what they are about is a deep matter. Respect for life is inviolable, the individual's right to die without pain is inviolable. And both sides have claimed that God is on their side. I wonder however whether the strength of these assertions is not rather an indication of our longing to be utterly sure of our rightness.

So we see the somewhat distasteful tendency in our hearts to ignore the mixture of motives and the uncertainties of understanding that lie behind our own decisions, to ignore the elements of chance and hidden prejudice, temperament and feeling that make up our minds, even on the most profound matters. We fear that if we admit this sort of mixture in ourselves we fail to distance ourselves clearly enough from what we believe to be evil. The questions posed by the euthanasia debate are hard. They force us to face the unwelcome idea that some people's lives are a burden to them – and they themselves judge their lives to be not worth living.

And we do not always know what we are talking about – dying is a very hidden process in most families. Although people say that it is not the dying but the pain that is undignified, death is such an outrage, it is hard to separate the pain that the patient feels from the indignation and grief that the loved ones are experiencing. It is not easy to stay the long course with someone when there is no hope of it ending other than in death. We feel uncomfortable, we grieve, and it is all too easy to project these feelings onto the dying person.

Yet there is plenty of evidence that pain is a severe problem in only a few cases. Far more common, is the experience of depression brought on by intolerable passivity. Passivity is a given of illness. When sick and being cared for there is nothing that the patient can do for themselves or for other people.

And passivity is not only a physical reality for the terminally ill. There are also varying social responses to passivity that impact on the question of euthanasia. There have been, in recent years, a number of high profile cases where elderly, terminally ill people have had their deaths eased for them. I am pleased that those responsible for these deaths have been treated leniently by the courts.

But I am puzzled why these cases seem to have involved the deaths mainly of women. In recent years we have seen a number of elderly, terminally ill, and very dependent women assisted in their dying by their husbands, or, in rarer cases, their children. Is it possible that women acquire their sense of self-esteem by their active and life-long giving of care to others, so that they find receiving care especially from those for whom they have cared for so long, so hard to bear? Little wonder then that they find their own physical dependency and neediness intolerable, especially when they see the man they love struggling, overwhelmed and depressed by the caring task. Are elderly women more likely to request an early death? I simply have no answers to this.

But I do know, as someone who has been privileged to wait with many a dying person, both those who profess faith and those who do not, that such passivity can be a real bonus. When a dying person can allow their spirit to align them with the enforced passivity of their body, they can experience a time of real healing of the spirit, which can transform their dying into expectancy. There are many, many people who identify with no clear spiritual tradition, who have their own rich spiritual life. For all such folk, who have the privilege of moving slowly towards death, there are graces that they will only know about when they reach that point.

There is a profoundly spiritual dimension not only to life and living but also to death and dying, whether it is our journey to death or our privilege of accompanying others. The journey to death is a journey of spiritual enlightenment, and it is a tragedy to push this to one side. ■

From articles written by the Anglican Bishop of Dunedin for the Otago Daily Times, reproduced by kind permission of both

Time for a change

Theologian Dr Patrick Maloney asks for a revisiting of the Catholic Church's teaching on sexual sin



The Church's credibility is, I believe, nowhere more tested than in some areas of her teaching on human sexuality. There is ample evidence from surveys as well as our own experience, that her teaching on contraception, as laid out in *Humanae Vitae* and *Familiaris Consortio*, simply has not been received by the faithful at large, ordained or lay.

I was greatly heartened by an editorial by Clifford Longley, a layman, in the London Tablet (April 19th 2003). The article needs to be read in full, but in essence, Longley seems to be saying that avoiding artificial contraception must be seen as an ideal, unattainable by a great many people and not an absolute norm. He questions the claim that the use of contraceptive acts introduces 'an objectively contradictory language, namely that of not totally giving oneself to the other' (*Familiaris Consortio* 32).

He goes on to point out that in the everyday experience of couples, the act of sexual intercourse is quite commonly less than a perfect self giving. He cites everyday problems such as premature ejaculation, frigidity on the part of the woman, 'the headache', even a dose of the 'flu'. Similarly, impatience, selfishness, and thoughtlessness can play their parts.

These, and similar problems make the ideal of total self-giving seem the exception rather than the norm in many marriages. Yet, it is precisely on such imperfect relationships that the conjugal love in many marriages is built. Contraception needs to be seen in the context of the imperfection already present in married relationships. I suspect few couples would be bold enough to claim their sexual relationship was perfect.

Little wonder that so many couples find the Church's teaching unreal, incomprehensible, utterly divorced from their experience of married life and love. Little wonder either, that few Catholics these days appear to take seriously all Church teaching on matters of sexual morality. Chunks of it don't relate to their own life experience. So often, the teaching seems to relate to human beings in the abstract, not to imperfect people of flesh and blood trying to love God in a very imperfect world. Sadly, this style of teaching has a long history.

damage inflicted on countless people by the sledgehammer approach to sins against purity

I really don't know what kind of teaching on sexual morality is offered youngsters these days. Hopefully, it's a lot better than that meted out in my youth and for years before and later. Then it was the teaching of the standard moral theology books of the time. Apart from married intimacy, all deliberate sexual activity was deemed mortally sinful. There was no *parvitas materiae*. That is to say, no matter how minor the action – every sexual thought desire or action, knowingly and deliberately entered into – was deemed mortally sinful and deserving of hell. This is still the official ruling of the Church as indicated in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (2350-2352) and the instruction *Donum Vitae* (1987).

I'm afraid to say I have to question this teaching. Confessors everywhere will attest to the damage inflicted on countless good people, male and female,

by the official sledgehammer approach to sins against 'holy purity'. They present themselves, week after week, even daily, sick with anxiety, crushed with guilt, burdened with fear. Others have just given up on confession completely.

In a great many instances, priests reassure the poor penitent that their sin was not mortal because of some lack of freedom or full awareness on their part. There is no question that in such sensitive delicate and embarrassing matters, the conditions required for serious sin are frequently not present. My point, though, is that these anxieties were frequently caused in the first instance by bad teaching and formation.

I don't profess to being a professional moral theologian, but I suggest that it's high time the moralists sharpened their quills on this matter. I question whether all sexual sin is, of its nature, gravely sinful. The argument seems to be that by knowingly and deliberately embracing any sexual pleasure out of marriage, by taking the part, by implication, one takes the whole. No one believes that all sins against charity or justice or truth are mortally sinful.

To say so simply contradicts our own experience of life. If I punch someone's nose, or desire to do so, or get delight from contemplating such an action, that is quite different from bashing his head in. A lesser act of violence, actually performed, imagined or desired could conceivably lead to the more serious violent action. Still, no one in their senses would claim that the punch to the nose was mortally sinful because it somehow contained the seed of violence which could lead to the more

serious crime. So why then inflate the significance of some minor sexual action? Are we to believe that enjoying a suggestive image indicates consent to fornication, adultery or rape?

It is apple pie normal for adolescents to be curious about their own bodies and even more curious about the bodies of the other gender. I really wonder how many could claim that in their growing up years they never explored, experimented with their own bodies. Let's face it, masturbation in some form is often enough part of that exploration. Masturbation may not always be entirely free of moral guilt, but hardly deserving of hell fire. It may indicate immaturity, levels of self pity and the like. There is danger of it becoming a habit, retarding mature, adult development. It can also be indicative of psycho-sexual problems.

Masturbation certainly falls short of Christian ideals, but is it mortally sinful? Intrinsically and gravely disordered? Likewise, what are we to make of the minor intimacies a courting couple may indulge in? Are they sinful? Perhaps sometimes, and in varying degree – but mortally sinful? In Christian living, appropriate modesty and restraint are always called for, always necessary, but their lack admits a wide range of degree.

It might be helpful to remember that in the early Church, there were only three sins for which one had to seek Penance and forgiveness, namely apostasy, murder and adultery. That may be simplistic in today's complex world, but at least, it avoids the absurdity of strewing the moral landscape with mortal landmines at every step.

My problem with the teaching, as passed down, is that it is so often negative, condemnatory and distanced from the concrete reality of people's lives. For many, many people it is just incredible. It's not for real. What in fact we have done in the Church is to create a climate in which human sexuality is viewed through filters of fear and guilt.

Little wonder that many of our young people as well as the not so young,

dismiss Church teaching on sex as irrelevant. That's a shame, because the Church has much to offer them. I believe it's time for this teaching to be revisited, restated in light of fresh understanding now available through human behavioural sciences, not to mention the praxis of good confessors everywhere.

The position I take here should not be construed as rejection of the Church's teaching authority. Far from it! It does suggest, though, that her teachings may need to be revisited, restated from time to time. Times change and we change within them. Even Pope John Paul II concedes "that the expression of truth can take different forms" and "that the renewal of these forms of expression becomes necessary for the sake of transmitting (the Gospel Message) to the people of today" (*Ut Unum Sint* 19). We have reached such a time.

Further, there is an urgent need for a new theology of human sexuality, a theology that celebrates our sexuality, a theology that relates sexual love to God's love, a theology which sees sexual love as a mirror of the love life of the Blessed Trinity. We need a theology that encourages us to appreciate and

enjoy and grow through the wondrous differences of the sexes, which celebrates our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. We need a theology that opens and reveals for us the full beauty of committed married love within the context of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Think about the lovely phrase used in some marriage services "With my body I thee worship". Sexual love in this context has been beautifully compared to Holy Communion. Now that's getting closer to the right approach.

True, our theology needs to take into account the reality of sin in our lives and the universal difficulty we have in controlling and directing our sexual feeling and impulses. It must, though, be a theology which is constructive, optimistic, a theology which lays before us the model of Christ's love for his Bride, the Church, but which is compassionate when individuals fall short of the Christian ideal.

Frankly, I don't see such a theology coming from male celibates. Their track record is not good. Where is the married couple prepared to share the wisdom gleaned from the Christian experience of wholesome, joyfully lived sexuality? Put up your hands, please. ■

Pat Maloney is parish priest of Waverley, Dunedin



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Retreats in Daily life

A new, parish-based movement in spirituality is quietly growing in the church

In terms of the various works of the church,” says Fr Mark Chamberlain, of Dunedin diocese, “I would rate the lay retreat movement right at the top of what the church does. It’s about a person’s relationship with God – and nothing could be more central than that! It costs very little in terms of cash – although a lot in terms of people’s commitment.”

Six years ago a spirituality team was set up in the diocese. There are two priests on the team, Mark and Fr Michael Dooley. At first it ran residential retreats at Holy Cross Centre, Mosgiel, but the numbers who came were disappointing. So the team decided to look further afield. The idea of parish-based *Retreats in Daily Life* came from a Jesuit initiative overseas. Michael had come across them while training in Australia, and he saw it as a way of making a retreat accessible to people while they continued to pursue their ordinary lives.

This kind of retreat usually lasts four or five days. Participants commit themselves to a daily prayer time each day, and each day they arrange to meet either one-to-one with a director or as a group. The choice often depends on practicality: how many directors are available and when people are able to come. People who have done *Renew* will often say they enjoyed the group sharing, so they elect to follow the group alternative. Many are not used to one-to-one direction, but the group method may be a stepping stone towards having an individual director.

Usually the retreat starts with an introductory session on a Sunday afternoon, and finishes on the Thursday or Friday with a closing liturgy. At the final session people are invited to speak about the graces they may have received during the time of retreat. The wind-up liturgy lasts between half and three-quarters of an hour. So far about 15 of these retreats have been held in the diocese. Bishop Boyle has been very supportive and has sometimes been joined the team. “Increasingly,” says Michael, “we priests see our role as co-ordinators, and

we gather together a new team of directors for each retreat.”

The overall focus is to enable people to discover God in life as a normal day-to-day experience and to generate a fresh awareness of God. For most, this is their first experience of a formal retreat, so the impact can be powerful. “But we do find many people who already have a well-established prayer life.

*I would rate the lay
retreat movement right
at the top of what the
church does*

Then, the retreat simply serves to affirm them in what they are already doing. In the country areas the response can be astonishing. For instance, in Western Southland, all up about 70 people became involved.”

“When the *Retreat in Daily Life* group meets together with a director,” says Mark, “people will talk about what God has done in their lives over the past 24 hours. It’s a sharing, but there is no discussion. What is valuable is for people to hear how others experience God. For instance ‘Jack’ may start describing how God has touched him while he is filling the coal bucket. It doesn’t have to happen in a sacred place or while you are saying the Rosary. What needs to happen is for each person to be able to describe his or her personal meeting with God – without anyone else needing to comment and a minimum of discussion.

“It’s a mistake to use this time for ‘input’. Once I remember playing a hymn during such a session. A woman in the group said at once: ‘I’ve always hated that hymn, and I feel sorry

Prayer is as easy as playing golf

There was once a workaholic, who retired from work. His wife was quite worried about that, so she arranged for him to start golf lessons. The first morning he arrived at the course. The golf pro put a ball on a peg and instructed him to hit it ‘towards that flag over there’. Which the man duly did.

When they walked up, the pro was flabbergasted to find the ball only inches from the flag. “What do I do now?” the man demanded. The pro said: ‘You have to hit the ball into the

hole’. ‘Why didn’t you tell me that in the first place?’ the man answered testily.

“Prayer is simply communicating with God. It’s as easy as hitting the ball into that hole. Anyone who’s played golf knows that it isn’t always quite as simple as that! Yet really, simplicity in prayer is the essence of it. It is God’s presence.”

for God having to listen to such a dreary old tune!’ I learned what not to do!”

Mark and Michael agree it would be much easier if people dutifully came to them at Holy Cross, in Mosgiel. Driving across the country to a rural parish – going to the people instead of expecting them to come to the centre – is a sacrifice for busy team members, but it’s amply repaid by the response.

“The people are often on fire with gratitude. On our journey home we too are more than gratified with what has happened. The presence of the Spirit is manifest. People are amazingly appreciative. Very few drop out. And they put up with any inconvenience to be faithful to what they have undertaken. Like turning up at 7 am on a freezing cold winter’s morning in an old, cold parish hall! Not everyone who comes is a Catholic. People hear that the Retreat is going to happen so they come along. Unfortunately we haven’t got the personnel to offer the Retreats beyond Catholic parishes. But non-Catholics are welcome and it does not create a problem, because Eucharist or formal worship is not part of the programme.

“The key is its simplicity,” says Mark. “We suggest they set apart a time for prayer each day. It may be only ten minutes. Then they do an ‘examen’ at the end of the day. They reflect on where God has touched their lives during the day. If they wish, they can write it down. During the opening session we talk to them about prayer. The only Scripture reading I suggest they use is the Gospel passage of the day.”

Sowing the Seed

Mark Chamberlain has also helped set up the SEED programme in the diocese. This programme aims at forming spiritual directors and focusses on a person’s own prayer experience as well as what they hear and learn about the experience of others in the group. It’s an experiential way of learning. Locally there is a group of 13 who have been meeting monthly for nearly three years. There is a similar group in Christchurch.

The group meets on a Saturday once a month, from 10 am until 4 pm. They start with an hour’s sharing. Then they look at some particular aspect of spiritual direction. In the afternoon they work in groups of three. One acts as director, one the directee and the third person as supervisor. Between meetings they have a programme of recommended reading.

“The worst thing you can do in spiritual direction,” says Mark, “is to ‘professionalise’ it. No training is ever adequate, because the charism of directing someone else is a gift from God. The best the SEED programme can do is give a general sense of what spiritual direction is all about.

“Spiritual directors should never market themselves as if they were on some sort of commercial venture. When people come and say to you: ‘listen to my journey’: that is a sign the charism is present. Often spiritual direction happens spontaneously over the kitchen table. What the SEED programme teaches is a method – and that is the art of doing nothing, of not getting in God’s way! The worst thing you can do is spend the hour

teaching the other person or discussing books.

“As a team we have become aware of how many very prayerful people there are all over. The need, therefore, is for spiritual directors to be available. But direction doesn’t have to be the work of a priest or a trained professional. Just someone with the humility and time to sit back and listen. Anyone can do that.

“Historically, spiritual direction was never an exclusively ‘priestly’ ministry. But in the course of time it became attached to the sacrament of Reconciliation. It became reduced to seeking out what people were doing wrong in their lives – rather than discovering what the Lord was doing right!”

Mark and Michael see a great future for the retreat movement, because people who have experienced these weeks are eager for more. They will then tend to support the talks which the Holy Cross centre lays on, like a series on the mystics which took place a year ago. Recently Mark became involved as a director for a 30 Day Retreat in Christchurch. He’s now keen to see if one can be organised in Dunedin too.

Their dream is that this spirituality movement will grow. At the moment they are simply responding to God’s invitation to work on a very modest scale. They are waiting on God and simply observing what it is the people appear to be needing so as to make their lives richer and more full of meaning. ■



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A fully armoured 16th Century knight: Ignatius' ideal when in the king's service as a young man

Knight errant for St Ignatius of Loyola

Inigo (Ignatius) Loyola was born in 1491, the youngest of 11 children, a Basque from northern Spain. The Basque people are fierce, hard-headed, stubborn, loyal, independent and pious. Inigo was all of these.

The French invaded northern Spain in 1521. The young knight Inigo was wounded in the siege of Pamplona, a cannon ball smashing both his legs. During his long convalescence at his home castle his conversion began. Reading the lives of the saints Inigo resolved he could emulate a Francis or a Dominic. He would become a 'knight for God'.

When he became well again he determined to go to Jerusalem as a poor pilgrim. But first he visited the monastery of Monserrat and spent long hours in prayer in a cave at Manresa nearby. He had a vision of light by the river Cardoner, and was convinced that he was called to the service of God.

Inigo's path to conversion is the pattern of the *Spiritual Exercises*, which he started to write and to use with others. The *Spiritual Exercises* is not a text to read but a process to be done. The text is the manual for the giver (retreat director).

Classically the *Spiritual Exercises* are divided in four 'weeks' which the receiver (retreatant) spends walking with God – (1) through the story of Creation and human sin; (2) the hidden and public life of Jesus; (3) his passion and death; (4) his resurrection.

Praying the Ignatian way

Rev Pamela Warnes, from Christchurch, became interested in the spirituality of St Ignatius while in South Africa. For many years she had been involved in experience-based learning, and was astonished to discover that nearly 500 years ago Ignatius was on about the same thing: reflecting on the experiences of life and discovering God there.

The basic questions that come out of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius are *Who is God? Who is God for me? Who am I?* The Exercises, says Pamela, enable you to get in touch with your own life experience and find God there. "Ignatius is flexible. There is no 'hard and fastness'. His approach is always: *Who is this retreatant in front of you? What is their context? Where are they physically and emotionally?*

"You could criticise the Ignatian way as very male-centred. Ignatius was a soldier, a man of action. But there is

a literature which adapts the Exercises for women. That's essential."

Pamela was responsible for bringing the Ignatian 30 Day Retreat to Christchurch last May. The directors included George Drury SJ from the USA, Mary Gleason RSM from Christchurch and Mark Chamberlain from Dunedin. She describes it as "an environment of very deep prayer... 16 people engaged in silence, having a daily rhythm of five meditations a day and Eucharist at night. All in silence, eating together in silence, enjoying the majesty and splendour of the place (*Living Spirits*, near Lyttelton Harbour)."

When Pamela made the 30 Day Retreat herself she had an experience which helped her identify closely with Ignatius. When out walking she slipped and broke her leg. It was when recovering from a shattered leg wound that Ignatius first dreamt up the discovered the 'discernment of spirits'.

"Ignatius was holed up in this castle bored out of his tree," says Pamela. "The only books on hand were lives of the saints and a life of Christ. He found himself daydreaming sometimes about his battles and his exploits with women – and sometimes about the books he had been reading. He noticed how he felt after his dreaming.

"When he finished dreaming about the life of Christ and the saints he felt peaceful and contented. After dreaming about his love affairs and his exploits in battle he felt disturbed and uneasy. The experience was crucial to Ignatius' understanding of the relationship between God and ourselves.

"For me, my spirituality means a deepening of the relationship with God, and thus with myself and with others. It's a dynamic process. Our whole Christian belief centres round relationship."

(from an interview by Kath Rushton rsm)

God

The prayer method is 'imaginative contemplation'. The retreatant is encouraged to be present with Jesus in the Gospel scenes during the prayer times. And later to reflect over what has happened with his/her director. The aims of the process are to discover God in one's life and to seek conversion.

Ignatio attracted around himself a group of companions, of whom Francis Xavier was the most celebrated. They became the nucleus of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), and grew to be one of the most numerous orders of male religious in the



Portrait of Ignatius from his death mask

Aims of the Spiritual Exercises

- to raise the consciousness of the retreatant: *what is the Spirit saying to me? What is the evil spirit trying to say to me?* This challenge is reinforced by a constant awareness of God's presence and care for us. The process was countercultural in Ignatius' time – such a sense of God, so much part of the mediaeval European world, was rapidly being undermined by the humanism of the Renaissance.

The Exercises aim to develop in the retreatant the attitudes and responses that Jesus would take in situations that do not actually arise in the gospel narratives but do arise in our lives. The Ignatian way is to develop a sense of intimate companionship with Jesus which will lead to unconditional service.

- to become critically aware of what is right or wrong with one's present life, society and culture. Subtly Ignatius guides us through the stories of the Fall in order to underline what might have been and what could still be realised in our lives through God's grace. The message of the Fall is one not of despair but of hope.

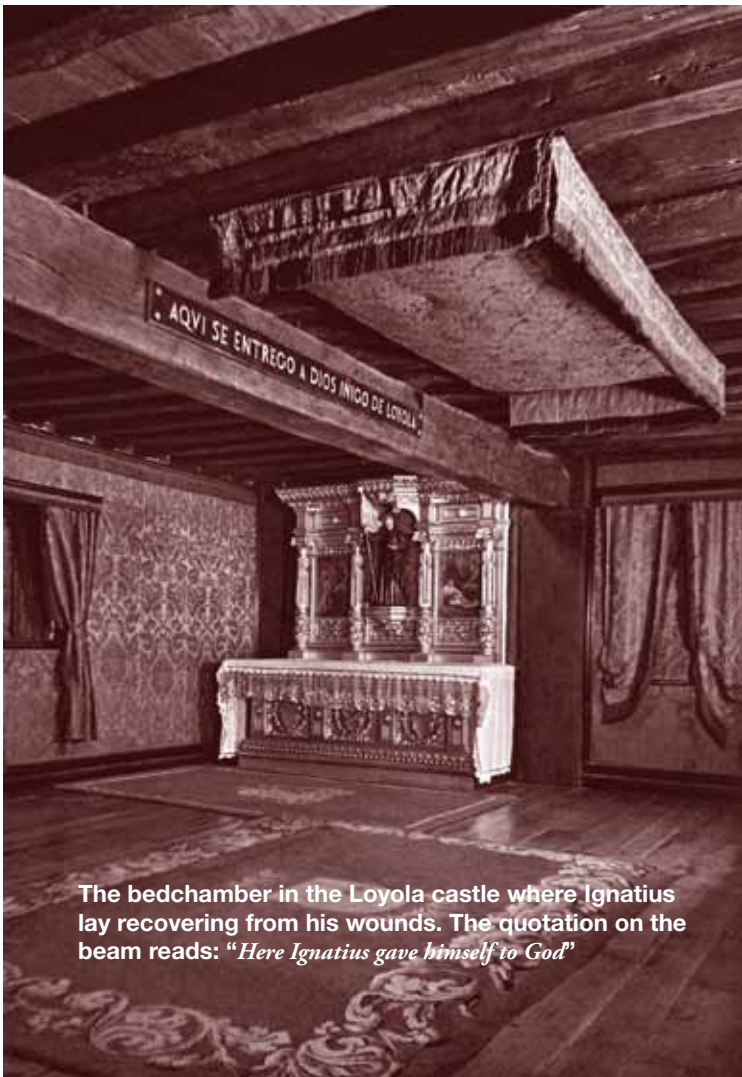
- to enlighten and empower the retreatant to embrace God's will in one's life and to dedicate that life in the service of God. We become aware of the power of grace within us, so that we may act in tandem with Jesus in the transformation of our world.

- to respond to a call to instant action. Love is to be expressed in acts: in loyal service; in conversion to a total giving of self; in repentance and the renunciation of sin. Engagement in the business of the world becomes a sacred work and no longer a profane one. We aim to sanctify our normal everyday business and activities.

This aspect can rouse opposition from wealthy or privileged people who resist calls for justice and peace because such attitudes on the part of religious people threaten their stake in the status quo. It can also be criticised by those who believe that the call to holiness is divorced from the world and politics. Action and contemplation are seen as essentially conflicting by these critics of the Ignatian way.

- to work for the saving of the present world and the reintegration of creation rather than simply saving individuals *from* the world. Therefore this means a Christian can no longer remain indifferent to injustice, poverty, racism, the exploitation of the earth and its resources, to prejudice or exclusion. A Christian must become committed to working towards the creation of a better and more just society.

(Taken from a commentary by American theologian Monika Hellwig)

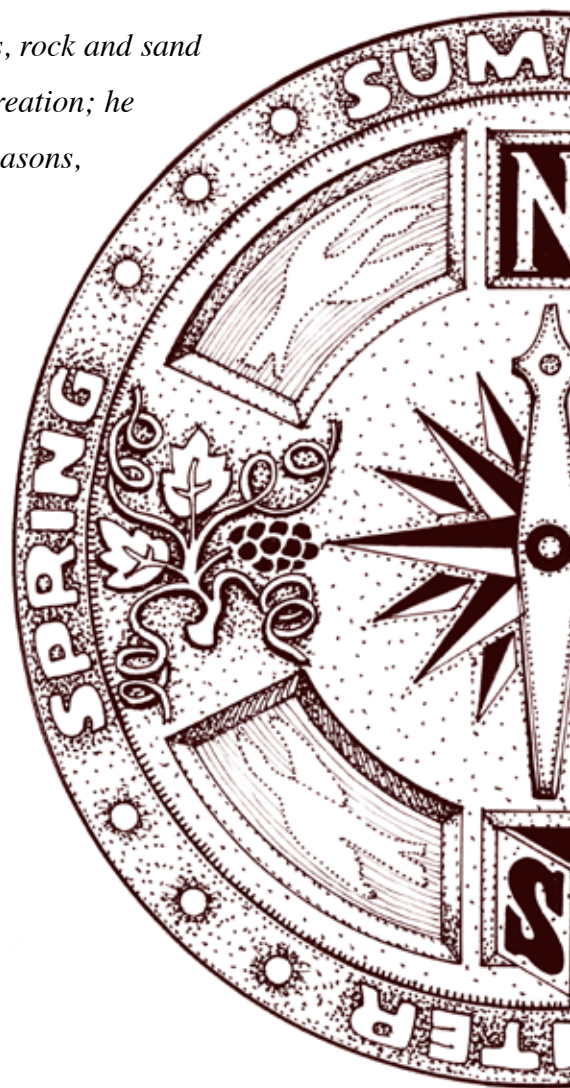


The bedchamber in the Loyola castle where Ignatius lay recovering from his wounds. The quotation on the beam reads: "Here Ignatius gave himself to God"

The Universe as H

We can't help but notice how close Jesus was to nature. When he needed to find himself, to pray, to recharge his batteries, he went out into the wilderness. His parables were about vines and wheat, lilies and sparrows, rock and sand and rich ploughed soil. He understood sacred teachings in creation; he drew from the parables of earth. His life was the cycle of the seasons, from spring to spring.

I believe that God gives us everything we need to realise our potential. The lessons are within us and around us, but often our intellect prevents us from seeing the obvious. That manifestation of God that we call the universe is both healer and instructor. It will put learning situations before us and if we ignore them, will go on repeating them with increasing insistence. If we are going to grow, we need to be continually developing openness to what is happening around us and within us. I've listed here some areas of personal awareness. You will be able to add your experience to the list.



Patterns in the Dance

Life is about growth and growth means challenge. An appropriate metaphor for life is the climbing of a mountain. The further we go, the steeper the way. But at the same time, we become fitter and the views keep getting bigger and better. I believe that we are meant to grow through a series of challenges. Yet, we live in a pain-avoidance society which is always urging us to find some kind of analgesic for our problems. If we ignore a challenge, it will come

back at us, sometimes in a different form. It will keep coming back, each time with more emphasis, until we learn from it. When we look at the patterns in our lives, we'll see that they mask something we need to learn in order to move on. Then a new pattern will establish itself. That's the way of growth.

The Opening Door

If we are fully open to the life process, it will provide us with the direction we need to take and will do this with amazing accuracy. When we are being steered in a new direction, a door will shut in front of us. We all know the phenomenon of the shutting door but when it

Healer and Teacher



happens we don't give too much thought to the universal truth that another door always opens. Why? Because our focus is on the door which has closed. Sometimes, we have to make a 90° turn to discover the way God is telling us to go.

Godincidence

We need to be really childlike to explore this in the face of our sneering intellect. The fact is, the entire universe does conspire to our growth and fulfilment. We look for the Godincidences in our lives, the synchronicities described by Jung. The moment we begin to see them, we realise they are a valuable learning aid.

Recognition of the Hungry Child Within

The Jungian shadow is for me, the hungry child, the primitive instinct for survival demanding attention in a distorted way. Too often we try to bury the hungry child or cut it away. If we reach out to the child in love and compassion, it immediately becomes quiet. We need to accept it with love, tolerance and also good humour, because it will always be there and it will always wake up from time to time, and bellow.

Humour

The cosmos heals with laughter. There is always a danger that we can take ourselves too seriously and when we do that, we tend to inflate our problems. Comedy is the companion of tragedy and there is laughter close to every situation. Learning to see the funny, quirky side of life's journey is perhaps the greatest blessing we can bestow on ourselves.

The Interconnectedness of all Things

The tragic product of our entire history of western thinking is isolation. We separate ourselves from earth, air and water and the creatures who share this planet with us. We possess, we control, we abuse, we destroy. At best we develop a convenient and selective morality – save dolphins and kill white butterflies. When we know that separateness is illusion, that we are all aspects of the same energy, then we begin to see all things as extensions of ourselves, all things as healers, teachers and guides.

A Sense of Otherness

The more we journey, the more we become aware of a great otherness which is also part of ourselves. It is contained in everything, a nameless presence that is at once intensely personal and at the same time universal. We can put words on it – Cosmos, Life Process, Prime Mover, Source, God – but all that these words do is describe our own concept of the nameless. The presence cannot be described by the smallness of human language. But speak to it with a full heart and it will answer you. Dance, and it will dance with you. Offer it your small words of love, and it will give you in return, the great Love you were born for. ■

Joy Cowley

Praying the Rosary

Paul Andrews

I used to wonder why Mary is so often shown carrying a rosary in her hands. After all, it would not make sense for Mary to be saying *Hail Mary*... Our Lady never said the rosary.

No, but it does make sense as a gift, something that prayerful people have developed over the centuries as a simple way of praying. It does not come from Mary, but it would not make sense without her. For an older generation, it was part of what we learned from our mother: along with our prayers she sometimes taught us the family rosary. For my mother as for others, this was often the occasion for brainwaves on important matters such as the style of her clothes, which were mostly of her own elegant fashioning. She would stand up from the final trimmings and move towards her work-basket, her eyes alight with a vision that had hit her in the third Joyful Mystery, of a new hat or blouse or skirt.

Was that a failing? Not in my book. Like the rosary itself, those distractions were a gift of God, and they tell us something about the effect of the rosary. Not everyone would agree with this. I heard some teachers of religion who would have us concentrate on every word we said in the *Our Father's*, *Hail Mary's* and *Glory be's*. That made for scruples, because at the end of a working day you were in no form for that sort of concentration; so when your mind wandered, you just felt guilty.

Even if you were trying to focus on the Mystery associated with each decade of the rosary, it was difficult. Only the brightest could keep pace with the change of topic and refocus after every decade; and the rosary was certainly not designed just for the brainy high-flyers. Of all Catholic devotions, it is one of the simplest and most enduring.

As you gather round a death-bed waiting for the end, and there is no more hope of reaching the sick person, you fall back on the rosary. There will be some around the bed who have become strangers to the old devotions; but even they can quickly pick up the rhythm and words. The murmur of a family praying together can be a comfort both to them and to the dying person, whose hearing is the last sense to fail.

I will never forget an encounter in a New York Hospital in 1959. They called me, the chaplain, to the bed of an old Irishman who was dying. Stranded without relatives in a huge city, working hard merely to survive, he had drifted rather than moved away from the Catholic community. He was happy to meet an Irish priest as he faced his end without any illusions. I shrived and anointed him, and then we prayed together. He could remember the *Hail Mary*, and as we moved through the rosary at an easy pace, his face softened with relief and tears of sheer joy. His troubles were over, and Mary was bringing him home.

Isn't it quaint, how people go to the ends of the earth to find what they have at home? I have known Irish people come back from Arab countries brandishing their latest discovery, worry beads, which alleviate stress when passed through the fingers. Or paying organisations like Transcendental Meditation for a mantra, which they repeat and repeat while meditating. Or marvelling at the repetitive chants of the Buddhists, such as *Om mani padi hum*. God works through all sorts of means, and sometimes we have to go round the world to discover what we started with. The rosary, if you use it with freedom, will offer almost everything we look for in prayer.

Around the time of the All-Ireland final, there was an eye-catching placard to illustrate: *Ask not what your county can do for you....* An old nun was praying at her kneeler with the beads passing through her fingers, her mind no doubt on her county's hopes. The fingers can find comfort in passing the blessed beads through them. The rhythm of repetitive prayers releases the mind, and it can go in all sorts of directions: to designing clothes, as my mother sometimes did; to focussing on the needs of children, or of sick friends, or of some overwhelming concern, and asking God to hear our prayer; to reflecting on the mysteries of Jesus' life, as linked with the different decades; or to reflecting on joyful or sorrowful times in our own lives, trying to see how God was there, when at the time he may have seemed far away.

Even when our prayer becomes more silent and wordless, as we grow older, the rosary can still help. It still releases our mind, because the telling of the beads becomes quite automatic. There are people who move from the reciting of the beads into a sort of prayer that no longer needs any thought. It has been called the prayer of simple regard, or the prayer of stupidity, or mystical prayer. Names do not matter. Prayer is, as the catechism used define it, a lifting of the mind and heart to God, and for that the rosary is only a springboard. Feel free. It is our Lady's gift, to be used as it helps us. ■

Paul Andrews is a priest psychotherapist who lives in Dublin. He has visited and worked in New Zealand

The music of teenage revolt

Mike Marshall looks back over 50 years of rock music.

What, if anything, does it have to say to the Christian

Rock n' Roll – once labelled the Devil's music. It doesn't sit easily with in a church context, though there are those who have tried to produce 'Christian Rock'. From my perspective they have failed miserably. Certainly there has been the occasional marked success where spirituality and rock have been melded, from, say, George Harrison's 'My Sweet Lord' to Joan Osborne's more recent 'What if God was One of Us?'

Why then is it so difficult for rock to sit within a church environment? Even with the myriad of styles that have developed over the last 50 years, rock is, at its core, the music of teenage revolution. I believe a good working definition of a true new rock song is that oldies over the age of 21 should neither like nor understand it!

Following Vatican II, the church attempted in many parts of the world to make its music more relevant, and guitars began appearing in churches along with the introduction of folk-style music, generally warm and fuzzy with a hint of social conscience, certainly as relevant as it could be for the times, but in retrospect, lacking any liturgical bite.

Since those times, newer liturgical music has emerged with a strong scriptural base, and certainly more challenging for guitarists than those early three or four chord tunes, witness the music of John Michael Talbot, David Haas or Marty Haughen. However, their music has its own style and dignity, a million miles from Rock n' Roll.

While some of the classical composers had a marked fan following, and Frank Sinatra and Johnnie Ray engendered early fan hysteria, rock was born in the 1950s with the advent of the teenager. Prior to this, with young people in their teens going straight from school to work, there were no real avenues to explore any resistance to societal norms – part of every young person's typical transition from being a child mirroring parental values to seeing the world through their own eyes as a young adult.

When Elvis Presley uniquely combined the influences of gospel, blues and country music there was a ready-made group of young people to embrace this new genre. Include in this the opportunity to develop new styles of dress, hairstyles and dance, the teen environment came into being, giving kids the freedom to express their individuality while rejecting the safe and, by implication, boring world of their parents.

This potential market was not lost on the adult world of the 'business opportunity' however. Elvis and other true originals, like Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis or Little Richards were soon swamped by a host of safer and more palatable clones, like Fabian, Bobbie Rydell or Frankie Avalon. The music was becoming establishment.

In England in the early 1960s, influenced by original US rock music, black American artists who were hardly accepted in their own country, and a dash of country, and with the tradition of British music hall behind them, *The Beatles* re-invented rock for the kids. They were followed by the likes of *The Stones*, *The Animals* and *The Who*, all of whom missionary-like, spread the gospel of re-exporting black music to America, though now filtered and supercharged through the British experience.

And one again the wheel turned. Lightweights like *Herman's Hermits*, the *Monkees* and *Freddie and the Dreamers* appeared. Since then the wheel has kept on turning. Once a style has become accepted, diluted or marketed, young people go off in a new direction. The flower power of the '60s was replaced by the denim, hair and heavy rock of the early '70s. This was in turn replaced by glam rock, itself then spurned and overthrown by the punk movement, all spitting, swearing and safety pins.

And so it continued. The '80s saw the New Romantics and androgynous rock, this overtaken by rap, which emanated from the black ghettos, developing harder and harder edges, openly addressing issues like sex and drugs, and in some cases inciting violence and suicide. More recently the coin has flipped again and we have had the emergence of harmony-based girl and boy bands and now the marketing of lightly-clad nymphette solo singers.

And this brief history only scrapes the surface of the changing face of rock music. It now has something to offer for a vast spectrum of people. But no matter how much we legitimise it by creating Sir Eltons and Sir Micks, it remains essentially the sound of teenage revolution. Add to this mix the changing face of society, greater individualism, instant global communication, a widening gap between rich and poor and a multibillion-dollar teen marketplace, it now seems what was once mild teen rebellion has taken on a hydra-like head of its own.

John Lennon commented that all you need to say in a song could be said in three minutes, and songs should be like newspapers, valuable today, discarded tomorrow. Most of us who have grown (up?) over the last 50 years probably make a lie out of the latter statement. If the majority of people reading this were to look at rock music in their own lives, most would have the greatest affinity for the soundtrack of their teens, the music they rebelled to!

The Devil's music? I think not. As Kiss sung; "God gave Rock and Roll to You". What we do with it is up to us. I'd like to believe, though, it will always retain the challenge of youth and an essence of rebellion. Nevertheless I suspect we still won't be singing it in church ■

Mike Marshall is a Catholic layman living in Christchurch

Troubadour's Tale

..... the homecoming of Dave

John Thornley

*Dave Dobbyn has come home –
literally to the land of his birth;
metaphorically to the faith
of his youth.*

*His songs today provide one
answer to some of
Mike Marshall's questions
in the previous article (p19)*

Love of the land

Few artists wear their love of the land so nakedly, translated into cinematic images in Dave Dobbyn's lyrics. It comes out of thousands of kilometres travelling to gigs all over the country, to small towns and big cities. It surfaces most in the 1994 *Twist* release, songs produced by Neil Finn. After years of touring overseas Dave comes home and settles down to marriage, family and renewing his career from a home base. "For the first time," he says, "it struck me that the landscape and the weather and the colour and the light and everything surrounding me was not the exterior of something, but the interior working of some heart somewhere".

Listen to *Rain on Fire* (from *Twist*). Over the steady thump of drum, brooding keyboards, and the keening metallic cry of electric guitar, the vocals sing of a land without people, where forces of nature contend for primacy – salmon thrashing against the rapids, lava stirring below the earth, glacier ice inching down the valley, and embedded meteors waiting to be mined.

Dave growing up – through the eyes of big brother

It was a different time, a different culture, a different world. Growing up in Glen Innes in the '50s and '60s: family, church, music and culture were altogether different then from what they are today. Dave and I would share the opinion that if we know anything of the tenderness of God, we owe a good deal to our father. And if there is anything of generosity in us, we owe much to our mother.

Whenever I return home to New Zealand now I marvel at the different ways each of us expresses who we are and how each of us lives out the faith and values we inherited from our parents. 'If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well'. You can see that proverb demonstrated in two brothers who are craftsmen in wood. And then there's Dave, the elfish songsmith and open-hearted entertainer, unaffected by the fame which he has to bear.

Growing up then *was* a different world. Some considered we had a big family – five. Our backyard was often the playground for lots of other children too. There were the trolleys... we would race down Radcliffe St and tear around the corner of Castledine Crescent, where we lived, hanging on for grim death in case you fell and split your head open on the concrete footpath.

Ours was a multicultural neighbourhood, the Robbies from Scotland, the Westons and Pawheras who were Maori... later a Tongan family who grew taro and whose family name I could never remember. Back then, 'multicultural' wouldn't have been in the dictionary. Life seemed to be about being a New Zealander and getting on as best we could, for we seemed to have more in common than what was different. I'd like to say it was multi-religious too. But looking

back we probably lived in something of a Catholic ghetto. You were either Catholic or 'public'. We Catholics walked to school on one side of the street and the 'publics' walked on the other side.



Dobbyn kids and friends, early 60s.

From left: Marie Dufficy, Kevin, Linda Dufficy, Mary, Paul and David – youngest boy John is not yet born.



Troubadour

Romantic love is one of Western Europe's enduring legacies to future generations. From the troubadours of 12th and 13th Century SW France comes the first love lyric poetry written in western Europe – and a continuous thread extends to today's pop songwriters. The evolution has been wonderfully secularising and democratising: from the cult of the Virgin

*There is a river deep in my valley
Jagged rapids and the bony salmon thrash
Upstream but never spawn never spawn no
Rock velvet and sky in my unstable valley
The lava is alive shallow beneath the dirt
Crystal glacier pure and ancient
Moves an inch a year – all it can muster*

*It's a monument
Rain on fire*

*There is a meteor deep in this canyon
A jagged jewel just inches under crust
A dream but never dreamt never dreamed no
From some foreign sky some unstable system
Light years of travel shallow beneath the dirt
Atoms bashing pure and ancient
They will mine it yet – we will mine it yet.*

*It's a monument
Rain on fire*

*Rain down sideways and the wind's carving ice
A team of scientists dressed for the freezing cold
Find evidence of life
Rain on fire
Just like blood
Rain on fire*

Mary and the chivalrous knights of the royal court to the Spice Girls. A matured and seasoned romanticist – and Dave Dobbyn is clearly one of the most eloquent in Kiwi pop – can live with the ambiguities and contradictions of this kind of love.



What particular faith the 'publics' were we never knew nor even asked about. We were right and they were wrong. But in terms of tricycles and trolleys and trips to have a sneaky puff on an ill-gotten cigarette, what religion we were didn't matter much. It was more important that we were friends.

Where was the music in all this? Music was very much a part of being Catholic. The Latin hymns, the chants, the songs that the Sisters started too high! After Vatican II there were guitars and the like. I watched my father's spirituality change from being Irish Catholic to being more Celtic and Kiwi – and catholic in essence and practice. As he was confronted by different attitudes and cultures within his working environment, and more especially as his children went different ways, my father learned to open his heart much more to the experiences life brought him, an experience that was both gospel-based and eucharistic.

There was change all around. I recall marching in Timaru against the war in Vietnam, singing Don McClean songs as we marched to the jeers of patrons gathered in clusters outside the pubs. In choosing to live as a Marist Brother in a community I realised that what I was taking on was in stark contrast to society's expectations and even those of my own family.

In many ways I think I shared an equally precious life-choice with Dave who abandoned Teacher's College for the unpredictable life of a vagrant songwriter. I recall inviting him to my class, in the days of *Th'Dudes*, when I was teaching in Wellington and hearing one of the students puzzling over how we could be from the same family, when our lives seemed poles apart. Perhaps it was the Celtic love for the word, for the disciplines of rhythm and rhyme, that made sure we did not move completely out of each other's orbit.

After his adult conversion I recall Dave telling me he could now understand the choice I had made. When he wrote the song *Shakey Isles* it may not have had the meaning I read from it, but ultimately the language of love is silence, mystery and awe. That comes through many of Dave's songs.

I am pleased that Dave has not channelled his energy into 'Christian' songs. And I hope he doesn't, for he will lose the gift he has to reach so many people. I think it sad that the word 'Christian' has become associated today with political parties and a kind of fundamentalism whose answers are too glib and simplistic. For this reason I think Dave's ballad of the sniper in the *Hallelujah Song* is most apt for the present and a warning to churches of all traditions.

The Reign of God is not without its blessing. It's a blessing I see Dave give to his family as husband and father and family man. It's a blessing I give as brother and one we give each other whenever we meet. Good on ya, Bro!

Kevin Dobbyn

- ▷▷ Dave himself writes: “If the songs appear to be focussed on Annaliesje, the woman I married, they are. She appreciates that, but she also appreciates that I’m not just writing for her, I’m just in love. And I’m becoming more and more in love with the idea of being in love” (*Twist* website). Despite Dave’s addiction to that heart affliction of being “in love with the idea of being in love”, in the end he knows one woman, and one only, as friend, lover and mother to his children. All three aspects of his partnership are celebrated in his love songs.

Justice themes

Awareness of a love greater than the individual and family leads to recent songs raising the consciousness of the community, national and even global themes. Political developments of the last two decades have stifled the individual will to rebel and resist; so the artist can choose to raise a voice for others.

Maybe the Rain, from 1994 *Twist*, is a protest against the Americans dumping nerve gas in the Pacific. Says Dave: “Just before the Gulf War the Americans decided to pull out all their nerve gas from Germany and truck it through Europe and then ship it across to Johnson Atoll. I thought that was an exercise in complete fascism... If they are going to treat the Pacific like a toilet, they are going to carry on doing it”.

*Maybe the rain will wash your tears away
 Into the stream with autumn leaves
 That some other spring may grow – sometime
 Maybe the rain will wash your poisoned hands
 Into the open belly of the ocean wide
 The some other child may grow some time
 Some other child may grow.*

Madeleine Avenue (from *Overnight Success* 1999) may be Dave’s finest social commentary. Developers, with the endorsement of the local council, had pulled down the state homes of the eastern city suburbs to make way for ‘development’. It was part of the Glen Innes of Dave’s childhood – “over the hill, straight out of *Once were Warriors*. Calling it ‘The Street of Shame’ was insulting. It was the place where people lived and died.”

Madeleine Avenue (1999)

*Madeleine Avenue Hood
 Real people giving birth
 To continue the love
 Somehow raise a family
 Coming out of sheer subsistence
 Come circumstances grim
 Plain out of our control
 Yet you victimise and distance them*

*(Chorus) Oh no, oh no
 How dare you call this
 My street of shame
 Madeleine Avenue Hood*

*Where love is lived and lost
 At the sacred human cost
 Over weeping hearts of mothers
 And the workless working class
 On the edge of every minute
 You nonchalantly shame our spirits
 While all we’ve seen is broken down*

*When we’re all to blame for this
 This legacy as losers
 With criminal intentions
 Strictly kept behind the boardings
 While the bourgeois faces grin
 Over houses, lives and sins
 Covered up and bulldozed in*

*On the street called...
 Madeleine Avenue
 Madeleine Avenue*

*Madeleine Avenue Hood
 Where we disassemble homes
 Where we relocate the tenants
 To do digs within their limits
 Just a curse across the street
 From a house not full of angels
 Just a stone’s throw away
 From obliterating history*

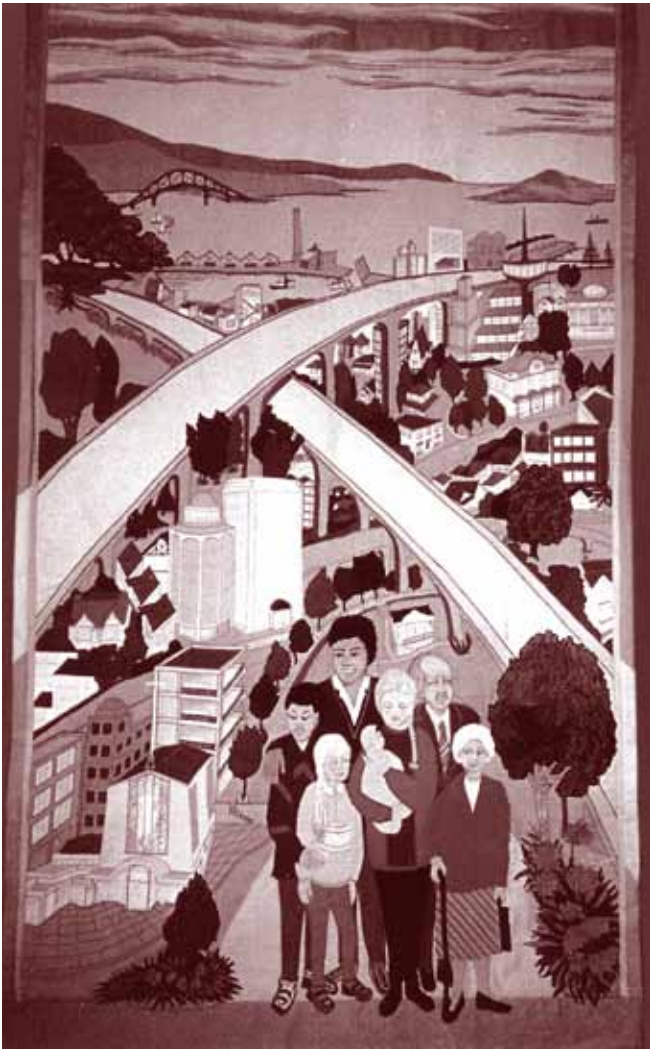
The Christian theme

In a 1999 interview Dave speaks more explicitly of his adult conversion. “I believe in Jesus Christ and he is the centre of all things... he’s insanely in love with us and I’m insanely in love with him.

“The fact is I’m admitting that there is a huge part of me that is not mine. It’s a spiritual life that is not entirely mine. So people slap me on the back for it – I’ve found my way and its quite a journey I’ve been on.”

For signposts and markers we go back to the music. Let us take two examples of Dave’s imagery. The title *Hopetown* (2000 collection) is a word play on the Auckland landmark, Hopetoun Bridge, which takes cars from the central business district to the older residential suburbs of Grey Lynn and Ponsonby. Ponsonby is where Dave’s parents grew up and where he and his family currently live.

The inner city motorway is the central image of a tapestry “The Family in the City”, found in the Aotea Chapel of the Methodist Missions Office, Queen St. (*illustrated right*). Dave himself says: “There’s a sense of vertigo when you’re on the bridge. Underneath is a motorway going in the opposite direction. Meanwhile you’re flying into town, with an amazing view on either side. In a setting like that, there’s some architecture you can relate to. There’s so much more



you can evoke in a song when there's a place to hang it on. I love that; it really excites me."

*It's only in the darkest blackest night
You can see from where the light is shining
Driving for the sake of driving
Like I'm in some kind of dance for you
(Hopetoun Bridge)*

The bridge is a symbol of various journeys we make in life, as we build relationships with others, move from the physical to the spiritual world, and get out of self into communion with others and with God. This latter theme finds expression in a second image, found in the title and chorus of the opening track: *Just add water (and dissolve, baby)*.

The encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well may be the Scriptural link here. Some key lines in the middle of the song express concern at the multinational's exploitation of the environment and the threatened tampering with the genetic code.

*Your world is clanging like a liberty bell
People divining long-abandoned wells
Your air feels thicker and a weight is upon you
Like Babylon burning up in California
Don't move an atom, don't change a thing..
Just add water.*

But the real genius of this song is the phrase 'Just add water and dissolve, baby', an imaginative lift from the Gregg's jelly packet instructions – imagery of individual dissolving beyond self.

In a radio interview with John Campbell (Christmas 2000) Dave said, in answer to Campbell's question regarding his satisfaction after creating a new lyric: "...each time that happens, I acknowledge it as a gift. Because it is. Everything's given to you. You are given the tools; you're given the money; you're given the car keys, and I just love that.

"I'm grateful for that when I'm playing. I think I've got that appreciation for music for what it is. It's instant spiritual language for me and it affects me deeply, and I'm not ashamed to revel in that. It's transporting too. It takes you out of yourself, which is something I've been working on for a few years now".

Finally, let Dave speak for himself, why he writes a certain type of song:

"I have always loved black American gospel music for its sheer exuberance and its beat. I was fascinated as a child to see all those faces enchanted, animated and dancing with such free-spirited singing. Great roots. And so gospel begat jazz, and jazz begat Rock n' Roll, and so on. For me it is mesmerising still – I take great comfort in that as a Christian.

"As a songwriter I'm interested in songs that last – they tend to be the ones that almost write themselves. They also tend to be familiar. I'm interested in being there when they arrive rather than forcing them into shape. I love the fact that people might sing these songs for family occasions. There is a nobility in that. To ask how someone might feel at a birth, wedding or funeral and write something in that vein might speak well for those occasions when we run out of words. These milestones come and go and what better way to mark them than with songs.

"The same can be said of places. To set a song in your own town is a great thing. It's as if by naming places you are pointing to the spirit over them. It happened with 'Madeleine Avenue', a song of mine for the former residents. A lot of prayer goes up for these people now. And that prayer will outlive the houses on the now renamed Mount Taylor Drive where a world oblivious to poverty accidentally obscures a neighbourhood's true history which, ultimately, is a spiritual one." (This excerpt from *Songs that Last: The Spirit in Kiwi Pop Music* by Dave Dobbyn courtesy *St Matthew-in-the-City*: website: www.stmatthews.org.nz) ■

John Thornley is publisher/editor, *Music in the Air*.
For a fuller version see *Music in the Air Summer 2002*
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Ministry... a non-anxious presence

In this second paper presented at the May Conference on Disability and Spirituality (see July TM) Christopher Newell looks at the ministry of healing

It was as if a huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders, my chest, my very being. The day had started so appallingly. I had been battling a chest infection in previous days, mentally gearing myself to do the super-crip thing. A good nights rest, another 24 hours of elevated steroids, another 24 hours of antibiotics. I should be right – yet, as I opened my eyes and took those first few tentative breaths, and immediately regretted it as the coughing began again, I was no longer able to deceive myself.

As my spine screamed at me that it was well and truly awake and not enjoying this experience of coughing, as my chest joined in sympathy with the spine and its complaint at having been so rudely awakened by that deeper breath, the phlegm sealed my fate. After years of infections, pneumonia, bronchitis and years in chest wards with older men coughing their lungs up, I am expert of phlegm and this deep, dark yellowy green phlegm told us I was not going anywhere this morning.

“Where are you now, social model of disability?” I ruefully reflected as I tried to persuade myself that this was yet another social construct which could be overcome. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. It was the middle of my Clinical Pastoral Education unit and the class of CPE had been meeting for some weeks. We were a close-knit small group. For years I had wanted to do CPE but the regular class requirements and the practical commitment (400 clinical contact hours) had made me very nervous. I had spoken about the

possibility of not being able to make all of the classes and it had been stressed that it was very important for me to do so. We were a high functioning group. At that stage where they had all discovered my neurosis and traumas to do with my disability and I had worked through a lot of the stuff to do with doing chaplaincy on the wards.

I was well behind with my contact hours for that week but the CPE supervisor, Eric Cave, was very understanding. Eric had been with me in some dark times before as a Chaplain. Even so, it was with great trepidation I picked up the phone and informed him that I would not be able to make it that morning. He had obviously been thinking about the situation. “Would you be well enough if we came to you?”, he said. “We don’t want you missing another week.” Well, by hook or by crook he managed it. A variety of people were contacted or picked up and here they were assembled in my lounge room.

Ceremonially clad in the requisite fluffy slippers and dressing gown, with O2 cylinder at my side in order to give the appropriate *Days of our Lives* effect, we were served freshly brewed coffee and little cakes that Jill had just baked. We started with prayer. Yes, they prayed for me. It wasn’t the prayer that said what a burden I was. It was a prayer that had listened to me. It was a prayer of ministry and accompaniment. As Bill Williams puts it:

If we disappear from your sight, it may be because our courage failed. We decided not to burden you, and ourselves, with our presence.

But I’ve been with people who are not made anxious by my brokenness, and I’ve seen the difference. It is, in fact, the best definition of ministry I have ever heard; I nearly wept when I heard it, it so defined what I needed. Engrave this upon your forehead, if you would wish to do good:

Ministry is a non-anxious presence

You can tell such grace by its care, by its attentive ear, by its pace. When it reaches out to heal you, it is to give relief to you, not itself – and when it prays with you, it lets you declare your own burdens, rather than declaring what it finds burdensome about you. You may be surprised by what we ask for.

Looking back on it the fellow CPE student who led the prayer that day was really perceptive. Those students didn’t just know about ministry. They were doing it. By then they had all been privy to the abuse I had suffered at the hands of priests and prelates in the name of healing and pastoral care. They knew how critical I could be. The group worked well that day. With all the coughing my pain levels were very high, and sometimes I was fighting for breath. Yet, whilst there was concern for me there was no condescension. They waited for me to indicate how we should act regarding my situation.

Of course some CPE supervisors would never have actually come to me. Yet, that day I was healed in relationship. Far more thoroughly than any pill or potion that I could have taken. For weeks they had had to put up with my critical reflection upon pastoral care. As a new PhD, I was also stuffed full of theory,

spouting the social model of disability and how disability really was all social construct. Yet, here I was manifestly unwell, feeling unwell. They could have had a theological extravaganza with me. They could have had the CPE session without me. They could have given me another exemption based upon the sick role. Yet, instead they changed arrangements in order to suit my requirements, not just because of me, but because the group would have been diminished without me.

We were supposed to be learning by presenting narratives and the presentation of critical incidents. I was learning just from participation in the group, experiencing the embrace of the group and even, in allowing myself to be vulnerable, experiencing the mutuality which truly marks a community.

Yet, I had come with so much baggage – and I assure it was the negative type. As a youngster I had experienced a variety of forms of faith healing. Here is one that I subsequently wrote up in the literature as a verbatim.

Patient: Charles

Age: 18

Denomination: Anglican

Marital Status: Single

Ward: 5G

Patient is an eighteen year old male who has met the Anglican priest who has appeared on several occasions before. He has been diagnosed as going to die, but the only one who doesn't know this is him.

Priest: *"Hello Charles, I have come to save you and to bring you the Lord's grace."*

Patient: *"Hello Father."*

Priest: *"I know you can be healed if you have enough faith. I have come to offer you that."* (Grasps patient's head with both hands and cries out aloud)

"Lord Jesus, cast out Satan from this child, this sinner. Cast out the devil. We love you Lord Jesus, we love you, we love you."

(Patient looks distinctly uncomfortable

and has shrivelled into himself. Charge nurse enters.)

Charge nurse: *"Are you okay Charles?"* (Patient says nothing but looks at nurse with eyes that show despair – or do they?)

Charge nurse: *"I am sorry, you will have to go. This patient needs treatment"*

Priest: (Slowly departs, muttering) *"Praise God, thank you Lord Jesus, thank you ..."*

Two stories, two markedly different realities. Two markedly different approaches to healing and disability which lead to extremely different accounts of chaplaincy and pastoral care. People involved in the provision of pastoral care have significant opportunities to nourish but they also can provide significant damage.



In the healing ministry we meet people at their most vulnerable. They may be frightened, anxious and in great need. They may be facing life-threatening illness, incapacity or other changes in their circumstances and relationships that are causing them distress, trauma and the need for comfort, renewal and a sign of the presence of God with them. At such times, we the Church need not only pastoral wisdom and sensitivity, but also the highest standards of integrity. Those involved in the healing ministry are asked to remember how they like to be treated when they are vulnerable.

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A Charter for Healing and Intercession

A different understanding of healing and pastoral care, of disability itself, is provided by an exciting new book *Making a World of Difference* by UK writers Roy McCloughrey and Wayne Morris. This book provides a re-reading of theology as well as a practical guide to pastoral care for people with disability. Inspired by Moltmann they write:

"So Jesus heals through his humanity rather than his deity. He comes to be with his people and to take on himself the sickness and disability of all. He takes those experiences into God who makes them his own. 'God heals us in that he participates so much in our pains that they become a part of his eternal love'." So every person, however disabled, participates in God's divine life. Each person can have a place where they can find themselves accepted by God as they are. Roy McCloughrey and Wayne Morris also provide a *Charter for Healing and Intercession* which provides a practical guide. (see overleaf)

The charter is offered to all churches, Christian organizations and people involved in the healing ministry as something with which they might like to be publicly identified. We have chosen to use the word 'intercessor' rather than 'healer' to describe the person praying for someone else to be healed for three reasons.

First, healing is an activity of God; the intercessor and the supplicant pray and wait. *Second*, those who pray for healing are not authorities but fellow-travellers. *Third*, it demonstrates that a Christian approach to healing is completely different from the claims of 'New Age healers'.



A Charter for Healing and Intercession

- The focus of the healing ministry is the encounter between God who heals and those people who bring their requests to God. Intercessors facilitate that encounter.
- Every person who asks for prayer for healing should be treated with respect and dignity. They should not be embarrassed or exploited, nor should their wishes be ignored. This is particularly important when the ministry of healing takes place in a public place.
- Those who offer prayer for healing should do so with integrity. Those who come for prayer should do so without seeking to manipulate or in any way undermine those who pray for them. Mutual respect is essential to both intercessor and supplicant.
- If an intercessor uses a particular symbol in prayer (such as laying-on of hands or anointing with oil) the significance of this should be explained to the supplicant and their consent obtained. The supplicant should, at any point, have the freedom to stop whatever is going on.
- No pressure should be put on a supplicant, by any means, to state that they have been healed. They should feel that they have the freedom to say that they do not think they are, to the best of their knowledge. Neither should pressure be put on them to say that they feel any changes in their body (such as heat or pins and needles), unless they do so freely and of their own volition.
- God heals as an expression of his radical freedom to do as he wishes. Healing witnesses to the wholeness associated with the reign of God and points forward in hope to the new world coming. In healing we may have a bodily experience of renewal, but we may also have an experience of the love of God who is with us or a change in our own attitudes to the situation in which we find ourselves. Healing is not the same as cure.
- Healing is not a matter of success or failure. Praying for somebody shows that they are cared for, included in the family of God and shows solidarity with them. Neither those who pray, nor those prayed for should carry this additional burden.
- Where testimony is given, the supplicant should be able to deliver their testimony in their own words and from their own perspective. No pressure should be brought to bear on them, and neither should testimony be given on their behalf, either in spoken or written form, without their consent.
- Praying for healing does not complete the Church's responsibility. It may be important to refer people for continuing pastoral care. Offering prayer for healing means that we are willing to follow people up, ensuring that the Church expresses continuity of appropriate care.
- It is also important to recognize that there is a link between healing prayer and social justice, since those in need may also be the victims of injustice or discrimination. The love of justice is also a sign of our love for God.
- Intercessors should see themselves as part of a team. It is helpful if prayer is offered by people in pairs. This enables responsibility to be shared, perspectives to be discussed and each person to receive support from the other.
- Prayer takes place in a wider context than the Church. Lay people or church leaders who are intercessors in a healing context should see themselves as part of a team, which includes physicians, psychiatrists, social workers, counsellors and other health-care professionals who are also exercising gifts given them by God. Similarly those who work in a medical environment or in social services should not ignore the ministry of the local church.
- Many claims to healing are ambiguous and cannot be verified. Where there is a claim that someone has been healed in a way that is verifiable, this should be investigated and confirmed by medical authorities. Jesus told the leper to 'show himself to the priest' in order that the healing be confirmed. When making claims to healing we should be willing to have them also confirmed by those who are medically trained, whether or not they share a Christian world view.
- Where someone comes forward for healing prayer with an overt impairment it should not be assumed that they have come for prayer for that impairment. The supplicant may not perceive their impairment to be a problem that needs healing. There is no substitute for careful listening.
- People with disabilities may also be intercessors for healing. The Church betrays its calling if it conducts its public healing ministry in a way that is not accessible to people with disabilities. The integrity of the healing ministry cannot be separated from access to that ministry.
- It may be extremely harmful to be told that one is not healed because of sin (either one's own or that of previous generations), or because of lack of faith. In the majority of instances the person who is praying for healing cannot possibly know that this is true. It may be true that a person is struggling morally or with their faith. Such a person needs support, encouragement and care rather than accusation. If there are problems, these should be dealt with privately in the context of pastoral care.
- Intercessors who offer prayer for healing may also be those who want prayer for healing, today or tomorrow. Similarly those asking for prayer may also be those who pray for others tomorrow.
- Intercessors who pray for healing and do so as a permanent ministry in their local church need pastoral care and accountability to exercise their ministry with confidence and integrity. They may also face situations that drain them physically, emotionally and spiritually. They need not only to receive pastoral care themselves, but also to retreat to places where they can find refreshment and new energy for their ministry.
- Wherever possible those people who have a ministry that is recognized by the local church should be commissioned and welcomed into that ministry by the local church.
- Where there are valid criticisms of the conduct of a church's healing ministry these must be taken seriously and not dismissed. The Church will always make mistakes but can only grow in its ministry if they are heeded and lessons learned from them.

'Totty'

God's good servant...

Mgr. Bernard Tottman (1915-2001)

over the sparkling waters of the harbour.

When his days at the Basilica and as Vicar General were over, Totty went to the 1980 priests' renewal at Mosgiel. After it his friends observed in him a real freeing of the spirit. Up to then his priestly life had been a serious business to be conscientiously pursued. Now it was to be enjoyed. He loved his golf. He enjoyed going to the races. Above all he enjoyed offering hospitality and the company of friends.

A parishioner described him as a caring pastor; humble but not to be bullied. He was especially good with the elderly, for whom he always had time and sympathy.

But he was also interested in the needs of the young. He lamented the fact that the church often failed to meet their needs. "I remember the days when the Catholic Youth Movement was strong. Young people learned to express their

faith in a joyous way, and those who came through are the lay leaders of today.

"I fear we are failing to help young people develop their capacity for God. The dioceses have shied off putting their resources into a vigorous youth apostolate; I suppose because they saw it as too difficult."

Totty loved the life of a priest. "I love meeting couples I married years ago," he said, "to hear what they have done with their lives and meet their families. It's wonderful to see people who serve God in a selfless way."

In his funeral address Fr Jim Lyons, his companion in the Onslow parish and personal friend, described Totty's legacy: *joyful in his priesthood, happy in his humanity. To feel that same happiness, that same sense of wonder and awe, knowing that God cares deeply for us in spite of our unworthiness, is not only how we will draw closer to Christ – it is how we can best remember and give thanks for Mgr. Bernard Tottman.*

M.H.

An image engraved on the memories of older Wellingtonian Catholics is of a pair of contrasting figures presiding over ceremonies and church occasions in the '50s and '60s: the formidable figure of Cardinal Peter McKeefry, nearly seven feet tall, and alongside all five feet of Fr Bernie Tottman – MC, guide, philosopher and friend of the Cardinal for 28 years. "Totty" as he was universally and affectionately known, was in those days the model of dutiful efficiency, yet behind the scenes he provided the necessary human support for the shy and distant McKeefry.

"McKeefry was a workaholic", Totty said in a *Tablet* interview in 1993; "He appeared aloof in public, but one-to-one he was kindness itself... He was a hopeless preacher, at his worst when presiding at the profession of nuns! Much better as a talker: he was a man you could talk to... He treated me as a friend. Those evening chats were his chief recreation."

Totty spent nearly all his 60 years' priestly ministry in his beloved Wellington. Driving with him through Thorndon where he was born, he could identify the families who had lived in practically every one of the old houses. He never ceased to delight in the splendid view from the heights of Khandallah down

Fr Vincent Flaherty (1918-2001)

As we go to press we have learned of the death of another faithful servant of God, Fr Vince Flaherty of Dunedin. Fr Vince struggled for many years of his life with various afflictions, but in his mature years he too came to a great serenity. He is remembered as a kindly and devoted pastor and chaplain.

Pictured *right* in his retirement at the Little Sisters' Home, Brockville, with his faithful friend, Amigo.

May they rest in peace.



Alleluia Aotearoa – A Story Of Achievement

AA means a number of things, but always excellence. It also means *Alleluia Aotearoa* and a story of achievement.

From the marketing point of view, its greatest achievement is that, a decade since publication and four reprints later, *Alleluia Aotearoa* is still selling well. Even on its tenth birthday many congregations are just finding out how good it is. From the point of view of worship and the churches, an even greater achievement is that it has changed the course of hymn singing in New Zealand. With *Alleluia Aotearoa*, authentic New Zealand hymns and songs were available – lyrics and tunes – to all churches.

Many of these “ten year old” hymns – such as *He came singing love; Brother, sister, let me serve you; Take my gifts; Join hands in the Spirit; Our life has its seasons; Where mountains rise; With a hoot and a toot* to name just a few – have already become “favourite classics” and part of the common worship experience of our country. It all began 30 years ago in Christchurch, when four people came together to produce a New Zealand hymnbook. They had no idea where to start or where it would lead.

By a number of chances however, the New Zealand group was invited by the publishers, Collins Liturgical, to add a supplement to The Australian Hymnbook, so that it could be sold in New Zealand. It was renamed *With One Voice*. That was 1982.

The New Zealand Supplement’s breakthrough was the publishing of a substantial number of Maori and Pacific Island hymns, in their original languages with ‘non-singable’ English translations. Not all the songs included were of New Zealand origin but noticeably the names of Colin Gibson, Shirley Murray, Guy Jansen and Richard Gillard had begun to appear.

The past ten years, which are being celebrated this year, have been full of further achievements. The editors – some nine or ten people from Anglican, Presbyterian, Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and Gospel Hall traditions – have been

very busy gathering and selecting songs from hundreds of contributions for two more major publications.

After *Alleluia Aotearoa*, the pressing need was for New Zealand carols to sing something of our summer, sunny season. So *Carol Our Christmas* was born in 1996. Then to mark the new Century and millennium, *Faith Forever Singing* was published – “New Zealand hymns and songs for a new day”. In all, these books represent a total of over 250 new pieces, both words and music, expressing our own contemporary New Zealand Christian spiritual experience.

Alongside the books, recordings of the ‘top twenty’ or so of each book have been released in both CD and cassette format.

The recordings are very professional, being sung by leading New Zealand choirs with an emphasis on youth voices. Now, many hundreds of recordings and many thousands of copies of the books later, the Trust is celebrating with a Bumper Birthday Sale.

But more than this, the Trust, through its publications, has since 1993 transformed hymn singing in our country – outside the conservative, fundamentalist churches – and has created a culture of spiritual self-identity within the on-going, ever-changing global Christian tradition.

This is no mean achievement, with few if any parallels elsewhere round the world. AA really does stand for achievement. ■

John Murray

Chairperson

The New Zealand Hymnbook Trust

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Here’s a jazzy song for the long months of Kingdom growing, following Pentecost. It’s very popular and the rhythm gets your toes tapping. It’s written for us, both the words and the music, by a music teaching Dominican Sister, Cecily Sheehy. It is published in ALLELUIA AOTEAROA #137

THE KINGDOM IS WITHIN YOU

The Kingdom is within you,
the Kingdom is within you.

Why do we go searching for the answers
of the mighty?

The Kingdom is within you,
the Kingdom is within you.

Like a little seed planted in the ground,
let it grow.

I will set my face to the wind,
scatter my handful of seed on high.
Needn’t have to worry where the great
wind takes it; seeds will grow wherever
they’re planted.
All we need is courage to keep on facing
the wind.

The Kingdom is within you.....

I will set my hand to the plough;
don’t look back, it’s too late now.
The fullness of the Kingdom is not
quite yet
but the seed of the kingdom is here and
now.

Don’t split the seed; be patient, let it grow.

The Kingdom is within you.....

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Harry Potter's 'dark night of the soul'

Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix

by J K Rowling

Bloomsbury Publishing

Price: \$39.95

Review: Mike Crowl

The latest volume in this publishing phenomena could be classed as Harry's Dark Night of the Soul. It's a long way from the cheerful tone of the earliest book, and even in the last chapters of this story, Harry continues to struggle with the almost over-whelming difficulties he's faced throughout.

I noted, when I was reading it, that the gloom and foreboding pervading the book hadn't cleared by page 400 (out of some 750). It's not surprising: the battle between light and darkness has begun in earnest, and no one has much time to relax their guard. Characters who, in the earlier volumes, brought light to Harry's life, are here anxious and concerned though it's amazing how the offer of a biscuit at the right time can seem like a cup of cold water in Harry's desert.

Harry is now in the midst of his teenage years, and must suppress an anger that threatens to dominate his character. He has several reasons to be angry: his best protectors are still there, but their hands are tied in ways he can't understand. Harry is forced to view his deceased father in a different light, and many of Harry's fellow-pupils regard him as someone who's got hold of the wrong end of the stick. Furthermore, a new and terrifying character, Dolores Umbridge, takes every opportunity to grind him down.

And there's death to deal with. It's unfortunate that the media focused on the fact that an important character dies in this book. Unfortunate, because when it happens, it now lacks the force of something unanticipated.

This book is less self-contained than the

other four: loose ends are left untied, and clues abound regarding future events. It has the unfinished feel of a serial. We're more aware than ever of Rowling's overarching plan; hints she dropped as far back as book one take on new light here. It's an extraordinary achievement that the fifth book in such a series has more depth than the earlier ones, and for all that the climax here is strong, we sense that the great climax to come will surpass all that's gone before.

The writing in this volume shows Rowling's confidence in her audience, and concedes less to her readers than ever. From the beginning, of course, Rowling has expected children to keep up, and to the surprise of many adults, keep up they have. She has never written down to them.

To tell anything of the plot is to give away too much, but suffice to say that Harry must exercise endurance and faith when many of those around him do not. His arch-enemy is alive and gathering his followers, and only a small band know the truth.

After reading Harry Potter IV, I came across *The Gospel According to Harry Potter: Spirituality in the Stories of the*

World's Most Famous Seeker, in which Connie Neal draws out the sometimes surprising spiritual and moral lessons that are part and parcel of this series. Let those who feel these books promote witchcraft and the occult, think again. Neal shows that Rowling is always at pains to show courage, friendship (and fellowship), trust, love, faith, hope, wisdom and perseverance in her characters. Harry Potter, for all his ordinariness, is a boy who mostly makes the right choices, even when in making such choices there is the potential for him to lose his life for the sake of others.

The writer, Andre Dubus, wrote that "in a world inevitably filled with brokenness, pain, and accidents, the only thing we can control is our response to such events, and the assertion of will inherent to an active response is a considerable power indeed."

Making the choice to take the active path rather than letting evil run its course is one of the strongest themes in the Harry Potter stories, and one that will make them enduring classics. ■

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Why we went to war – or was it lies?

Three months after the fall of Iraq, the media is seriously questioning the leaders of the war, namely Bush, Blair and Howard. But why was the media so in thrall to their governments before the invasion, when millions of people were opposed? What excuse can there be?

The American media uncritically relayed the catchphrase, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) as justification for the invasion and the cry was taken up by the press in the UK and Australia, with barely a dissenting voice. What was then trumpeted by the Bush administration now appears ludicrous. Consider Rumsfeld's words, March 30, "They (WMD) are in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad", and those of comical Ari Fleischer, January 9, "We know for a fact there are weapons there". This theme was quickly echoed by Blair with his infamous declaration that Iraq could deploy WMD within 45 minutes. Anything that Bush and Blair said was supported by the sycophantic Howard.

The rhetoric behind the US-led invasion was, in fact, propaganda disseminated without challenge by a compliant media before the invasion, but it is now being re-examined. The BBC is leading the charge and is being pilloried by the Blair government for doing so. Blair's position is indefensible. Indefensible that is, if you discount his ploy of qualifying WMD with the word *programme*. This suggests that any old piece of paper, suddenly discovered, will do.

Pretexts for the war, such as Iraq attempting to buy uranium from Niger, announced by Bush in his State of the Nation speech as coming from British intelligence, have been proved lies. Bush is now more interested in convincing his domestic audience rather than in coming to the aid of his coalition partner. Blair is fighting for his political life. He is having to justify 'dodgy

Crosscurrents

John Honoré

dossiers' and he faces strong opposition from his own party and from the BBC.

It appears that the media is no longer independent. The Rupert Murdoch empire, which stretches to both sides of the Atlantic was overtly pro-war. Berlusconi controls the media in Italy and is a firm supporter of Bush. Opponents such as John Pilger, Robert Fisk and Edward Said, all of whom opposed the war, were labelled as left-wing fanatics. But the evidence is now so damning that not even Murdoch's papers can ignore the lies, deceit and cover-ups. The BBC, and dailies such as the *Guardian* and the *Independent*, are asking the tough questions. Is the supposedly 'free press' really free?

Fishhooks on the foreshore

The Iwi demand that the Maori Land Court investigate whether Maori have customary rights over areas of seabed and foreshore has demonstrated again the gap between Maori and European expectations of *The Treaty of Waitangi*. Maori iwi are arguing on legal grounds and their claims appear to be justified. Since the Court of Appeal overturned the assumption that these areas were outside the boundaries of customary land, the case must be heard without prejudice. The decision has not been legally disputed, and the Government has decided not to proceed with a case to the Privy Council. The whole affair will be a test of good faith between Maori and other New Zealanders.

Iwi are not seeking exclusive rights to the seabed and foreshore, and have never threatened to block or restrict access to them. It is interesting to note that the bed of Lake Taupo is vested with local iwi, and nobody's right to gain access or to fish for trout has ever been questioned. Indeed, it could be argued that Maori are good custodians of their land and have a natural affinity with their environment. It would be counter-productive for them to antagonise Europeans and threaten, through due process, the existing understanding of sharing the natural features of New Zealand.

Inherent in this claim is the Maori objection to the discharge of effluent into waters over which they have customary rights. They also point, quite rightly, to the fact that it is bodies such as port companies and local authorities that block access to many seashores and disregard the ecological balance of the seabed. Further, *The Department of Conservation* is locking up vast tracts of land in the South Island high country, and individual land owners are beginning to object to fishermen crossing their property in order to reach the rivers. Crown ownership and public access rights are already being threatened and not by Maori.

A great deal of confusion can be avoided if the hotheads and malcontents on both sides are ignored. Politicians should avoid making cheap political points. For the first time Maori seem united on an issue. They are saying that the principles of the Treaty must be recognised by the country's law courts.

This dispute goes to the heart of the belief that we are one people – Kiwis – who live together in harmony with equal rights under The Treaty of Waitangi. Maori are asking for dialogue with government to reconcile the political and practical implications of that Treaty for the benefit of all New Zealanders. They deserve to be heard. ■

Human rights and the Law – civil and church

Cherie Booth QC, the lawyer wife of the English Prime Minister, Tony Blair, recently delivered the third annual Tyburn Lecture. She set out a Catholic perspective on human rights.

The convent at Tyburn in the West End of London was an eminently suitable venue for such an topic. Between 1531 and 1681, some 105 persons were executed at Tyburn for their profession of the Catholic faith, a blatant violation of their human right to religious freedom. Not that Catholics can draw any sense of superiority from those events. As Cherie Booth noted, in the same era in other parts of Europe Christian believers were being executed by Catholics for their profession of Protestantism.

The speaker saw the turning point in the recognition of the existence of human rights as being the Nuremberg Trials of 1946 that followed the demise of the Nazi regime. Under Nazism all the forms of law were observed. The courts continued to operate, dealing with normal business. But in fact Nazi law enjoined the discrimination against the Jews, and ultimately their expropriation and extermination.

It was following these events that the United Nations proclaimed in 1948 the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. This has been followed by other international declarations and by incorporation of provisions as to fundamental rights and freedoms in the legislation of many countries, including, as Cherie Booth noted, New Zealand.

The language of human rights, when it first emerged in the throes of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment attack on religion, was first viewed by the Church with suspicion.

But those days are long since past. One of the foremost exponents of human rights today is the present Pope. Typical is his address to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1999. John Paul II, while conceding that different cultures and different historical experiences give rise to a legitimate plurality of forms of freedom, affirmed the universality of human rights and their fundamental moral status.

Cherie Booth pointed out that one of the post World War II insights into the proper protection of fundamental rights is that the death penalty is unacceptable. For example, the Sixth Protocol to the European Convention, dating from 1983 provides that: "The death penalty shall be abolished". In his 1995 encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* Pope John Paul concluded that in most cases there was no longer any moral basis to justify the use of the death penalty by the State.

Ms Booth reported the reflection of Justice Antonin Scalia, a judge of the Supreme Court of the United States who is himself a Catholic, as to the dilemma in which he saw this placing those engaged in the American legal system. "The choice for the judge who believes the death penalty to be immoral is resignation rather than simply ignoring duly enacted constitutional laws and sabotaging the death penalty. He has, after all, taken an oath to apply those laws, and has been given no power to supplant them with rules of his own." He envisaged that if the Church's new position on the immorality of the death penalty were imposed on the faithful, this would require American Catholics to withdraw from public life because it would effectively disqualify them from running for political office, from sitting as judges, from working as criminal prosecutors, or from serving on juries. This was not, he suggested, the course of prudence. >>

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▷▷ Justice Scalia's solution to the problem was to see the new position of the Church on capital punishment as a non-binding one. Given that the position has been adopted only in very recent times after a long history of Church acceptance of the legitimacy of capital punishment, as instanced by the Inquisition, his view is not without merit. Cherie Booth, however, believes that a better solution would be to interpret the U.S. constitution in the light of post-Nuremberg human rights developments rather than in the mind set of the time when it was written.

Judges and the death penalty is no longer a New Zealand problem. But conflicts between the religious convictions of a judge and the prescriptions of our civil law remain a possibility. I can recall my father, at that time Chief Justice of our Supreme Court, pondering 50 years ago on the implications for himself of a statement made at that time by the Holy See on the involvement of Catholic judges in divorce cases. The medico-moral issues of today can well provide areas for potential conflict of obligations.

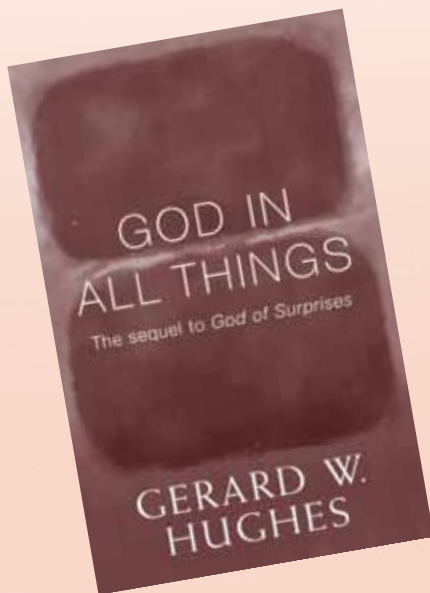
Cherie Booth does not provide answers as to how Catholic judges and other legal folk should solve dilemmas of conscience with which they may be presented. But at least she alerts us to the existence of such questions, and this calls us to work towards finding solutions.

She also gave attention in her address to the matter of human rights within the Church. She cited the principle that the 1967 Synod of Bishops enunciated, "Everyone who ventures to speak to people about justice must first be just in their eyes. We must undertake an examination of the modes of acting and of the possessions and lifestyle found within the Church itself."

She found time to deal only with the position of women in the Church. Her treatment was restrained, talking on the sea change that had taken place in her lifetime of the visibility of women in the Church and of green shoots that were visible in certain areas. Perhaps the best insight into her views is her wry comment on her recent visit to the Vatican. She thought that there could be greater scope for active female participation in the Curia.

Shortly after her address, a letter to the editor in *The Tablet* listed further areas in which the writer considered the Church needed to ensure that the rights of Catholics were respected. These included the right to fair procedures, to financial accountability, to the sacraments (millions see themselves as unnecessarily deprived of the Eucharist), to good liturgies, to good preaching. Cherie Booth did not have the time, or may not have considered it politic, to speak of such rights. She would surely endorse that they must be protected. ■

Humphrey O'Leary



GOD IN ALL THINGS

by Gerard W. Hughes

This collection of reflections is the sequel to the classical bestseller, *God of Surprises* by the same author. In this new book, he expands upon some of the themes of *God of Surprises*. Hughes believes that at the heart of contemporary Christian crisis is the dislocation within the nature of spirituality.

Should and can we confine God to 'religion'? Can we not meet God in everyday matters, and thus experience a God who is always greater than all our expectations yet closer to each of us than we are to ourselves. We are invited to meet and become one with this loving God of the Impossible.

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