Tui Motu

InterIslands

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... a preferential dialogue with young people

Contents

Cover: photograph courtesy Reuters

Teresa and Diana

As I write, the ceremony of beatification of Mother Teresa of Calcutta is taking place literally at the other end of the street. This Mass is like no other in the 25 years of this Pope's pontificate. For one thing the front seats in St Peter's Square are not taken up with the *glitterati* of Rome. Instead, alongside bishops from the whole world including our own Bishop Peter Cullinane, are the poor of the city, brought in specially from the 'barrache' (slums) by Mother Teresa's Sisters who look after them.

Beyond them are thousands of pilgrims from all over the world, a crowd stretching from the steps of St Peter's right down to the banks of the Tiber, sprinkled throughout with blue and white saris. At the *Our Father* a group of Indian women perform a dignified dance in front of the altar waving flowers, incense and burning braziers to signify the union of this gathering with the local faithful and the world beyond.

On the *Tui Motu* cover we have chosen Mother Teresa with Princess Diana; hopefully they are at this moment celebrating together in the next world. We have also invited articles by young people. Diana was a supreme symbol of Generation X: young, beautiful, endowed with all this world's blessings – and lost! Diana's life stood out as a tragic betrayal of what might have been. Yet, in her perplexity she was clearly fascinated by that tiny, wizened old nun from the slums of Calcutta. Perhaps it was through Mother Teresa that Diana took up those works with victims of landmines and AIDS which helped redeem her life.

Diana was a lost soul! Many of the young people in the West are lost souls – and not just lost to the church. They have the world at their feet. If they have any initiative they can travel, find jobs, earn good money and enjoy a life style which their parents never dreamt of. Significantly, many choose not to marry. Instead they drift in and out of relationships as easily as they drift in and out of jobs. And if they do marry, the strain of modern living causes too many of those marriages to break up. There has been a devastating change in Western society over the last half century. Italy, for instance, once the exemplar of wholesome Christian family life; now it has the lowest birthrate in Europe!

Why is this generation 'lost' to the church? Often, sadly, it is because the church has neglected them. I remember at an education meeting 30 years ago, Fr Leo Close lamenting the fact that while the church was pouring vast resources into schools, there was little investment in the tertiary sector. We did nothing.

Yet the picture is not wholly gloomy. Anyone working with the young knows how generous they can be. Bishop John Dew *(right)* applauds the response of many young people to the call of the Gospel. Every weekday evening in Rome, there is a church full of young people who gather to pray – and respond to the calls of social justice. The *Community of Sant'Egidio* in Italy is one of the beacons of hope at a time when so much in the church appears negative. Here in Rome you *do* see young people in church – and there *are* vocations.

The critical age is from 18 to 35. It is a time when a person leaves behind their inherited faith and embraces an adult belief system and practice which is his or her own... or they decline to do so. The alternative is simply to absorb the pervading culture of narcissism, individualism and scepticism – in other words, nothing.

The Holy Father in his wisdom appeals for a ***preferential dialogue with the young.*** It would be generous response to his 25 years of faithful service if we in the churches actually did something about it.

M.H.

"You are the future of the world"

Bishop John Dew

The day I was invited to contribute to *Tui Motu* by writing this editorial happened to be the day of the 25th anniversary of the election of Pope John Paul II. A few minutes before I received the invitation I had read a news item in which the Pope remembered his first Angelus address in 1978. He said: *I look upon young people with whom I established, from the beginning of my ministry, a preferential dialogue. He went on: I added a special greeting to them on that day by saying: 'You are the future of the world, you are the hope of the Church, you are my hope'.*

I'm delighted to contribute to *Tui Motu* this month in which there are articles by young people and about young people in the church. There are articles in this edition that put to us that kids and young people know how to celebrate – they're the uninhibited ones! Why can't we celebrate Eucharist their way? Why can't we let them truly celebrate Eucharist?

Another offers a reflection on the freedom that having boundaries actually gives. There is also an article on bioethical issues by a young woman who was surprised that she did not have a strong stance on the never-ending list of issues such as cloning, designer babies, euthanasia, Genetic Engineering and Assisted Reproduction. So, in searching for morals to guide her decisions, she looked to her background as a Catholic to add another perspective to her thoughts. The speech that won the *Cardinal McKeefry Cup for Oratory* at this year's O'Shea Shield Competition for Wellington Catholic colleges, is also included.

It's wonderful these articles are featured this month. If we want to pick up something of what John Paul began 25 years ago – ***a preferential dialogue with youth***, then obviously we have to encourage young people to be involved, active, contributing to the life of the church.

In the Document *Ecclesia in Oceania* (para.44) we find the following words: *Young Catholics are called to follow Jesus not just in the future as adults but now as maturing disciples. May they always be drawn to the overwhelmingly attractive figure of Jesus, and stirred by the challenge of the Gospel's sublime ideals! Then they will be empowered to take up the active apostolate to which the church is now calling them, and play their part joyfully and energetically in the life of the church at every level: universal, national, diocesan and local.*

I would love to see the church in Aotearoa New Zealand involved in a preferential dialogue with youth. There are wonderful young people involved in the church. Twice I have been blessed and privileged to accompany young people to World Youth Days, in Rome in the Jubilee Year and in Toronto last year. Both occasions have been highlights of my life where I have seen some of our young Catholics totally involved in the activities, looking for ways in which they can respond to the overwhelmingly attractive figure of Jesus and be stirred by the challenge of the Gospel.

Bishops and priests, religious, parents, people involved in all levels of the church have the opportunity of engaging in a dialogue with the young and of making that our preference. It's only when we welcome them, when we give them every opportunity, that they will be playing their part joyfully and energetically in the life of the church.

If John Paul, after 25 years can still talk about pursuing a *preferential dialogue with young people*, then we all can. We are called to give hope to the world as people who follow Jesus and try to live his Gospel. Anyone who attempts to give hope to the world can hardly fail to build the future together with those to whom the future is entrusted, that is with young people. ■

Bishop John Dew is Auxiliary Bishop of Wellington

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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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Sexual apartheid

On reading the first part of Bishop Peter Cullinane's article on why non-males cannot be ordained, the argument used seemed once again to reflect the continuous "sexual apartheid" practised by some of our church hierarchy.

I would like to refer Bishop Cullinane to the following quotation from Sandra Schneider: "*John* is in substantial agreement, theologically, with the Synoptics in presenting Jesus as relativising the significance of physical relationship with himself (whether of motherhood, fraternity, or distant kinship) and recognizing discipleship, expressed in hearing the word of God in Jesus and keeping it, as the truly meaningful relationship with him.

"If physically based human relationship with Jesus is regarded as salvifically irrelevant, it should be obvious to all that biological similarity to Jesus is even less relevant in the order of faith"(*Written that you may believe*).

Or is it the case that although we are all made in the image and likeness of God 'some are more equal than others'?

Gil Price, North Hokianga

letters

Drawing of boundaries

The August editorial states the 'fact' that GE foodstuffs violate the sacredness of created life. I find this assertion problematic.

There is no question at all about human tissue. Humanity is made in God's image. Human life is sacrosanct, and it follows that it is immoral to tamper with the building blocks of human life.

Plant and animal life also share in God's beauty. But they are gifts to humanity, and are our food. It is a huge jump in logic and morality to accord them the same protection as human DNA. In fact, I believe it weakens the Christian pro-life ethic by diluting the unique dignity of human life.

Genetic modification in plants and animals involves combining strands of DNA that would never occur naturally. This intervention is made to maximize favourable characteristics. For the same reason we are already making major interventions in natural processes, for example, in raising champion racehorses, and growing hybrid roses. On what basis can anyone say 'Intervene thus far, and no further?' Can we logically say by all means artificially inseminate your herd, but stay away from DNA?

There are major issues of economic power around the GE technology, and also possible danger to the biosphere. These deserve close scrutiny, but hardly involve the violation of the sacredness of created life.

Brian O'Connell, Wellington

Ethical judgments involve the drawing of boundaries. The editor's GE boundary is based on a principle that the nature of species is God's gift and not for human tampering. What he has asserted about GE is not a 'fact'; it is simply his opinion. ed

The Twilight of John Paul II

A beautiful, calm morning in the Eternal City. We take up our less than comfortable seats under a dramatic, giant statue of St Paul with sword outstretched: but why is he looking away from the massive columns of Bernini's splendid facade? Perhaps Paul's head is turned away, not because he is dazzled, but because he is disgusted with such magnificence lavished on the poor carpenter of Nazareth and his trusty, outspoken lieutenant.

These thoughts dance through my mind during the long wait for the advent of Peter's successor, coming to greet and instruct the crowds waiting for the usual Wednesday audience. Almost on the dot of half past ten, out comes the procession preceding a richly caparisoned Land Rover carrying the frail figure of John Paul II. At least he is here. There had been some doubts after he more or less collapsed during his last (literally?) overseas trip.

The catechesis starts. It is a teaching on the *Magnificat.* His voice is feeble and slurred. After a sentence or so he is gasping for breath. Soon a prelate in attendance takes over. The old Pontiff is a visible symbol of the Church Suffering. Yet this weekly audience is only one engagement in an incredibly crowded timetable. During my weeks in Rome he has beatified three others as well as Mother Teresa, flown to Pompei to close the Year of the Rosary, met the Archbishop of Canterbury, held a consistory of Cardinals, issued a 200-page document on Bishops and celebrated his own 25 years as Pope.

A story going round the city is that someone asked him if he should not resign. He answered: "Would Christ have come down from the Cross?". Is this the symbol he is choosing to give to the world: a testimony to his chosen vocation to suffer publicly rather than being quietly shunted out of the way to be nursed in private? Is this the last – and perhaps the greatest – teaching of Pope John Paul II?

Talking to Mother Teresa

Angelo Montenati is an Italian Catholic journalist. In 1971 he confronted Msgr Benelli (later Secretary of State) and requested an interview with Mother Teresa who was visiting Rome. Benelli tried to put him off, but Montonati insisted: "If we are not allowed to interview saints, what value is their work?"

He asked Mother Teresa why her Sisters wore the sari for a habit? She replied: "When I decided to carry out an apostolate in the midst of the poorest of the poor, I thought one way to identify myself with them was to dress as they did. My vocation arose from a meditation on that Gospel passage where Jesus says: 'Every time you do these things to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do it to me.' For this reason the Missionaries of Charity take a fourth vow, to give themselves 'from the heart and without recompense' to help the poor.

"Every religious is held to behold Christ in a poor person. No matter how repugnant the work or the people may seem, all the greater must be one's faith and love in dedicating oneself to Our Lord in the guise of the most needy person."

She also told this story: "One day a man knocked on our door to tell us about a Hindu family with eight children who hadn't eaten for several days. The man took away some rice and gave it to the mother of the family, who divided it into two halves and then left the house. On her return he asked her where she had been. She told him of a Muslim family nearby who were also starving. In spite of the hunger afflicting her own family, she had shared the rice with another equally needy family."

(This interview is reported in *Club Terzo,* an Italian monthly. The author kindly gave it to *Tui Motu*)

John Wesley – *the little man who still matters*

Colin Gibson

John Wesley was a little man who rode upon a horse.
By country ways and city streets he kept his steady course.
"The whole wide world's my parish", that little man declared,
"God's love is meant for everyone, with all it must be shared."

Susannah was his mother's name, she taught him all he knew;
His father was a minister, and John became one too.
He went into the open fields and preached to all who came:
"Believe in Christ and know his love", is what he did proclaim.

John Wesley was methodical, he drew up many lists,
And that is why his followers are called the Methodists.
He fought against the slave trade, he opened up a school;
To practise Christian holiness he made his daily rule.

The recent tercentenary celebrations of the birth of John Wesley have focused attention yet again on the extraordinary personality of the founder of Methodism – a separate church foundation Wesley never deliberately sought. But having been virtually driven out of the Anglican communion, this indomitable little man put his own stamp on the faith and the practices of the Christian communities which came to claim his name.

Wesley matters to the Church Universal because out of the synergy between himself and his much more orthodox brother Charles he gave Christian song a place and an impetus it has never lost. But while Charles the poet wrote the verses, John the practical genius scoured the streets for the music of the people, got the music and the texts into print, organised the first truly modern hymnbook, and taught musically illiterate congregations how to read music and indeed how to sing with passion and intelligence.

Theologically Wesley matters to the Church Universal because, heir to Luther as he was, in an ocean of Calvinism he sailed the Arminian ark and brought it triumphantly to land. An English scholar has written that "logical Calvinism and its belief in Predestination paralysed human effort, encouraged despair in the unconverted and sloth in the Christian". Wesley would have none of that; his emphatic emphasis was on the grace of God, not God's awful judgment, and on the possibility for determined human effort to change the world for the better.

Grace in action was Wesley's theme, and his strenuous efforts to reform and improve society in its concern for the wretchedly poor, its provision of education for the mass of people, its more humane dealing with criminals, its commitment to a politics of peace not war, and its surrender of privileged oppression have inspired later generations of active Christians and humanist reformers.

Although it arose from the simple fact that in its early stages the Methodists could not provide enough trained and ordained leaders to organise and supply the needs of thousands of new converts, Wesley's empowerment of ordinary lay folk as lay preachers and leaders (here again his genius for organisation and practical instruction was to provide models for other denominations in later ages) took the 'doing' of religion from priest and vicar and placed it squarely in the hands of the laity, the people of God.

Wesley's stress on the 'warmed heart', the trustworthiness of religious experience, his spirited defence of the doctrine of assurance (the inner witness of the Holy Spirit accessible to all human beings, enabling anyone to know that they are the children of God) safeguarded the validity of religious experience in an age of scepticism and the contemporary deification of human reason as the final arbiter of truth – safeguarded it, until it could be rediscovered by following generations. Wesley's sheer tolerance of diversity and refusal to narrowly define a set of essential saving doctrines (Methodism is unusual in having no absolute creedal statement or set of statements), also provided an important model for inclusiveness and openness to all other believers.

What he called the 'catholic spirit' is likely to supply a more practical basis for ecumenism and good relationships among Christian denominations than any negotiated trade-off in fixed beliefs or organisational practices. And it is no accident that it was among Wesley's Methodists that women were early given leadership ands priestly roles, and Holy Communion became an open feast for all who genuinely wished to receive Christ's welcome, without being hedged about or closed off for the privileged few by tests and restrictive regulations.

We still need today the spirit of that little man who rode upon a horse, and by country ways and city streets kept on his steady course. "The whole wide world's my parish", that little man declared, "God's love is meant for everyone, with all it must be shared."

In a world dominated by aggressive superpowers, both military and commercial, in communities where religious conflict within the faith and between Christians and other faiths still poisons peace, in societies where poverty and inequality, ignorance and fanaticism make misery for millions, Wesley's example of temperate, practical, strong and active engagement with his world still shines out for modern Christians. ■

What if they all turned up one Sunday?

Chris Duthie-Jung asks how can we expect young people to stay faithful to a liturgy which isn't really theirs

It happens two or three times a year. The local parish school sends a note home encouraging parents and children to "come to Sunday Mass this weekend" to celebrate Mother's or Father's Day, or some other festival day of note. Sunday morning rolls around and at 9.00 am Mass there is a strange feeling indeed. Rest assured, it's a family Mass normally – but today there are kids everywhere! The school choir takes up nearly a quarter of the congregation space. Other kids mill around out the back looking exotic to a greater or lesser degree – they will dramatise the Gospel for us, making visual that normally verbal highpoint of the Eucharistic celebration.

I've seen even more young people present: the local college's end-of-term Mass being a case in point. The entire church was wall-to-wall boys – young men actually. Fantastic things happened that day too: four Baptisms, eight Confirmations and 12 First Communions – and all of them senior students (including the Head Prefect!). Impressive and inspiring stuff, spoilt just a little by the sentry-like presence of standing teachers, scanning constantly with fixed frown – ready to glare down any evident misdemeanour. I swear I heard the occasional low growl!

On the first occasion I would venture that we almost became a church for the young... almost! The numbers and the active participation gave things a child-friendly quality that was truly pleasing. Kids led the singing (their own songs), the intercessory prayers (their own prayers) and children brought the Gospel to life (kid's own acting). But, guess what? For most of the time we made them sit through our adult thing... again!

As for the college Mass: well, the music certainly shifted a generation. What a difference a set of well-played and mixed drums and bass can make! Young people led all the usual parts of the Mass and our youth-friendly Bishop preached with well-known vigour about the experience of sharing World Youth Day with Pope John Paul II, twice. The sheer mass of young people lent a youthful flavour to the occasion, but... guess what? Most of the time we made them sit there and do our adult thing. Again.

Now, many in our Catholic community will take me to task as many have before. "If only the young appreciated what Eucharist really is – what it is that God offers them in this extraordinary sacrament!"

The problem is, I totally agree. So why do we keep it to ourselves? Why can we not bring ourselves to see that young people do things in a way that is... well, 'young!' And it is just as pleasing in the eyes of our God as anything 'adult'. Perhaps more so! Kids and young people know how to celebrate – they're the uninhibited ones! Why can't we celebrate Eucharist their way? Why can't we let them truly celebrate Eucharist?

Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.

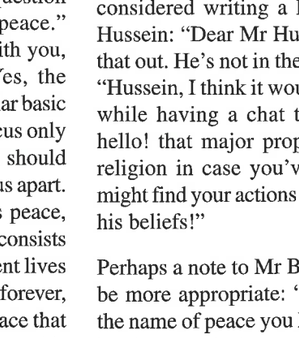
Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.

What was Jesus talking about?

Here's the rub. If all the kids in our schools, all the tens of thousands of them actually turned up for Mass one Sunday and said that they were planning on being there regularly, wouldn't things change fast! So why not change a few things now and stop endlessly lamenting the absence of the young.

It's just another case of chickens and eggs. ■

Chris Duthie-Jung is advisor, Youth and Young Adult Ministry Catholic Centre, Wellington diocese



What is the way to peace?

Peace begins within the human heart. A newspaper war picture prompted Naomi Eastwood-Wilshere to write this essay contesting the Oratory prize in the Wellington O'Shea Shield Competition earlier this year. She won.

You know! their photograph made the front page of the *Dominion Post.*

There he sat, like Buddha, cross-legged on the desert sand, a gentle bear-of-a-man, an American doctor dressed in the camouflage gear of the marines. Beside him lay two camouflage kit bags. In his left breast pocket were his tools of life: scissors, pen, toothbrush. His goggles he had pushed up on to his helmet, his hands were encased in blue surgical gloves.

In his lap, cradled in his arms, was a child – an Iraqi girl clad in pink. The sleeve of her hand-knitted cardigan was blotched with blood, her sister's blood. With face blank in shock, toes scrunched over on to the balls of her feet, she lay there, curled into foetal position. One little hand reached up stiffly as though to seek comfort from the soldier doctor, as a child does in its mother's womb.

From behind his glasses the soldier's eyes watched protectively over the child. His face was sad, compassionate. Was he crying? His expression asked: "What is the way to peace?"

When Buddha was asked this question he replied: "I am the way of peace." Christ told us: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." Yes, the world's major religions hold similar basic precepts, but it seems we now focus only on the differences, so that what should be holding us together is forcing us apart. In any war the ideal outcome is peace, yet the path to peace through war consists of a journey during which innocent lives are lost, families are broken apart forever, dreams are shattered, and any peace that had once existed is snatched away. This is the irony of peace.

Christian Churches reject nothing of what is true and holy in other religions, even though they are duty-bound to proclaim Christ. This belief in one God is essentially the same as the Hindu belief of 'monism', that everything is part of one reality. A like belief is also evident in Islam, a religion based on five pillars, the first of which is their declaration of faith: "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet."

Muhammad advocated the improved status of women. No longer could baby girls be killed. He insisted upon racial equality and religious tolerance. However, in many Islamic countries today the all-important teachings of Muhammad seem somewhat rejected.

The treatment of women is questionable, the tolerance of other religions is laughable; and unless you believe that hopping into a plane with the intention of killing yourself, and, '*oh, let's bomb some others while we're at it*', is an acceptable way to get a group of people to Heaven... you will agree that something has gone horribly wrong.

When I reflect on the current world situation, I cannot help thinking I am too insignificant to do anything. I have considered writing a letter to Saddam Hussein: "Dear Mr Hussein". No. cross that out. He's not in the least dear to me. "Hussein, I think it would be worth your while having a chat to Muhammad – hello! that major prophet guy in your religion in case you've forgotten. You might find your actions are off track from his beliefs!"

Perhaps a note to Mr Bush Junior might be more appropriate: "Mr President, in the name of peace you have blitzed Iraq, leaving a trail of carnage from Basra to Baghdad. Satisfied?"

In the name of peace – ah! That's the phrase, the irony that echoes down the ages.

In the name of peace heroes have fought and died.

In the name of peace great empires have been gained and lost.

In the name of peace religious crusades and inquisitions have ravaged lands and peoples.

And now, *in the name of peace* we are admonished in a series of violent imperatives to denounce tyranny, to repudiate propaganda, to avenge terrorism – for, how else can we enforce peace if not by aggression?

I don't know. Quite frankly, I find it hard enough to explain simple concrete concepts like Newton's laws of physics; let alone understand the vast logistics of extremist religions and political manipulation.

But, I do know that peace cannot be enforced on anyone, anywhere. It is a state of being that operates on a much smaller scale, seeping into our bodies, pervading our hearts, magnifying our souls. It is not enough to want peace – we have to *live* peace, simply by treating others, as we would – they should – do unto us. If the whole world lived by this principle, then surely God's prophesy of peace would come about.

Meanwhile, a man sits, like Buddha, cross-legged on the desert sand with a little Iraqi girl in his lap, cradling her in his arms. From behind his glasses his eyes watch protectively over the child. His face is sad, compassionate. He is crying. ***Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.***

Naomi Eastwood-Wilshere is a student at Sacred Heart College, Lower Hutt

A compass for steering us through the moral minefields

Like the young Augustine in his Confessions, Charlotte Boyes looks to the Church for a guide in the ethical confusion of today's society

In a world swarming with debate over bioethical issues many young people find themselves unsure of their opinions. As a young woman who most often can only see black and white, I was surprised that I did not have a strong stance on the never-ending list of issues such as cloning, designer babies, euthanasia, Genetic Engineering and Assisted Reproduction. In searching for morals to guide my decisions, I looked to my background as a Catholic to add another perspective to my thoughts.

Law and medicine had not satisfied me, but why did I need to consider ethics and my beliefs? Ethics are about forming a basis on which to decide what is right and wrong and establishing norms to indicate what should be done. The church provides us with a framework and standard by which to measure our decisions and challenges us to look at what is best not only for ourselves but for all humanity.

The fundamental teaching of the church on these issues comes from the belief that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God. It is because of this sacredness that life deserves the deepest respect and has such dignity. Who are we to interfere with the plans of God by artificially taking and creating life as we please? When a scientist or doctor does not have God's ability to see and know all, why should they be given such extraordinary power?

In the bishops' document from Vatican II, *The Church in the Modern World*, it

is stated that "faith throws a new light on everything by showing them against God's calling of all humanity and directing the mind towards fully human solutions to life's problems". This has great meaning for us as Christians. If we are true Christians we cannot make decisions without our faith. It is often challenging for young people to listen to church teachings when we wonder how something we see stereotypically as being old and out of touch can have any value on issues of today. In fact, we have *The Nathaniel Centre*, in Wellington, as the New Zealand Catholic Church's body assigned to keep up-to-date with these issues. This is just one example of how dedicated the church is to ensuring ethics become a focus of public thought and discussion on the social issues of the developing life sciences.

We must break down our initial barriers and look seriously into what the church has to say. While '***what does the church think about this?***' may not be a common response, it is worth questioning and considering. It is very difficult to uncover the church's ideas without first responding according to the values instilled in us by our peers, the media and social trends in our secular society. Church opinion can be particularly difficult to stomach, but faith is so vital when considering our viewpoint.

The call for Christians is to work through these issues and look deeply into the reasons behind the teachings of the church. A common phrase among young Christians is "What would Jesus do?" You will see Christ's answers to these very current issues in what is being taught by our church today.

There are endless possibilities for society to tamper with the make-up of our world as we know it. We now have the ability to alter the genetic make-up of what we eat but does having that ability make it the right thing to do? We could easily clone our cat or our brother, but should we? While some of these ideas may sound ludicrous they are suddenly very real. When the decisions of today will affect so many people in the future we have a responsibility to make informed choices now before bio-technology gets away on us.

While I do not have the depth of knowledge or authority to preach on church teaching, it is important to have an example of how our church's teachings fit into some of the current social issues we face. While in the middle of my exploring these teachings, the debate on euthanasia was again at the centre of the media's attention.

On one side I have the world telling me to respect individual freedom while on the other I have the church calling me to consider first and foremost the value of human life, in *all* its conditions. It is far too easy for society to allow us to detach ourselves from the value of being made by God and the dignity that comes with that. The value of human life does not diminish, nor does it cease as is suggested by those who advocate euthanasia.

So far, the Church's guidelines for making judgments had worked for me and I had moulded more of a belief and confident opinion. The church offers guidance and another perspective on this and all of the topics of bio-technology currently being debated. The focus is on God as the author and master of life, the sacredness of human life and always questioning the effect of our actions on others. But that is also coupled closely with compassion and understanding for those faced more personally with these issues.

In opening my eyes and researching this topic I have become far more aware of the complexities of these social issues. As a result I have actively encouraged those around me to also make the most informed choices possible. We are incredibly fortunate to be guided by Catholic tradition grounded and centred on considering what is best for all of society.

I admire the church's commitment to adding an ethical perspective to these debates and providing guidelines. However, this approach has the potential to go much further. I appreciate how difficult this may be with a media not often interested in exploring ethics, but I believe it is our personal responsibility to seek out and become better educated and informed, and lead by example for others to do the same. Indeed this challenge would be worth adopting not only for youth but for those of all ages, religions and categories of thought.

Scientists and doctors are often left with the unenviable power of making ethical decisions but this should be shared with the general public whom it affects most. For young Catholics it may be difficult to see how this concerns us at our current stage in life. However, in the future we may be required to vote on such issues and we have a responsibility to know and articulate a Christian viewpoint. It takes commitment to explore these topics. I began by discussing the issues with priests, Religious Education teachers, searching the Scriptures and keeping in touch with statements issued by the Catholic Church.

There are so many questions we must ask and seek answers for both personally and in discussion with our community. This must happen before we can responsibly proceed with technology. My heart told me there was something missing, that I did not feel comfortable making a decision on these issues and I have now found what that is.

When law and medicine don't give us all of the answers, we can find direction in church teaching. Keeping our faith central to our thoughts can complete the picture. I encourage other young people to explore church teaching too. ■

Charlotte Boyes is a Year 13 student and Service Captain at Villa Maria College, Christchurch

Playing heavenly Quidditch?

Jamie Cox

Ever wondered why Christians – with what seems to be a 'strict' way of living – seem to be really free and happy? Or have you ever tried to explain to your mates how it is you're happier and free when living with rules like 'no sex before marriage' and 'no getting drunk'?

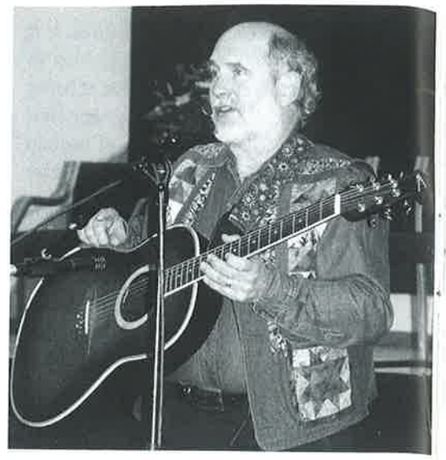
Here's an analogy that might help. Imagine you're on a soccer field and it's three kilometres up in the air. The outlines of the field are just cliffs. If you step out, then gravity is going haul you three kilometres to the ground below. Imagine what the game would be like! If you kicked the ball too hard it would disappear off the cliff. You would be a bit freaked about going too near the edge in case you tripped and fell or some idiot tackled you off. It wouldn't be a great game of soccer.

Now imagine that God created the game. God made up the rules, made the soccer ball, made the field and made you. Then God said: go and have the best game of soccer ever! Oh – and while He was making stuff He made a big 50 foot high wall to surround the field so you couldn't fall off. Now suddenly with the security of the wall you know you can't fall. You can use the whole field without fear, and you're not going to lose the ball. You truly can have an amazing game. If you really want to, you can climb that brick wall, but the consequence of climbing over that wall is that you're going to fall and it's going to hurt.

God is the author of our life. He created us and this world we live in; He knows the rules and He knows how you can have the best game possible. So God puts up boundaries, or rules, to keep us safe in life from the pitfalls of sin. And you know what, if we stick to what Christ has shown us, to the teachings of the church, to Holy Scripture – even though at times it all seems like one big *No* – then we are going to truly be free. Trust in the Father for He is good. ■

Jamie is in his early 20s and is the diocesan Youth Director for Hamilton. This reflection comes from a talk Jamie heard

At the Worshipping under Southern Skies *conference in Christchurch recently, Mike Marshall interviewed the celebrated American songwriter, Marty Haugen. The music minister's job, says Marty, is to bring the people in*



Let the people sing

Introducing Marty Haugen

The Christchurch conference opened at 7.30 on Friday night. Within 15 minutes Marty Haugen, the keynote speaker, had the 275 attendees singing an African four-part harmony!

Marty is a composer of liturgical music for both Roman Catholic and Lutheran congregations. For the past 20 years he has also presented workshops across North America and in Europe, the Pacific Rim, Asia and Central America for church musicians and anyone interested in the renewal of worship. He is probably best known in New Zealand for compositions such as *Gather* and *As One Voice*. If you have sung *We Remember, Shepherd me, O God, Gather us In,* the *Mass of Creation* or the *Mass of Remembrance*, you know Marty Haugen.

Over one evening and one day, Marty presented two keynote addresses, ran two workshops and led an interactive session. I attended all but one of these, and at each he captivated the attendees with gentleness and humour, he inspired and motivated. Marty has a deep appreciation of the Catholic Mass, a keen awareness of the structure supporting the liturgy, and the relationship between the relevant ministers. He admirably illustrated what could be achieved rather than telling us what not to do. And singing was an integral part of every session. At the end of each session those present were clearly unwilling to let him finish, despite the cumulative effects of uncomfortable stacker benches.

Renewal of the music ministry

The opening keynote address was constructed on a cornerstone of Vatican II: the active participation of all the faithful. In the ministry of music, this is realised through empowering the congregation to pray through music – a theme he would return to again and again. What had brought almost 700 people to these two conferences: was it desire for musical renewal, or was it the drawing power of Marty Haugen?

I asked him: "This weekend we have seen a real hunger for renewal in music. It seems we could be either preaching to the converted or those who would like to be converted. From your experience in the States and overseas, would you say there is still a large proportion of churches using music 25 or even 50 years old?"

"I would say there is much music written 25 or 50 years ago that might be of value," he replied. "Good worship incorporates the best of our tradition and the best of the new music that is being written, and lives with both. Renewal doesn't mean throwing out everything, it means choosing the best of what we have and bringing in the best of what's new.

"In Minneapolis every Sunday they'll have a Mass with altar boys in white gloves and they'll have an orchestra. It sounds beautiful, but no one in the congregation sings, no one participates. There's another church that uses a rock'n roll band and the congregation claps and sways, but they don't sing, and the music has nothing to do with the liturgy.

"In both cases you might say they are stuck. One is stuck to a vision of church that says beautiful music is all you need, and the other one is stuck in a church that says energy is all you need, and in neither case are they looking at the liturgy as the work of the people and the prayer of the people."

Where musicians 'fit' in liturgy

Christian worship, on any given day, within a liturgical-religious tradition, in a particular community or culture, at a unique moment in history, will always exhibit a tension between the voice and tradition of the ancestors and God speaking in today's world.

Eucharist means to give thanks: it is essentially anamnesis *– a remembering. Remembering who we are and who we are called to be. Musicians are Ministers of the Word, invoking God's reign – remembering God has acted in the past, and we ask God to act again.*

Collaboration is required between the ministers especially since the liturgy is a dialogue between the priest and people. A strong collaboration can make this prayer powerful and meaningful. Scripture needs to be 'yoked' to music – when we sing Scripture we hear it again. What we sing over time, we remember: eventually – what we remember, we believe. We aim to empower the congregation to sing prayer, and this may take them out of their comfort zone.

The Parish Musicians – *Making a Joyful Noise*

As well as looking at the structure of the liturgy and importance of musical empowerment of the congregation, our Christchurch group was taken through a fascinating session on the use of, and relationship between, instrumentation; organ, guitars, keyboard and a myriad of other instruments were covered.

There are three levels of competency:

• *individual competency.* Here flexibility is needed to adjust our style of playing to work with the congregation. In ritual music-making, nothing is ever played the same way twice. The development of communication skills is vital to invite the congregation into participation.

• *ensemble competency.* The music should support, surround and encourage the congregation. It should be felt more than heard. The instrumentalists should sing along to get a feeling of working with the congregation.

• *inviting the congregation in* is the ultimate goal. The placement of the musicians in the church should indicate they are part of the congregation, not separate from it. As musicians we should ensure the introductions and transitions for hymns and responses are obvious.

We need to be sensitive to the rite. When inviting the congregation to a response, a brief introduction only is needed, so as not to interrupt the dialogue: for example, at the doxology leading to the *Great Amen.*

The difference between a minister and a performer is in their intent. Ministers make themselves vulnerable to the congregation's response!

Marty the composer

I enquired: "Obviously you write for several denominations, and it brings a richness to your writing."

"Each denomination has its own way of praying in its own traditions", he said: "The two denominations I have been writing most for are the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church. What they have in common in their liturgy is almost identical.

"Lutherans sing hymns, whereas Roman Catholics sing other forms: processional songs, mantras. I have just finished writing a communion service for a Lutheran church, and it will be published both in a Lutheran and Catholic version. The differences are very slight – they are almost identical. My hope is, that if you go, say, to a wedding and you hear the music, people feel they can pray in a way they couldn't otherwise." ■

Some quotes

"Remember that the human voice is always the highest voice!"

"The musician's first role is to make the most vulnerable person in the congregation feel comfortable."

"One of the principles is that music doesn't exist by itself. Music within liturgy is to help the whole prayer."

"For me, liturgical music always begins with Scripture. If we are careful about using good theology and put it on the lips of the congregation it can help them hear and remember and live into the scripture."

Footnote Marty's music can be accessed as sheet music, CD, cassette or in hymnals from GIA Publications Inc, at http://www.giamusic.com

Valiant for Truth

Katie O'Connor interviews Donald and Margaret Lamont who farmed in Southland all their adult life, until retiring to Gore ten years ago. Always they have been campaigners for change – and they still are

Tell us about your upbringing

(Margaret) My mother was Irish and a nurse during the war and had a great love of animals and songs. All the songs we learned as children were war songs that she remembered and songs of her country.

My father was born in Christchurch in 1873; he was 50 years old when I was born. It was from him I developed my love of poetry. I was the eldest of three and we grew up with adults. We had a trip to Sydney to the Eucharistic Congress when I was quite small. I nearly died of poisoning because I ate oranges with skins on – I had never seen so many. When we came back to New Plymouth, I began ballet. I made my first communion dressed in my mother's cut-down wedding dress with the veil folded about 20 times.

In the 1930s we lived in Palmerston North, and that's where I remember the nuns of all nationalities. We had Irish, New Zealanders, a Spanish sister who taught us music and we sang in Latin. Sr Natalie had a great affinity with the Maori people. She said we should have no difficulty with the Maori language because of Latin: the vowels are similar. I learnt speech and dancing and was in the choir.

Then I went to Island Bay, Wellington to *Sacre Coeur* convent, run by French Sisters. They were a tremendous influence in my life. I did French, Latin, art and literature. Looking back now it was a European education. It wasn't really preparing me for the way my life became.

My Catholic background was very important. My mother had been an army nurse and she was authoritarian – discipline and consequences. You had to be careful. If you did something wrong, then it was a sin. You didn't sin because you were so fearful of God's punishment. God was an unforgiving God to my generation. And if you didn't suffer spiritually you certainly suffered physically. There was a lot of fear. But I survived, and maybe it might have been a good beginning.

In the 1940s the war came and I left school. I really wanted to be a concert pianist. I was a good pianist and had all my Royal Academy exams, but war changed all that. One's vision of life became shorter.

I worked in the library for a year and I loved that, but it wasn't an essential industry so I accepted a job in the Post Office Savings Bank. I was hopeless at maths, but I shone because it was very much a people-oriented job. I was there for six years. There was lots of drama, theatre, ballroom dancing in my life.

I was involved with Catholic Social Services. We had to entertain the troops, keeping their morale up. No sex, no alcohol, just pure music. It was the days of the big bands. At that time I believed everything I was told about war and the justification for war. And everything the church said I accepted as being the word of God.

In 1947 I got married to Donald and that was the big change in my life. What you do for love! I went to the South Island with Don, and I relied on him for everything because he knew about children, about babies; he'd been the eldest in a family with younger children and I had no experience of that.

I read a lot of books and did my best, and in the end threw the books away and just had to look at the children because they weren't like any of the ones in books. They were unique. That was probably my first courageous act.

Also, coming to live in a non-Catholic community was very different. But I got to know the people and love them, and it didn't worry me.

Donald, you came back from the war. Had you always wanted to be a farmer?

No. I was a 'townie' not a farmer. I had a keen appreciation of the Italian countryside. I would have liked a small farm like the Italians: just vines and olives; but our Government was anxious to get men settled after the war. After three years down south we received a farm by ballot, a place of 413 acres. We were 30 miles from Invercargill, and 18 miles from Wyndham where we went to church.

The property had 2 army huts, with a double bed and a cot and a small cooker, a tin bath and a copper. There was no electricity, but we had water. We just struggled on as best we could. When our second child was born, our eldest boy had to go up to Margaret's mother because we had no room in the huts.

Eventually we got a house built and that was a big moment. The builders said to us: "no tucker, no house", so Margaret had to cook on the little stove. Since the builders needed power for their tools, we got the power on.

The farm became overrun with rabbits, then grass grub. It wasn't stocked properly. We dealt with problems as they came – getting services, the telephone. It was then I became involved with *Men of the Trees*.

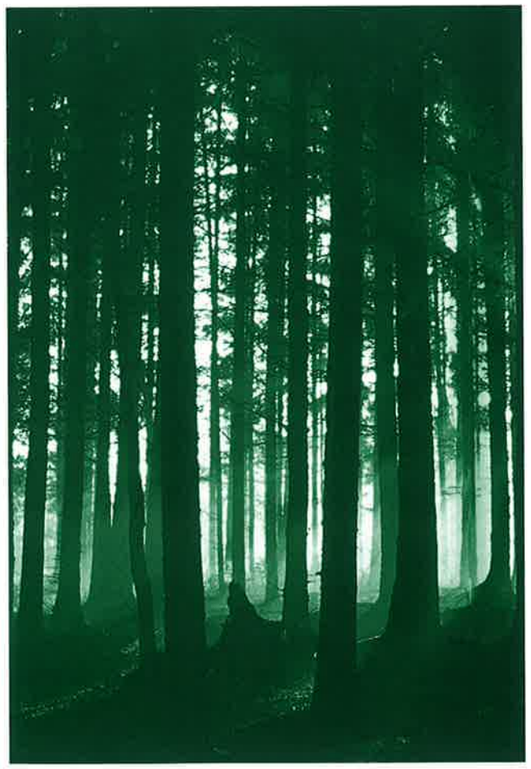
We went on the farm in 1949 in the middle of a storm and the middle of lambing. The silly ewes had all gone into the gullies and dropped their lambs in the creek behind the tussocks to get away from the weather, and of course the lambs were all dead. There were no trees on the farm; only two rows of macro-carpa near the house, so I began to plant trees to provide shelter and shade for the animals.

We were aware people thought us a little strange: the pioneers had gone in and cut down the bush to make the farms, and they saw that as being the natural thing to do. And here were people coming from the North Island and planting trees. "You'll just cause blood poisoning in the sheep, because of dirty land under the trees (they were thinking of the macrocarpa shelter belts). And they'll get you for death duties!"

However, we met with about a dozen people in Invercargill and formed *Men of the Trees*: It was a worldwide organisation, not restricted to country people. We were the only branch in New Zealand. It was founded by a man called Baker, who was going to restore Africa with tree-planting. In my life I've planted thousands and thousands of trees.

(Margaret) Farm forestry has been very important to us. Today farmers do it for economic reasons, whereas we did it also for aesthetic reasons. It became our habitat, also the habitat for birds which we've always loved, as well as for the welfare of our stock. We influenced quite a number of farmers in the district. Our next-door-neighbour became South Island *Tree Planter of the year*; Don had encouraged him to go out and do it.

Our trees have given us a very good life. They've given us a trip around the world! We've been to conferences all over New Zealand meeting with like-minded people, seeing what they'd done, talking about what went right, what went wrong, admiring the successes and learning from the failures. We also formed a Southland branch of the *Forest and Bird* Society.



And we had eight children. That kept us pretty busy. Two of them had special needs, and I suppose one of the first areas of concern was that rural children who didn't fit into the school system had to be sent away at such an early age: at six or seven for both of them. It was never a happy experience.

Jo used to cry all the way in to Invercargill, and I cried when we got there. The dear housekeeper used to give me a dispirin and send me home again. They were in residential care, Monday to Friday. We did that for eight years with Josephine – and then we had Phillippa and had to start all over again with her.

(Donald) Jo was born in 1954, our fourth child. She was such a beautiful child, but hyperactive and very cranky. We had no idea what medication she needed. Nobody knew. Dr Begg was the only paediatrician in Southland, and he was just starting. We didn't know she was disabled until she was two and a half years old. She used to have grand mal epileptic fits and was diagnosed with gross brain damage from unknown causes.

It is a miracle she has done as well as she has. She speaks well: Margaret put in hours and hours of time getting her to speak. Often what she speaks doesn't apply to the situation, but she can hold her own and she's very witty. Now and again she comes out with a pearler, and she's the joy of our lives.

(Margaret) Then I had Phillippa – and it broke our hearts. I felt that God was being most unkind in giving us two intellectually disabled children. We'd done our best with Jo. I completely lost my faith in God ▷▷

or any form of a loving Creator. I think I was depressed. I wouldn't go to Mass.

Then one day a lady sent me a great big chocolate cake and said she was missing me, so I went back to Mass. It was just love. After that I had no long-term plans. I just lived day to day – and Phillippa thrived. All she needed was love.

Having a disabled child in a marriage can be very threatening. We've seen it so often that people just couldn't cope with it. One or other partner found it too much and left the marriage. However, with Don and I it became a uniting thing. We had to be very fair rationing our time because the demands are very great, especially for country women. You're on your own. Your husband is out busy, and you are doing everything. I did the best I could.

In many ways our other children must have suffered, yet it hasn't shown up in their lives. They've all pursued professions of caring. Perhaps I was a role model for them, though I wasn't good at it. Our girls are wonderful mothers themselves. But it wasn't easy.

When did you become interested in justice issues?

(Donald) In the '50s and '60s we were totally absorbed with the farm and helping to get services for our area: telephone, a school bus, a hydatids campaign. Hydatids was a very serious disease. We pioneered the campaign to control it in New Zealand; the farmers in our district all co-operated and eventually a proper scientific programme was implemented.

In those days you had to be active, or you would get walked over by the bureaucrats. You appealed directly to the politicians. So we campaigned for fertiliser works, new freezing works, rabbit-control campaigns – to name a few.

(Margaret) Donald was always into new things right from the start. He had a good long-term view, but he would think about things for a long time first. He pioneered many things and people came to see they were aesthetic, important for family life and economically sound. I think that was his gift to the community. It was not necessarily a future *we* would enjoy, but what the community would eventually enjoy: the common good.

Our first big protest was the campaign to save Lake Manapouri. It was the beginning of being quite vocal about issues. We got criticised a lot, especially by our fellow Catholics who didn't see anything to do with the earth as being related to justice. They could see no connection. But I am a great believer in creation and God's gift of plants, trees, animals. They were there for our care, not just for our use. We had to look after them.

That was also the time the native forests were being cut down, and we had already been very active in *Forest and Bird*. In 1978 and 1979 Don was the Southland president and I was secretary; we spent all our leisure time writing submissions on issues that we saw were justice for the earth: especially the forests that were the habitat for the birds. We were protestors and a thorn in the side of the bureaucrats, but never strong enough to hold up big developments. They simply went ahead.

We held protests against the projected aluminium smelters at Te Wae Wae and at Aramoana. We won some, lost some. We were selling our natural assets to overseas companies.

We had become 'activists'! Some time later Don and I organised a national camp for *Forest and Bird* at Borland Lodge. We walked through the forest and listened to people naming the plants with Latin names and bouncing them off one another so they would remember them.

I had this wonderful moment of realising what we'd done by saving all the bush around Manapouri and other places because the natural forestation was there. While you are campaigning, it is just an idea, but when you see what you've saved, it's really quite special. That was a big revelation to me.

We were also involved with *Corso*, a voluntary movement started after the war. It was built on the experiences a lot of servicemen had had overseas of being helped by poverty-stricken people, who nevertheless shared with them whatever they had. A lot of returned servicemen were farmers who had had boom years and were interested in supporting the idea of repaying those people in some way: giving them the opportunity, the tools, the education.

There was a lot of good work that went on in those years after the war – a whole world movement of people being neighbours to one another, encouraging one another. A lot of New Zealand expertise was shared with the people of South America and India – trying to improve their standard of living to bring these people out of poverty. This was before the new globalisation, which is so much about power and money and making profits from commodities.

Muldoon effectively demolished *Corso*, saying it was all about supplying arms to the Reds.

Then it was the **Springbok tour**: we marched against the tour. It was a significant time in our nation's story and caused all sorts of divisions among the Catholic laity and priests, among your neighbours and even in your own family. It was a time of great conflict. It required a lot of patience.

But out of that came an awareness of justice issues for the Maori people and the Treaty. We were protesting about an unjust situation in South Africa – and here in our own country were people being unjustly treated. And you had to listen to them. That's what we've tried to do ever since.

Our life has been a series of little journeys with different groups of people who shared the same concerns. Each time you did something, something else evolved, and you got yourself involved.

Did you see this that as an active way of expressing your faith?

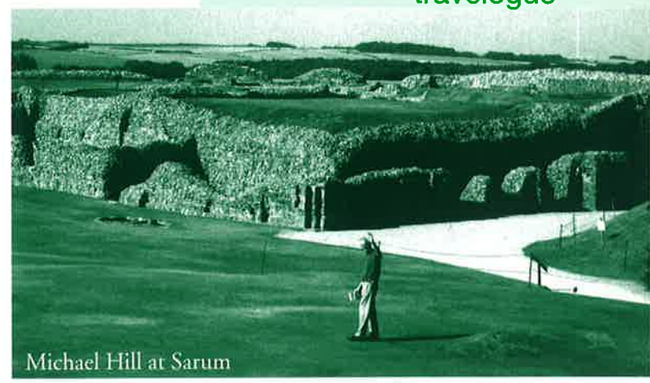
(Donald) My faith may have had something to do with it, but I didn't see it as a projection of my faith. The church was just as stick-in-the-mud as some people. We did not get a great deal of support from any of our parish priests.

(Margaret) It was quite different for me. The most significant thing I carried from my schooling was the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*: it was my teachers who led me into Catholic action. *Rerum Novarum* taught 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay'. The job significance of worker and master and the family being entitled to a living wage.

I learned that at school, and I carried that with me all my life. I still believe in it. It drew me up short to think of social concerns and social justice. ■

In Part Two in the next issue Don and Margaret bring the story of their struggles for justice up to the present day, and they talk about their religious faith.

Through Kiwi eyes



Michael Hill at Sarum

Looking at the UK

When you have been away from your native land for 20, 30, 40 years you begin to see it almost with the eyes of a stranger. People and places you once knew have changed beyond recognition. During the past month I have criss-crossed this tiny island kingdom. The sun seemed to shine every day, so I shall dismiss the worst elements quickly.

The UK is very expensive (in terms of kiwi dollars); it's very congested; the traffic is at times a nightmare. Do you believe in guardian angels? When hurtling along those motorways at 120 kph in a stampede of juggernaut lorries, fast cars, aggressive white vans and terrified kiwis, you feel that only some gracious presence can protect you from the inevitable cataclysm. I survived intact, but at times my heart was in my mouth.

When, however, the congestion becomes intense, a system of requested speed limits is flashed onto wayside screens. Usually the traffic slows – and suddenly all becomes sedate and tolerable at 80 or 90 kph, even pleasant when the countryside alongside is rolling and verdant. For once you can actually see it and enjoy it. You wonder at the madness of competitive speed which seems to transform drivers into suicidal maniacs; and why car manufacturers delight in designing machines that go nearly twice the official speed limit.

Of course, the alternative is to travel by train. Britain still rejoices in an intricate, frequent and comprehensive train service – again, extremely expensive and not well maintained. I began to develop a complex about those trains. For a period of some days I only had to look at one and it would break down or the brakes would seize up. On one trip four separate faults developed – which made me one hour and a half late on a journey of barely 100 miles. No wonder the regular travellers look so harassed!

London itself is comparatively easy to travel round. Its new mayor, 'red Ken' Livingstone, has made it so expensive for private cars to circulate in the inner city that the traffic moves more freely than it has for years. That means you can cross, say, from Westminster in the west to the City in the east in under half an hour.

There are lots of wonderful things to do in London. It is still a fascinating place: a higgledy-piggledy heap of untidy buildings, palaces and hovels, churches and shops, separated by spacious squares and vast parks – breathing space which should be the envy of many another of the world's great cities.

One day I went on the 'Westminster' walk. For just four pounds you get a two-hour tour round the political heart of Britain, always within the sound of Big Ben tolling the hours. In that short space I learned more about the faults and virtues of kings and queens, of politicians and heroes than in a year of casual reading. All described in context. From Boadicea to

Princess Diana, from Edward the Confessor to Winston Churchill we were regaled by our most entertaining guide to living history from its most sublime to its most gruesome: how those who fell from favour were 'hung, drawn, and quartered' in all its gory detail.

The tour finished at the wartime cabinet rooms underneath Whitehall. An hour's wander through this underground maze was the optional dessert to our Westminster tour. You see where Churchill and his team spent many hours during the blitz, waging war on Hitler. All the little details are faithfully reconstructed, and you get a real sense of the claustrophobic atmosphere of those tiny, crowded spaces; and of the ups and downs of that epic conflict. The terrible carnage in the cities: thousands of civilians killed and over four million houses damaged or destroyed. Hundreds of ships torpedoed, each recorded on the vast, wall-to-wall maps: each dot representing the tragic loss of dozens of young lives to the cruel sea. Then you come upon the cramped studio where the old Bulldog broadcast words of defiance and comfort: some of his most famous speeches providing the audio commentary.

The history of this land remains ageless in a warp of time: the roots of one's being, the common origins of one's people. Yet history is also an adventure to be explored again, like a favourite old book, through fresh eyes. I shall mention a few gems.

One day I went to Old Sarum, site of the ancient city of Salisbury and the first capital of a united kingdom. Life, however, was quite hazardous in those early medieval times, and the king's palace, his cathedral and his castle were all crammed together inside an ancient iron-age hilltop stronghold.

Jubilee group

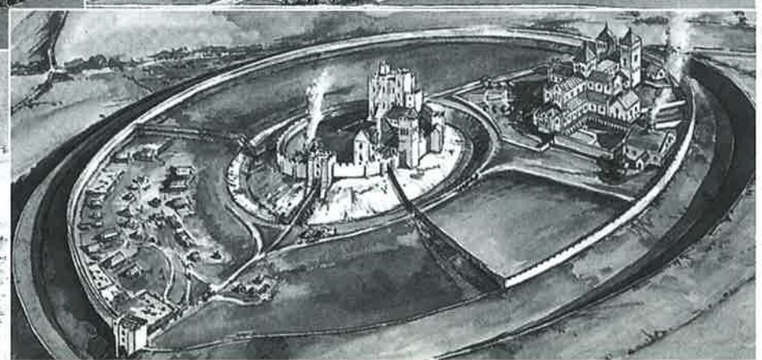
Frs Peter Reynolds, John Bland and John Daley (both in Gore during the 70s), Chris Smith, Eugene Monaghan, Michael Hill

By the 13th Century, however, the country became more lawabiding, so the king moved out to more commodious premises leaving the soldiers and monks to squabble inside their cramped compound. So the monks also moved out and set about building one of the finest of English gothic cathedrals down by the river. It was put up in barely 30 years (apart from the famous spire which followed 100 years later) and has a consistent design inside, unlike most other Englsih cathedrals which are usually a fascinating hotchpotch of styles.

Aerial view of Old Sarum -- where a flourishing Norman city once stood within the massive Iron Age earthworks – before the development of nearby Salisbury

(below) Castle courtyard and Old Sarum as it might have appeared 1130

12th Century Cathedral – conjecture taken from foundations



Another day I took a short boat trip from Tenby on the Welsh coast to visit the island and Cistercian community of Caldey. The island has had a succession of monastic inhabitants since the time of St Illtud and St Samson in the 6th Century, with a long interruption after the Reformation. The present monastery was founded 100 years ago by the eccentric Anglican (eventually become Catholic) Dom Aelred Carlyle. His Benedictine community found it difficult to survive, so they moved out during the 1920s in favour of the Cistercians, who have been there ever since.

I was delighted to discover an old University friend, Michael Rees, among the community, and he took us on a journey of exploration, including the ancient church of St Illtud, and we met some of the monks who greeted us kindly.

Michael's story is almost as astonishing as Dom Aelred's. He too converted to Catholicism – while at university. He was much influenced by the writings of Thomas Merton, the famous American Cistercian, and was keen to try his vocation at Caldey. But his parents were not at all happy at the idea. Eventually he went to Rome and studied for the priesthood at the Beda, where I again met up with him during the early '60s. But it was not until his mother died a few years ago that Michael, at the age of 67, was able to come to Caldey. He had waited nearly 50 years!

Britain is awash with little villages, old pubs, castles, manor houses and gardens, many beautifully preserved and restored by organisations like British Heritage and the National Trust. However, it is the splendid old churches and cathedrals which are the jewels. And among them all, for me – and I am prejudiced – the finest is York Minster (above), because of its splendid proportions, wonderful decor and its magnificent suit of medieval glass, over half of all that remains in Britain in the one church. Because of the width of the nave the 13th century masons were unable to give it a stone vault. But that has meant that the wooden roof glows, like an impressionist painting, with colour and gilt. That and the stained glass gives you some notion of how colourful these medieval interiors must have been, before the Puritans got to work smashing windows and statues and removing the colour.

And speaking of colour and beauty I must end my tour with reference to two Rosminian churches. The first, St Etheldreda's, Ely Place, London, lost all its Victorian stained glass during the blitz. But this was a blessing in disguise, because it has now been totally reclad with wonderful, modern stained glass. The great west window which the Massgoers have as a backdrop, has a personal interest for me. It was put in 50 years ago, but when I was a boy I would cycle over and watch its creator, Eddie Nuttgens, making the glass in his workshop. St

Etheldreda's is a jewel box among London churches, as well as being the oldest in Catholic hands having survived fire, blitz and Puritans for over 700 years.

The other church, St Peter's, Cardiff (below), is much younger, being built in Gothic style to the design of the great Victorian architect Hansom. It was the final object of my pilgrimage being the venue for the celebration of my golden jubilee of religious life. Our host was Fr David Myers IC (an ex-pupil of my early teaching years) who is in the process of magnificently restoring St Peter's to the glory of its original state: another symphony of colour and sculpture to the glory of God. I and my five companions who survive from the original group, were able to celebrate with a churchful of family, friends, Rosminians and parishioners. It was a great venue to give thanks for a collective 300 years of service.

An interesting connection: the college of St Peter's in Gore, Southland, is named after this Rosminian church and parish. ■

Trish McBride

Poland – *a land of bittersweet*

Trish McBride goes on holiday to Poland, and discovers a country undergoing resurrection

It was my travelling companion's idea to include Poland in our itinerary, but once the seed was sown the connections began to emerge for me until the lure was strong. There was the memory of listening to the *Warsaw Concerto* on the radio as a small child as my mother explained that 'the War' started when Hitler invaded Poland; kids at school with names that looked nothing like they sounded; my friend, who was one of the Polish orphans who came to Pahiatua. The papal connection; then the *Solidarity* saga of the '80s; the eventual freedom from communist domination.

So yes, here was a chance of a lifetime to visit a land that in New Zealand and even European terms is 'a bit out of town'. First impressions over the border were of descending the High Tatra mountains, then fenceless green plains and large well-kept houses. It was not long before we saw men and women working in the fields with scythes and sickles, and hand-sowing seed – a glimpse of an ancient way of life. And cows, ropes tied around their horns, the other end attached to a tree, or being led across the road to a new patch of grass. Motorway signs alerted us to the possibility of horse-drawn carts, which duly appeared on a regular basis.

Krakow is justifiably famous: it was the old royal capital until 1596, and still understands itself as a spiritual capital. Its stunningly huge and beautiful Market Square is the largest medieval one in Europe. Its buildings have a definite exotic flavour. Krakow is the only city to have survived the war relatively untouched, as the Russians arrived in 1945 and forced a German withdrawal.

Two mornings in a row, we breakfasted under umbrellas on the perimeter of the Square as we watched the heart of Krakow waking up in the sun. Vans of fruit, vegetables, flowers, alcohol and bread arriving to restock the restaurants, sellers of balloons and souvenirs setting up their stalls, live musicians. A delightful waitress who couldn't stop laughing at the strange New Zealand custom of having toast underneath the scrambled eggs – much sign language and disbelief! We wondered though about the number of folk with plastered wrists until it dawned that the uneven footpaths were the likely culprits! And it seemed that the civic structures don't do much street-cleaning: people were out sweeping and scrubbing their own bit of footpath themselves.

Off the negative end on the pleasure scale was the visit to Auschwitz. Even the prior knowings did not cushion the horror of the reality. I found it impossible to take photos or buy postcards, and was appalled by the sight of 8-10 year olds there on a school visit, despite a notice that under-14s would not be admitted. To tell the details to possibly unwilling hearers would itself be a violence. The spirits of Anne Frank and Maximilian Kolbe linger on along with all the other millions.

"Why did you go there?" asked a friend once I was back. I've wrestled for an answer, and the nearest I can get is 'the willingness to pay the cost of knowing'. And somewhere in that the legend of the knight Parsifal who healed the wound of the Fisher King when he learned to ask the question: "What are you going through?"

Gestapo Headquarters

After Krakow, we were off to Warsaw, 320km to the north, to do some more seeing for ourselves. 'Seeing' was the operative word because despite the cheerful predictions in the guide books, little or no English was spoken. We were in a virtual linguistic vacuum for the five days of our visit – nothing said and little written told us anything. We were reliant on our senses and intuition, very aware that we could be misinterpreting anything and everything, and there was no way to check things out.

A wonderful hostel room with huge feather pillows was a welcome contrast to the bleak room we'd had in Krakow. Warsaw seemed small and manageable after the size of Vienna and Budapest. We headed for the old town centre, where the 'medieval' buildings have all been restored in replica after the total devastation of World War II when 80 percent of the city's buildings were razed, and 50 percent of its population killed. Imagine that in Wellington or Dunedin! Whatever else the communist regime stifled, it apparently didn't get in the way of this extraordinary restoration project which was completed by the late 1950s.

World War II is still very much in evidence nonetheless. Postcards with 'then and now' shots of ruin and resurrection. Churches with plaques, memorials, candles, flowers. A Christ crucified in prison-garb on a gallows-tree in memory of the Katyn Woods massacre. The memorial square that was the ghetto. The razed site of the Gestapo Headquarters with its trees, one dead, one green and growing. A city still seemingly suffering from post-traumatic stress.

"How", we wanted to ask, "do you live with all this?" The full churches must be part of the answer, churches where there might be a Mass, confessions, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament all going on at once in different areas. The freedom to worship again, and the portraits of the favourite son. And each town seems to have its *ulica Jana Pawla II* (John Paul II Street).

A surprising glimpse of home: in the City Historical Museum in the main square – again doing the hard work of looking and seeing the evidence of the hell years – we came across an inscription, joltingly in English as well as Polish. It told us that the photograph of Stefan Starzynski, Mayor of Warsaw in 1939, and eventually killed by the Nazis, had been presented by the Polish Community of Wellington, New Zealand!

Market Square, Wroclaw

All this was the lens through which we watched the celebrations for *Children's Day* on the first Sunday in June, again from under a café umbrella. It was hot! Hundreds of families were there cherishing their children, giving them treats: there as here with balloons, ice-creams, puppet shows, rides in horse-drawn carriages. Smiles and happiness and the hope for the future of Poland! But underneath, were the grandparents remembering how it was when they were that size? And were they hoping all that will not happen again?

That same afternoon we watched a cheerful demonstration urging support for joining the European Union in the forthcoming referendum. The *Tak* (yes) on the placards was in our minute Polish vocabulary. They blew whistles, banged drums, handed out leaflets. Again we had unaskable questions and no-one to ask: *how will this help you? What will happen to your rural population if they are hurled too quickly into the 21st Century?*

After Warsaw we travelled 340km south west to Wroclaw (pronounced *Vrotswaf!!)*. It had been chosen as a convenient way-station between Warsaw and Prague, but turned out to be a delightful interlude in its own right. The river winds around the famous old university city, and a multiplicity of churches, some very old, appear about one per block. One held the tomb of Renaissance scholar Erasmus. Another was St Mary Magdalene's where, unusually, the patron saint appears on the altar backing – courtesy of a Calvary scene in which she figures. Wroclaw, visually anyway, is less haunted by the war. And loads of well-dressed young people were doing the café and study life. It too has a wonderful huge market square surrounded by colourful building facades, where we had some *pierogi*, special little Polish cheese and potato dumplings. Another notable meal along the way was a cold beetroot soup with chopped vegetables and hard boiled eggs.

And so on out to the Czech border after a memorable five days, and after considerable practice in mime and drawing to explain our needs! Phrase books can only do so much: try asking for a plug for the basin in your room, or explaining what a shandy is in Polish. A picture is worth a thousand words! Consideration then of the tourist/colonial idea that 'they should speak our language', and knowing it to be untrue, but relief when even basic communication was accomplished. 'Hello' (*dzien dobry*), 'please' (*proscze*), and 'thank you' (*dziekuje*) was as far as we got with Polish!

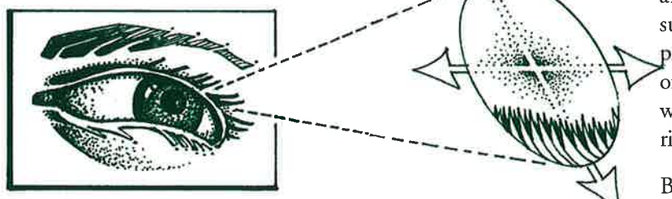
Poland is passionate, and overt about it. Poland elicits profound emotional reactions in response. Admiration for the beauty, horror at what it has had to endure, awe at the Resurrection faith and the sustained and costly fight for freedom, hope for its on-going development. May God continue to heal its past wounds and bless its future! ■

The Field of Love

Diane Pendola looks out over the world of human conflict and seeks a point of resolution. She finds it above her, in Christ's law of love – and below in the earth we all share

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.

We used these few lines from the 16th century Persian mystic and poet, Rumi, as the organizing theme for one of our Earth Liturgies. It has been running through my mind ever since. I have been thinking particularly about the field beyond wrongdoing and rightdoing, especially in this time of ever greater polarization within and between families, communities, religions, political parties, nations and the world community.



I am certainly aware of my own tendency to collapse into one or the other of these poles within myself: right or wrong, good or evil, true or false – and the desire to defend my own position at the expense of another. We witnessed the devastating effects of this polarized thinking in the 19 men who were convinced of the rightness of their cause when, on 11September two years ago, they commandeered planes filled with ordinary men, women and children, and flew them into buildings full of more ordinary men, women and children.

In the aftermath of that devastating event, and the great changes that have ensued in the United States and around the world as a result, I ask myself, what is this field beyond wrongdoing and rightdoing?

What is this 'third' underlying the polarity of right and wrong? Is it something greater than us, greater than our individual identities and opinions? Is it something that holds us in relation despite ourselves, despite our hunkering down on our own positions and perspectives? Beyond wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. Beyond *doing* there is a field where we can meet. It must be the field of *being*, that place where we share a common source, a unity, a place where we are in relation one to the other. Call it a 'web of life', a 'communion of subjects'. Call it the 'silence beneath the word'. Call it the 'formless beneath the form'. Call it the 'field of Love'.

The discovery of this field implies both an inward and an outward journey. An inward journey, because it is through entering my own interior depths and becoming familiar with the patterns of my thoughts, the inner territory of my mind, the habits of my heart, that I come to understand the passions that drive me to identify with one pole or another. It is at that point of identification that I lose the field. But, if I am self-observant, it is precisely in this moment of identification that I can 'let go' of my point of view so as to access the field that underlies it, the field of love that holds the polarities. This quality of awareness and detachment is the subject of contemplative practices across the spectrum of religious traditions. It is why I pray, meditate, ritualize and worship.

But I am not an isolated individual. I am part of an interdependent web that involves my family and community, my nation and my world. I do not exist alone. No matter how reclusive a life I might live, I am always at the centre of an inextricable web of relationships.

So it's not surprising that the passions and polarities, the battles and conflicts I experience within myself are also mirrored in the larger world around me. And, conversely, the wars and violence raging in the world are engaged within my own being. The more deeply I enter myself, the more deeply I enter the world of which my 'self' is constituted. To live more and more fully in the field, in the non-dual, in the present moment, is to find myself as integral to the whole. There, divisions cease. I think it is what Jesus meant when he said: *Love your neighbour as your self.* Listen to the whole of Rumi's poem:

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.

When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase 'each other'
doesn't make any sense.

(Rumi, *Open Secret*, p 8)

In this field the inner and outer journey become one journey as I recognize the essential unity that Love implies. Even the phrase 'each other' doesn't make any sense. It doesn't make sense if I know the whole of the human family, even the whole of creation, as one body, as my body. In Christian language this is the Body of Christ. The whole of creation, the whole of the cosmos, labours to give birth to this conscious awareness of our basic unity in the field of Love.

This labouring, this birthgiving, entails suffering. The cross can be a meaningful symbol of this intersection of the inner and outer, where my personal suffering meets a suffering humanity, a suffering earth. As I take into myself the suffering of the world, I also suffer.

In Christian theology this suffering becomes redemptive precisely through the crucible of love through which it passes: the human heart. In Buddhist terms, I realize that my own desire to be free from suffering and the causes of suffering is shared by every sentient being. By allowing the suffering of other beings to touch my heart, I learn the meaning of compassion, and through my practice of compassion, recognize our common suffering and work for our shared liberation. Somehow, it seems our willingness to 'suffer with' is itself a transformative power.

Today I am aware of too much suffering. I'm certain that each of us reading these words suffers greatly in the awareness of the pain, loss, grief, war and hatred that runs through our planet like blood through our veins. It spills into our living rooms and cars and public places through the airwaves and leaves us feeling bereft, angry, fearful, numb. How do we find the field? How do we find our common ground?

The Iraqis and the Americans; the Palestinians and the Israelis; the right wing and the left wing; the Catholics and the Protestants; the Muslims and the Hindus: we all share one Earth. We share the one thin living atmosphere that cradles the earth and beyond which is the vacuum of lifeless space.

We share the waters that fall through that atmosphere as rain, that gather in rivers and lakes and streams, that flow into our oceans and are gathered again into clouds to fall in eternal return upon the land. We share our dependency on the gratuitousness of the plants and the animals that feed us, the beauty of the flowers and the hummingbirds and the sunsets that sustain our souls. We are held in the curve of the gravitational field of this living planet, held in its orbit by the sheer attraction of love, by the bond that holds each thing in the universe to everything else in an inescapable togetherness of things.

In the end, we may find that the field of Love transcends space and time. We may find that it shares its essential nature with that intelligence that gave rise to our universe and our living planet out of apparent nothingness. But for us embodied beings, this planet is our common ground. Without it all poetry, all music, all prayer, all worship, all family bonds, all duty to country, all beauty, everything that makes our lives worthy of living, life itself, is naught.

We each need to take our stand in this world. We need to speak our truth. But as we do, let us remember the ground upon which we stand. Let us remember we do not own or possess it. It is our common ground. It is our field of Love. ■

Diana Pendola is co-founder and co-director, with Teresa Hahn, of Skyline Harvest, an Eco-Contemplative Centre in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Northern California. She wrote the following poem for her father

Meeting

A moment of meeting,
precious,
oh, so precious.
Can I stretch it out?
Can I make it last –
seeing you
seeing me –
held by the Love
in whose hand
we are both raised
beyond ourselves?

But it does pass
to the next moment
and the next,
each precious,
each passing.
I want to hold on.

I want to hold on to you.
But we slip back,
both of us,
into habit,
into the dull plodding
of the mundane
that veils this pristine
moment,
this prism of turning
rainbow light
that you are.

That is you.

Diana Pendola

In Part I *of his thesis on Why the Church cannot ordain women as priests, Bishop Cullinane maintained that self-emptying lies at the very heart of the Incarnation. Jesus came 'not to be served but to serve'. The priesthood of Christ is nothing to do with power*

Faith seeking understanding – Part II

In Part I we saw that self-emptying was at the very heart of the incarnation: "He did not regard equality with God as something to be clung to, but emptied himself.... (Phil. 2:6). Coming "not to be served but to serve", embodied the very purpose of his mission, which was to reverse the distortions of sin.

Moreover, a ministry which has no other purpose than to make Jesus' ministry present would also have to embody the purpose of his mission. Those appointed to act in his name would have to wash the feet of those they served. It's all about reversing sin whose hallmark from the beginning was dominating others.

If this symbolism is the reason for reserving ordination to men, then it is hardly wrong. Salvation history, foreshadowed during the first covenant, and realised in Christ, lives on in a living Tradition.

So the problem, I suggest, is not whether this teaching is right, but whether it is *credible*. Unless people's experience of ordained ministry reflects the parable of the washing of feet, and until the official Church shares fully with women roles that do not require ordination, ordained ministry will be perceived in terms of power, status, inequality and exclusion.

Clericalism

Ordained ministry doesn't exist in isolation from the circumstances of history and human weakness. It has become enshrined within a particular sub-culture – the sub-culture of clericalism. Merely targeting "clerics" (or men) might give some people a buzz; it might also be very understandable in some circumstances. But it also seriously underestimates the breadth and the depth of this problem.

To understand the sub-culture of clericalism, and how it impacts on the life of the Church and diminishes the credibility of the Church's teaching on ordained ministries, we need to reflect on what social scientists call *group bias*. By this they mean the tendency within any organisation to equate the specialised interests and needs of a high-profile group within the organisation with the interests and needs of the organisation as a whole. The whole (in this case the Church) comes to be thought of from the perspectives of the specialised group (in this case the ordained).

This skewed perspective created an environment in which it was possible to think that the ordained somehow *belonged to the Church* more than the laity; ("joining the ministry" was even described as "joining the Church"!); that *holiness of life* was less accessible to the laity than it was to priests and religious; that responsibility for the *mission* of the Church belonged to the ordained, and that any sharing in it by the laity was through delegation from the ordained; and that the laity did not *participate in the Mass* as fully as the priest. Social bias has a way of relegating or marginalizing, and to that extent excluding.

These were the widespread theological distortions that the Second Vatican Council consciously set out to correct. It rejected a draft document that would have described the Church starting with its hierarchical structure, then featuring religious life, and finally the laity – precisely the approach of "group bias". Instead, its Constitution on the Church starts with the whole people of God, because it is by reason of baptism that people belong to the Church, not by reason of Holy Orders. It is by reason of baptism/confirmation that they share responsibility for the Church's mission, not by delegation from those in Holy Orders. It is by reason of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist that they have equal access to holiness, not some more and others less on account of different walks of life. And the whole assembly celebrates Eucharist, not some more and others less on account of different roles.

The 1983 Code of Canon Law did away with modes of clerical separateness and privilege that had been institutionalised in the 1917 Code. It retained only the distinction that is constituted by the sacrament of Holy Order itself. But aspects of separateness and privilege sometimes surface in life-style preferences which contrast with the selflessness and generous availability of the vast majority of our priests. (Of course, proper self-care is a requisite for generous and pleasant availability.)

But the sea-change that is needed is not limited to the thinking of priests and bishops. It involves a radical paradigm shift in how the Church is perceived and experienced by all. This, in turn, opens the way to a more inclusive way of doing the Church's work, including the ways decisions are reached.

It's already happening. "Full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy" by all, the greater involvement of laity in parish apostolates, ministries, councils and management positions, their eager participation in programmes of adult education in the faith, in retreats "in daily life", in the works of justice, peace and development, in lay missionary movements, in the life of Catholic schools, and in the new ecclesial movements – all these are creating a new way of experiencing the church, and they are offsetting the group bias of clericalism. ▷▷

What future for Christian gays and lesbians?

Tom Cloher *returns to the debate within the Catholic Church on the plight of homosexuals. Are we singling out this one group of people for a censure which is dissonant with other moral principles?*

Church and Western society have travelled a long way in their understanding of homosexuality. The English convert theologian, James Ellison, has vividly evoked the early experience of being homosexual: "Being gay was associated with shame, with deception, with denunciation, with blackmail, with disease, with abnormality, with suicide and, floating freely amongst these, with sin" (*Faith Beyond Resentment:* Longman, Todd, 2001, p197). He left out imprisonment, too young perhaps to remember when homosexuals were classified as criminals and jailed: the lepers of modern Western society.

It seems a bit sad that so much moral criticism is centred upon homosexuals as if heterosexuals were somehow exempt. Both represent relationships with great potential for success or failure. Relationships are multi-dimensional experiences. Sexual activity is not the ultimate factor in a heterosexual relationship. It can certainly enhance it but it is no guarantee of its survival as the statistics of the divorce courts indicate. Gay and lesbian relationships are also multi-dimensional. The notion that they are obsessed by sex is an unjustified assumption. In spite of the disincentives homosexuals have had to face from the wider world there is evidence that many relationships are enduring and fulfilling. The further implications of this are a discussion for another day but it is raised in brief lest the reader conclude that the following text takes too simplified a view of a complex issue.

Scientific research has helped both church and state towards a more enlightened perception, revealing that orientation towards homosexuality is a given, not a choice. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* confirms this: "The number of men and women who have deep seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. They do not choose their condition – for most of them it is a trial (*2358*)". Reference to an experience of 'trial' indicates that the commentator is aware of the trauma of transition as a person gradually realises his/her sexual orientation is untypical. Friends and family members would confirm this as the person in question seeks to come to terms with an unexpected sexual identity.

In the first instance the realisation can be less than welcome as the consequences of being gay strikes home. Reactions such as the following are not unusual: "Who would want to choose an identity that puts you at odds with family and community expectations? It would be so much easier to be heterosexual." This is why the decision to 'come out', to declare a homosexual identity, is an act of courage and integrity: not flaunting the difference, but owning it.

Doubt continues to shroud the origins of homosexuality. Is it the result of nature or nurture? The difficulty of being definitive about this is under-scored when, say, the third child of a family of five is identified as gay or lesbian. All five children have the same parents and share the same ▷▷

▷▷ Priestly ministry itself, and vocations to the priesthood, will also come to be perceived in a more positive and healthier light.

Deeper anthropology

It all comes back to a way of being the body of Christ. That, in turn, exemplifies the fundamental calling of all human beings to become their true selves by being "for others". Our existence is pure gift, and so we are never more true to ourselves than when we are gifts to others. Again, the very opposite of dominating, possessing or using others. It opens out into a "civilisation of love".

It starts with the realisation that everything, including our own personal existence, is pure gift. The God who didn't have to create anything wanted to, and wanted a world that included you.

To see everything as the gift of God (which it is) rather than as something owed to us (which it wasn't) is to come alive:
The glory of God is the human being fully alive, and being fully alive comes from "seeing" God.

If our personal existence is *gift*, then we are ourselves only by *being* a gift, and that means being *for others.*

This is the deeper anthropology the Pope has called for. It is not about the kind of comparisons between men and women and observations that are proper to the social sciences. It is about what it means to be a human person.

In the celebration of Eucharist, our becoming one with Christ means becoming the body given up for others, and the blood, or life, poured out for others. This of course, is equally the calling and the mission of every one of us – to model what it means to be human, as revealed by Christ. ■

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environmental experience – same neighbourhood, schools, and community. In any case the issue is not the origin of homosexual orientation.

The Church has affirmed that gays and lesbians "do not choose their condition". They are not at fault in any way. There is nothing immoral about being a homosexual. How could there be, when no choice is involved? Indeed, recent *Considerations* issued in August by the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (CDF) insist that homosexuals should in no way be the objects of unjust discrimination.

Inherent in the reference to unjust discrimination is the possibility of 'just' discrimination. This becomes apparent when homosexual orientation, while not culpable, is classified as a "disorder" and homosexual behaviour as an "intrinsic moral evil". Homosexual behaviour is condemned as sinful because it is chosen. Orientation, however, is not chosen and therefore not sinful. Gays and lesbians are consequently called, through no fault of theirs, to face a dilemma never faced by their heterosexual fellow Catholics. They may be homosexuals as long as they do not act as if they were, although the drive to do so may be as strong.

How then do they prepare for a life of mandatory celibacy? The Catechism responds as follows: "Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By virtue of self-mastery – disinterested friendship, prayer, and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection".

Idealistic advice of this order has prompted the publisher of the *National Catholic Reporter* (7 August '03) to pose the following questions that might find an echo across Catholic communities: "Does the Creator condemn all gays and lesbians to lives without sex and sexual intimacy? Would the Creator banish forever those gays and lesbians who seek sexual intimacy? Why would God's creation plan be so devastatingly uncaring to a significant portion of the human family? Are all gays and lesbians to live celibate lives? We know how hard it is. Just consider the record of the clergy who have freely chosen celibacy. The Church teaches that celibacy is a gift given to relatively few. Are we to believe that all gays and lesbians are so gifted?"

These questions do not constitute advocacy for promiscuity: quite the contrary. They simply raise the prospect of stable relationships becoming permanent, inviting a blessing rather than condemnation.

They are tough questions and could well be regarded as impertinent in official quarters, but they bring to the surface the need for continuing dialogue. They are not being asked by enemies of the Church but by people committed to it. Little will be accomplished to assuage an increasingly anguished community if the CDF keeps putting up 'not negotiable' signs. In particular, gay and lesbian Catholics need to be consulted about their situation – talked with, not at.

Stephen Pope, a North American theologian (*London Tablet*: 9 August '03) points out that the dialogue offered to other Christian Churches, to the Jews, and to the Muslims (to be applauded) seems not available to its own homosexual community, amongst whom reside professional experts of every kind, not least physiologists, behavioural scientists, biblical exegetes and moral theologians.

A strong initiative of this kind was taken as long ago as 1997 when 13 articles on homosexuals and homosexuality appeared in successive issues of *L'Osservatore Romano*. The writers were obviously expert in their professional fields but none appeared to represent the homosexual community. The voice of that community was not heard.

Should some readers sense that the opinions voiced above (and they are no more than that) appear to be overstated or unreasonable, I refer them to two articles written for *Tui Motu* in September 1999 by Nick Thompson, now a staff member of the theological faculty of Aberdeen University, in Scotland, and his mother Sue. Nothing I have read elsewhere surpasses their authenticity and relevance to the issue. More than words, their witness declares the reality of an individual homosexual and his family struggling to discover the right place to be in a Church that they love.

Four years later such a place is still poorly defined. They, and the thousands they represent, deserve better. ■

Bread Broken ...and Shared

Cushla Low, *of New Plymouth, looks at the way our Eucharists are – and suggests how they should be*

One of the most basic needs universally experienced by all human beings is the need to be fed: to receive and give nourishment, to share a meal, to gather together and be present to each other. To share food is to share life, to experience pleasure, to understand one's place as belonging to those gathered around the table.

From Sunday dinners to summer barbecues, the aroma lingers in our memory. And it is not just the food that is shared, it is the stories and the experiences and the journey. Nourishment is experienced not just by the action of eating but by the experience of being present to each other. The meal always tastes better when shared in good company.

It is not by accident then that one of the most powerful symbols of Christian community is the eucharistic meal. It is our most central rite, defining a level of relationship where all are essential to each other. When Jesus shared that last Passover meal with his disciples he declared an intimacy of relationship that was stunning in its connotations. When Jesus said, "This is my body," he wasn't just talking about the bread. He was talking about those gathered around the table, he was talking about all that they meant to each other. He was talking about all the sharing, and the loving, and the confrontation that had been their experience up to that point and beyond. He was talking about them there, he was talking about us here, and he was talking about the bread.

When we gather around the Eucharistic table on Sunday, the meal is blessed and made sacred by the words, actions and presence of the community gathered. The bread is consecrated not simply because the priest acts but also because the community acts. Christ is present because we are present. The body of Christ in the pews unites with the body of Christ on the altar to create a window for divine revelation.

Yet within our Catholic tradition certain eucharistic practices have developed over the centuries which not only distance God from God's people, but are the absolute antithesis of what Christ intended when he gathered with that early group of followers to break bread. These practices exclude and marginalise large numbers of God's people, placing narrow interpretations on who is worthy and who is not.

The Crucifixion declared to all people for all time that everyone is infinitely worthy to gather at the Lord's table. The profound love experienced on Calvary makes it so. Salvation was God's initiative and God's action, it was pure gift freely given and available to all. We do not need to deserve it; we only need to accept it and live celebrating it.

In the past we have been taught that certain requirements are necessary before one is 'fit' to come to the Eucharistic table. We must sort out our messy lives first, make sure we are not offside of church rules and regulations; we must not be in irregular relationships, in short we must fix ourselves up so as not to come flawed and broken to the table. Yet it is in our very brokenness that we most experience God's healing action. It is there that we identify with the crucified Lord, it is there that we are most truly bread broken and wine poured out – the body of Christ.

God does not say to us: "if you are flawed, if your life is messy, then stay away until you sort yourself out." Instead God says: "if you struggle, if you sometimes fail to live the full dignity of all that you are, then you must come. I am here to wash your feet and to apply balm to the injured, painful areas of your life." Abundant grace waits to be ladled like gravy over the bread of life. It flows freely as God's prerogative not the Church's.

If we consider that first Eucharistic meal where Jesus gathered with his disciples, we witness a motley gathering. They were slow to understand, fractious amongst themselves, capricious with their loyalties; in short they were a broken, flawed group of people. We have the one who was to deny him and the one who was to betray him, and yet Jesus, in an act of profound love broke bread with them, shared the intimacy of the meal with them. In doing so he declared that all are redeemable and all have been redeemed.

Redemption is a one-off – for all time, inclusive of all peoples – action. We have been set right with God. We have been loved into wholeness again, and so we can gather each Sunday to re-experience that healing redemptive action, to be present to each other, to wash the feet and hold in reverence the Body of Christ, the entire body of Christ, both present and absent, both strong and weak, all the baptized.

If we truly believe this, then why do we feel unable or unwelcome to share the Eucharistic meal?

The table has been set. Our God is a most gracious host. Why do we hesitate? ■

Anyone for cricket?

A casual remark at a cricket match sets Glynn Cardy's imagination working on church and commitment

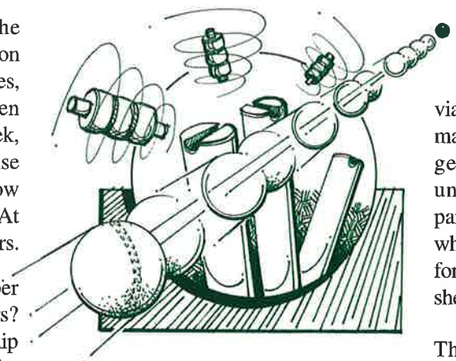
It was one of those conversations parents have while watching their darlings play cricket. We were exchanging pleasantries and proffering opinions. We had just applauded a run out when he unexpectedly turned to me and asked, "How much time is involved in being a Christian?"

I can't remember my reply. It's the question I remember. A very real question considering the fast pace of parents' lives, especially on an Epsom wicket. When work dominates 60-plus hours per week, family considerably more, and exercise and leisure are short, it is a fair to ask how many hours church is going to take. At the parenting stage, life has limited overs.

Can one be a faithful committed member of a church and yet keep restricted hours? Can one just, for example, attend worship monthly, a few social functions in the year, and help out with the annual bazaar? Or is that like being a member of a club cricket team, skipping practice, and missing half the games?

He did ask about being a Christian though, not being a member of a church. The statisticians tell us there is an interesting upsurge in spirituality that hasn't, as yet, if it ever will be, translated into regular church attendance. There are probably many reasons for this, but I wonder about the traditional demands of the church club being one of them. Rosemary Neave writes about the church as a club that not every Christian wants to join. However, she concedes there are advantages in having churches that one can drop in on every now and again without feeling like you're interrupting a holy, invitation-only match.

The Parish is an entity that is well worth preserving. It offers a community meeting place, relationships that span the ages, and a local glimpse of the mystery of God. However, given the significant amount of voluntary time needed for a parish to operate well, is it possible to create churches where monthly attendance is a reflection of commitment, not the lack of it? Can we change the assumptions, the *modus operandi* of the church, or is that just not cricket?



Let me tell you about Rex. He was the Vicar of Selby, an impressive parish where every member was on somebody's visiting list. There were 43 somebodies. It worked out to five households per somebody. Rex, full of energy and ideas, had also initiated a food bank and free counselling service. A team of 25 volunteers underpinned this service. As I said, it was impressive.

When Rex moved to the parish of St John's he was in for a shock. The parish was larger – a bigger roll and bigger numbers at worship. What he had not reckoned with was the different 'culture'. The discretionary time of parishioners – particularly those in paid employment and with children – was minimal. Even those who were retired increasingly had familial, health and business demands reducing their time for church or other voluntary groups. Rex's energy and ideas were stumped by the lack of volunteers.

Rex's story raises for me two questions: firstly, are parishes like St John's failing in Christian faith and mission because its parishioners live lives with little time for voluntary service? And, secondly, how does a parish like St John's encourage and challenge parishioners in spiritual formation and witness?

Now let me tell you about Jane. She is 35, an environment lawyer, married with two children. Between work and kids, the family gets to church about once a month. She receives the sermon weekly via email. Each month she gets the parish magazine also via cyber magic. She gives generously via direct debit. She understands herself to be a regular parishioner. She makes a special effort when a service is advertised that looks great for kids. When Jane does come to church she is grateful there is a Sunday school.

The other thing about Jane is that a sizeable chunk of native, central North Island forest and associated bird life owes its ongoing existence to her team. Over a period of eight years they worked solidly with government, Iwi, forestry interests, and conservation groups to get an agreed upon outcome. Jane is living out her Christian faith, not by attending Bible study groups or Women's Fellowship, but by caring at work, caring at home, and caring for God's creation. Her church tries to support her and equip her, as it tries to support and equip the many other Janes and Johns like her in the congregation.

This is a different way of thinking about church. In this way of being church there is a small team of lay and clergy who initiate events. Critical is a weekly Sunday service, enjoyable and stimulating. People acknowledge and encourage each other in their home/work vocations. There are occasional lectures or social evenings depending on demand and volunteers. Existing social service agencies are supported, rather than new ones initiated. Cyber linkage is increasingly popular.

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The act of dying

November is the month when Christians remember their dead. Paul Andrews *offers some thoughts on the process of dying*

How many deaths have you witnessed? It depends how much you watch TV or films. By the age of twenty most viewers have watched over 20,000 people die on screen. They seldom die actively or consciously, or with preparation. In most cases they are murdered, and no account is taken of how they go to God – who is not part of the scenario.

Those are the deaths on screen. The deaths you see in the flesh are fewer. Most people could count the number of death-beds they have attended, and are probably slow to talk about them. More women than men are found at death-beds. A girl described to me how she travelled across Ireland to be with her dying aunt, wondering would there be too many of the family around to allow her to be alone with the aunt. She reached the hospital room to find the aunt on her own. Her husband and brothers were not far away; they were in the pub across the road, unable to stand the pain of attending helplessly in this terminal situation.

While there is almost a cult of killing on screen (watch, for instance, the violent trailers which advertise films), death is a taboo subject in Western culture, and increasingly even in Ireland. In the soaps people may discuss sex in all its delights and shapes ad nauseam. But when did you last hear a TV character describe how they feel about dying, or being with a dying person, or preparing for death?

When the Russian nuclear submarine Kursk foundered in the icy Barents Sea in August 2000, and the authorities realised they would not be able to save the sailors who were slowly dying of asphyxiation, immense efforts were made to contact those inside the hull. The authorities knew their deaths were inevitable, but (at least as reported) nobody tried to prepare the doomed victims for it.

Though this piece is entitled *The act of dying,* we know that dying is not an act. You suffer death, you don't do it. Because we have no first-hand accounts of *that undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveller returns,* evidence of what it is like to embark on that last journey is hard to find. We have a little.

Jim entered the Jesuits with me, and survived till last year. He was a large, strong, unemotional Corkman who said little and worked non-stop. Fifteen years ago he was operated on for cancer, something went wrong, and he was at the point of death. Later he told me about the day of extreme crisis. Though apparently unconscious, he was aware of a sense of foreboding around his hospital bed, and he felt his body in terrible shape while medics worked feverishly to keep him alive.

Then Jim's mind withdrew from the body, and he remembers moving across a bridge towards a bright, beautiful place on the other side. He was happy, buoyed up by a feeling of joy and anticipation. Round the middle of the bridge the joy was interrupted. People were pulling him back, and when he came to himself he was sadly in the hospital bed, in a painfully sick body, disappointed and rather angry at being hauled back from happiness. For the next 14 years he laboured in an increasingly sick body, and was noted for his tender care of sick people. Perhaps he could convey to those who were facing the end, that there was a lot to look forward to, that the last act of life is beautiful. When his final sickness overtook him, he went in extraordinary peace.

My friend Kate had her first and only child when she was in her thirties. After a terrible labour and birth her kidneys failed, and poison was flooding through her body. Her husband remembers her swollen body being as yellow as the daffodils beside her bed. She was too sick for an ambulance to bring her to a Dublin hospital from the western seaboard. They waited three days before a helicopter was available to lift her to Phoenix Park, then into intensive care where she hovered between life and death for weeks, able to hear for most of the time, but unable to speak or gesture. Her memory of that time is vague. Night and day merged into a long twilight. She suffered acute pain in her chest and arms. When she was turned in bed, every nerve in her body was screaming. When they brought the baby to show her, she was appalled to find she could not see him – she had gone blind, though she recovered her sight later.

In this agonising memory, one episode stands out. She knew she was dying, and seemed to be free of her body. She was moving at incredible speed towards God, and felt herself bathed in his love like an avalanche of warm light. In that brightness she realised that nothing else mattered, not sins or

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Of course, many parishes aren't like this. A number, for example, will continue offering the high commitment, cricket club model, like Selby mentioned above. Others, like Jane's, will be more like beach cricket. That's when three or four people, on a fine day with the tide out, grab the gear and get bowling. It's impromptu, relaxed, and the environment is a big player. Pretty soon others have joined in and 20 or so are having fun. At the end of the game they go their separate ways, save those who started it, until the next time. ■

A wise and gentle pastor

From our earliest days, Father Tom has been an enthusiastic supporter of Tui Motu and we will miss his visits to 'the office'. We publish these thoughts sent to us by a long-time friend of Tom's, Fr Kevin Toomey OP, before he left to take up the position of Dominican Novice Master in the Solomon Islands

Fr Tom Fahey (1915 – 2003)

Compassionate of heart; gentle in word; gracious in awareness; courageous in thought and generous in love.

With these words, Bishop John Dew summed up the life of Father Tom Fahey, as he concelebrated his Requiem Mass with 30 fellow priests on 30 September. Tom's death means the end of an era in the Diocese of Dunedin – 65 years of dedication by a man whose constant discernment, friendship and care meant so much to so many.

Tom followed his older brother, Ted, to Holy Cross College, Mosgiel, was ordained in 1937, and was immediately sent to Europe, where he studied Canon Law in Rome and the (then) infant science of sociology in France. He was fortunate to be able to spend some months in Belgium with Monsignor Joseph Cardijn, being in at the beginnings of the La Jeunesse Ouvriere Chretienne (JOC), which was to become the defining lay movement in the Church after the Second World War. "See, judge, act" was its foundational idea and motto, one which Tom, along with Reg Delargey and Frank Bennett (among many others), acted on to begin lay movements within New Zealand. The outbreak of the war sadly cut short study for Tom and he was lucky to find a berth on a NZ-bound ship.

Wherever he was, there are people who will remember his ministry with gratitude and delight. He had the uncanny knack of being able to see through problems, and of giving nuanced pastoral answers to often difficult scenarios.

Going on holiday with Tom would mean a slow procession from place to place while he called on people along the way to "check up" on those to whom he had ministered, perhaps decades before. He never forgot them. This meant generations of care in particular families: presiding at the marriage of the grandchildren of those he had married decades before! He rejoiced in doing their baptisms, and celebrating all types of anniversaries. And often he was there at the end of life, for their funerals. This pastoral care brought deep and warm friendships with many, of all faiths and none.

As well, there was nothing he loved more than to sit down and "chew the cud," attempting to solve the problems of the Church and the world. His keen radar mind was always searching, following the lead of Vatican II, for new and clearer ways of being able to face the challenges of being a contemporary pastor. Right to the end, he delighted in handing you a good book to read, to share with others the insights that he found fruitful and life-giving. His fine sense of the principles to be followed and his prophetic instincts were uncannily sound. Many women, for instance, would have found not just a sympathetic ear, but a ready and practical acceptance of the part they more and more play in the Church of today.

And in Tom's love for the scriptures and his wise pondering of them for preaching, he showed what Vatican II asks of the priest as the principal sign of this ministry.

Tom was a wise man, who loved people, spoke with a quiet, prophetic voice, and who read "the signs of the times" with rare accuracy all his life.

May he rest in peace.

▷▷ misfortunes or words or pains or her body. She was surprised by joy, could hardly stand it.

Then she became aware of her body again, and was shattered to find herself in the same old bed, the same nightdress, the same sick body. Like my friend Jim she was deeply disappointed; what stayed with her was that memory of the overwhelming love of God. She would never again be afraid of death.

I allow myself to treasure those two witnesses. At the moment of death, God takes over. Our resistance fades away. In the joy of being loved by him, everything else becomes irrelevant. All the human constructs surrounding death, the medical attentions and the prayers, drop into unimportance as we realise that for which we were born. This month of November, we remember, and perhaps allow ourselves to envy, our loved ones who have entered that joy. ■

Martyrs – for God or for La Belle France

The Sword and the Cross
by Fergus Fleming
Granta Publications 2003
Price: $59.95
Review: Kathleen Doherty

They were total opposites: Charles de Foucauld, *bon vivant* turned ascetic, burning with a desire to seek God in the solitary wastes of the desert, and Henri Laperrine, an austere perfectionist whose whole world was the army. But in spite of the differences they became friends, and together were part of the French turn-of-the-century dream of conquering the Sahara.

Fergus Fleming, known for his narrative histories on Arctic exploration, has turned his attention to an equally hostile region in his latest work, and has woven the story of French imperialism in North Africa into a double biography of two unlikely allies. The soldier and the priest were products of a 19th century system which saw the colonisation of North Africa as a chance to show that despite the ignominy of Waterloo, France was still a power to be reckoned with.

For those who know Charles de Foucauld through the meditative writings of one of his Little Brothers, Carlo Carretto, the man who emerges from the pages of this account is vastly more engaging and human. Born in 1858, in the house in Strasbourg where, in 1792, the *Marseillaise* had first been sung, Charles was orphaned at an early age, and after schooling by the Jesuits, entered a military academy where he assumed the role of man-of-the-world and socialite.

"He who discovers a new dish does more for humanity than he who discovers a new star", he declared, and he demonstrated his love of dishes old and new to the extent that he found it necessary to have his coaches lowered so that he was able to get his great bulk on board without climbing steps. A stint with his regiment in Algeria, during which time he met the dedicated career soldier Henri Laperrine, followed by 11 months wandering in Morocco and living on the lowest rung of society, left de Foucauld disillusioned with the shallowness of Parisian life.

The man who changed his life was an elderly priest, Abbé Huvelin, whose dictum was: "one does good much less by what one says or does than by what one is". This appealed to de Foucauld who embraced the Catholicism which he had earlier abandoned, with the passion and fervour of a new believer. He joined the Trappists and was ordained a priest, but the Trappist life was too comfortable for him, and his search for communion with God led him again to North Africa and the desert.

At the time de Foucauld was on his spiritual quest Laperrine was establishing himself as a leader of the military presence in North Africa, heading a camel corps to subdue the fearsome Tuareg tribes, the very people de Foucauld chose to live near and to evangelise. He was not impressed by his friend's new life. "That wretched Huvelin, in five seconds, turned my friend Charles inside out and made a monk out of him", he wrote. But he saw the advantage of having a monk on his side and sent a subordinate to pluck de Foucauld from his hermitage. "He will become the Tuareg's priest and will be a great help to us."

De Foucauld saw no problem in working both for God and for France. Whether or not his spying on the side for Laperrine was any more successful than his attempt to found a monastic order – he attracted only one follower, an elderly blind woman – is doubtful, but his blending of religion and imperialism made him a hero in certain circles in France.

His murder in 1916, at the hands of tribesmen who saw him as part of the colonising French, was followed three years later by the death of his old friend Laperrine from injuries sustained when his plane went down in the Sahara. It was an ironic end for a man who considered cars less reliable than camels but who was seduced by aeroplanes.

The two were buried side by side. Together they are intrinsically linked with the story of France's colonial crusade in the unforgiving Sahara. Theirs is a story well worth exploring. ■

Two contrasting adopted sons of Uncle Sam

Crosscurrents

John Honoré

People who emigrated to America believed that the New World offered greater opportunities. Last month, two 20th-century immigrants, widely different in their beliefs, proved once again the extraordinary diversity and strength of the United States. Thomas Jefferson, author of the *Declaration of Independence,* wrote "all men are equal", and created for America a mythic vision combining individual liberty and national power.

Edward Said, a Palestinian born in Jerusalem, died last month after a lifetime of defending the Palestinian cause in America. In New York where he lived, he was vehemently opposed by Zionists and pro-Israelis, but he did not waver from publicly attacking US policy in the Middle East. His prominence as a scholar and an intellectual enabled him to mount a rigorous examination of the whole Palestinian problem. In many elegantly written essays and articles, he criticised President Arafat and recognised Israel's right to exist.

Yet, his right to free speech and his powerful advocacy of the Palestinian cause were never questioned. It is difficult to imagine such freedom of expression being tolerated to such a degree in countries other than America. Edward Said was educated in the universities of America and has been described as a Christian humanist – a wonderful description of the man and his adopted country.

The other immigrant, this time from Austria, is Arnold Schwarzenegger, now Governor of California. In any other country such an election result would be unbelievable. He was a 'Mr Universe' projecting a testosterone-laden image of an over-muscled gorilla, who moved into Hollywood movies which depicted killer aliens and whose longest line of dialogue was "I'll be back!". This cannot be real. But he *is* real and he *is* Governor. Now he says: "I shall not fail you." It is the American Dream writ large.

This astonishing election exemplifies Ralph Waldo Emerson's encouragement of self-reliance and self-confidence – a genuine American belief system. But it also discarded Gov. Gray Davis for having made no inroads into the California deficit. Californians have decided to give a film star who is untested in politics, a chance at fixing things. Republicans are unsure whether Arnold is good for them or not, but Democrats must be very concerned about their chances for the Presidential elections of 2004.

The Californian election result reflects the pragmatism of Americans whose definition of success is dependent on consequences. If it is not working, change it – and then judge the results. The American toleration of difference, in areas such as religion and politics, is extraordinary.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

The title of my favourite spaghetti Western, *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly,* made me reflect on recent events in New Zealand and how this country is evolving politically and democratically in its quest for a strong identity in the South Pacific.

The government has cut the links to the Privy Council and established a New Zealand Supreme Court as the authority of last legal recourse. It is time, in the history of a British colony beholden to a 'Mother Country' which has less and less relevance, to quit the expensive and irrelevant system to which few New Zealanders had access. The legal system and its practitioners here are robust enough to deal more efficiently and more wisely with cases which involve the particular idiosyncrasies and identity of a multicultural society that is no longer beholden to the law lords of London. The change has been debated and passed democratically.

Naturally, the National Party opposed the change. They would have been better advised to support a New Zealand Supreme Court and be proud of the maturity shown by an independent New Zealand. With experienced judges presiding, the change is definitely good.

Not so good – indeed bad – is the lifting of the GE moratorium which looks like going ahead despite the objections of the majority of the public. This issue has been debated in *Tui Motu* and the possible dangers are obvious. They have not been addressed. The Corngate episodes have made the public suspicious of the Government's ability to control the spread of GE material. The clean green image of New Zealand is in peril, an image fostered overseas to promote tourism and agriculture. The ethical and scientific arguments need more investigation before such an irrevocable step.

The decidedly ugly is the selling, by the National government in the '90s, of the national electricity assets, now resulting in spiralling power prices which look set to continue for the rest of the decade. The advocates of privatisation have been proved totally wrong. The world-wide blackouts have been sheeted home to privatisation, lack of maintenance and profits being siphoned off in management fees. Power crises look inevitable as profits are now placed before service. Already, power companies are preparing the public for shortages next winter. Is there no possibility of reinventing them as one government-run entity?

Perhaps beyond the pale in the ugly bracket is TVNZ continuing with Paul Holmes after his "Cheeky Darkie" comments; and paying him $715,000 to continue to sully the reputation of New Zealand. ■

Great Expectations

Back in 1969 the American publication *Today's Parish* faced in its very first issue the question, "Why should we lay people get all enthusiastic about parish councils if the pastor can veto everything?" After thirty years, the publication returned to the topic. Posing the question, "Consultative only?", it ran seven articles by diverse authors trying to sort out issues of power, consultation, discipleship and canon law in the parish.

The matter is as alive here as in the United States. If the Americans cannot resolve matters in 30 years, what can *Tui Motu* do in half a page? Let me at least offer a few thoughts.

The parish pastoral council and the parish finance committee each have their own canon in the Code of Canon Law. Other parish committees can be taken as coming under the umbrella of the pastoral council. All parishes must have a finance committee. While not universally mandatory, I believe that all New Zealand dioceses have opted to have parish pastoral councils.

Canon 856 on the parish pastoral council runs in part: "In this council, which is presided over by the parish priest, Christ's faithful ... give their help in fostering pastoral action. The pastoral council has only a consultative vote."

The norms for parish pastoral council and finance committee differ from diocese to diocese. Those for finance committees often require the committee's consent for larger projects. There is no such provision for pastoral councils.

But legal norms cannot say all that is to be said. Is the parish pastoral council purely an advisory body? By no means. It is an endeavour to bring together all the resources of the parish, ordained and lay, to give the parish maximum pastoral effectiveness. This is more than can be summed up in a legal formula.

The Second Vatican Council envisaged an expanding role for the laity. No longer was God's guidance to be perceived as flowing almost entirely through the leaders – the hierarchy of pope and bishop and pastor. At parish level what was envisaged was a new structure with representative members of the parish forming one body with the pastor in fulfilling the church's ministry. Together they were called on to reflect on the parish's ministerial activity and on the basis of that reflection to discern what needed to be done in the parish.

A similar change was envisaged in the celebration of the Eucharist. No longer would the priest be the only person who ministered. Ministries of planning the liturgy, reading, singing, serving, distributing the Eucharist, were envisaged. We have as a result witnessed the emergence in worship of a co-operative ministry with the priest playing a unique but hopefully not dominating role.

Parish pastoral councils try to follow the same pattern on a wider scale. Are they successful in this? One parish priest I consulted claimed: "We always try to achieve consensus". Another put it: "It is vastly helpful to have a parish pastoral council with whom the P.P. can share his hopes and dreams and get consensus as to *how* these can be put into practice – if at all!" But we all know of instances where members of the parish pastoral council feel unable to make the contribution they wish to planning and decision making. This can be especially so when a parish priest with one style is succeeded by another with a quite different approach.

Parish pastoral councils are by church standards fresh and tender growths. We are still feeling our way. One of my gurus, Fr Jim Provost, an American canonist, summed matters up in the title of one of his articles, "The working together of consultative bodies – great expectations". ■

Humphrey O'Leary

Fr Humphrey O'Leary is rector of the Redemptorist community in Glendowie, Auckland

True and false prophets

From its earliest days, Christianity, like all religions, has been vulnerable to the ambiguity of its claims. Divine inspiration, prophetic zeal, religious ecstasy, God-given authority – even the notion of incarnation itself – are open to abuse. Jesus' own family wondered if he were mad (*Mk 4*), and throughout the following two millennia the dividing line between inspiration and delusion has at times been difficult to discern.

Recently I was asked what, if anything, distinguished James K. Baxter from the likes of Jim Jones or David Koresh. There was no simple answer to this. Baxter claimed to have a vision from God which led him to set up a community of devoted followers. He suggested that the surrounding society was morally bankrupt, and offered a different and communal mode of living, closer to the kingdom of God.

In this, his pattern was similar to those of Jones, Koresh, Bert Potter and similar leaders of utopian movements. Each community came into conflict with mainstream society and ended in tragedy. The charisma which generates such communities and social movements is a double-edged sword. Baxter, Jones, Koresh and such leaders as Martin Luther King all had sexual appetites which matched their powers of oratory. This seems to go with the territory.

What is it then, that distinguishes the genuinely prophetic from the harmfully deluded? On what criteria might we want to acclaim Baxter and King as prophets while denouncing Jones and Koresh as deviants? The answer must lie somewhere in the gospel summation of fruit revealing that which nurtured it. In the luxury of retrospect, the various figures identify themselves through their legacy.

At what point does the prophetic and pastoral impulse begin to go bad? This has relevance to all in positions of religious leadership. My suspicion is that there is a point when genuine giftedness loses touch with a balancing humility. Charismatic leaders begin to imagine that their special role sets them apart from those limitations which are the lot of 'ordinary' people.

It was to protect himself from this fate that Baxter continually punctured people's elevation of him to guru status through the use of profanity and scatological references. These constant reaffirmations of his own frail humanity may not have saved him from moral failure, but they did save him from delusions of grandeur.

Religion is as susceptible to distortion and abuse as any other human endeavour. Possibly more so. It is not only outside the institutional church that we need to be alert to forces which corrupt. And those who have power or influence have a more difficult road to walk than those who do not. ■

Mike Riddell