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Feeding the Hungry

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Cover painting:
Boterhammen in Papier
by Tjalf Sparnaay 2007
100 x 130 cm, oil/linen,
Private collection.
http://www.tjalfsparnaay.nl/en/

Correction: The cover painting on the February issue was wrongly credited. It is the work of Mary Horn OP. We apologise for this error.

EDITORIAL

The Mercy of Food

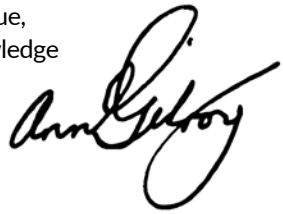
As longed-for rain fell in North Canterbury at new year, everything — sheep, grass, farmers, trees, gardeners, even campers — raised their heads in gratitude. Relief as a substantial downpour unknotted the stranglehold of the El Niño weather along the east coast — for a while. I recalled Shakespeare's imagery on Portia's lips, of mercy "dropping as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath". Both rain and mercy are gratuitous — we cannot control or manipulate them — and a single helping will not satisfy forever. While a mist is welcome in a drought, a soaking unleashes raucous dancing with all kinds of things gurgling into life. Newly dusted wheat plumps and ripens for harvest. Sheep, cattle and deer graze and fatten. Apricots, peaches and nectarines hang juicily. Kumara and potatoes glisten, and slugs party in the kitchen greens. We breathe with relief when food is secure once again.

And as we tend our seedlings of mercy through the rest of Lent into Easter in this Year of Mercy the theme of this issue invites reflection on how hunger affects our world, country, and neighbourhood — very unequally. During a TV commercial break we can be confronted by images of lines of refugees queuing for relief food, or starved by the opposing army, followed by a voluptuous cooking-show pantry from which a mere minuscule is plated. How do we deal with this desperate want and unconscionable excess? Our writers this month share their thinking and contributions towards feeding those who are hungry.

Some like Louise Carr-Neil, discuss the dilemma of food choices and of needing to delve into the shadows of food politics. Others like Deborah Manning and Marion Wood explain what drove them to act and how they maintain their enthusiasm for mission. Then Roger Ellis from *Caritas* outlines development programmes which support people in high risk areas to grow their own food. All speak of the community aspect of ensuring that there is food for all, of sleeves being rolled up, and of the sharing and receiving of wisdom.

And we acknowledge our reliance on the Bread of Life in the remembrance of Holy Thursday, and the resurrection of Easter. Brent McCauley, Daniel O'Leary, and Simon Rae prompt us to curb our too critical judgements, becoming instead soaked in mercy, rising with Christ from unhealthy, divisive, well-learned attitudes we've grown stout on over time, and to taste afresh the warm bread of mercy, of hospitality, inclusiveness — of life. They remind us of the hunger, deep in our spirit, satiated only by love — of our families, of our neighbour, of ourselves, and of Love Godself.

You'll find much more in this 202nd issue, *Feeding the Hungry.* Once again we acknowledge with gratitude all who have contributed by thought, word, art, and craft. And as is our custom, the last word is of blessing. ■



A Time for Dancing

We recently celebrated our daughter's wedding. Ten years to the day from when they publicly celebrated their love and committed their lives to each other in a civil union, our daughter Lisa, and her long time partner Sue, were married. It was a delightful ceremony in the presence of family and a supportive group of friends.

After the ceremony grandson Eli, four-and-a-half, announced loudly: "That was not a normal wedding." Those who heard him tensed slightly wondering where this was heading. With some trepidation his mother asked: "Why is that, Eli?" He replied: "Because there was no dancing."

There was relieved laughter all round and people remarked on the funny things kids say.

But on reflection, I believe this amusing little incident contains a rather profound message.

Many people would consider this wedding to be "not normal". Some would consider the very idea of a same-sex relationship, let alone marriage, as an abomination. Some would try to be kinder and think the relationship is disordered in some way but the participants are doing the best they can. Some would accept the relationship but consider marriage is too much. Some of our Catholic friends might struggle to reconcile what they know of our family with what the Church officially says.

Eli knows nothing of all this. But at four-and-a-half he knows a fundamental truth that is, perhaps more important than all these things — a wedding is a time for dancing.

Jesus said we must become as little children for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs. We adults often get hung up on the rules and regulations, the rights and wrongs, the complexities and contradictions, the puzzles and politics of a situation and we can lose sight of the essential and simple truth.

Children do not so much ignore all these peripheral things, they are simply unaware of them — they do not enter into the equation. Children see straight through to the truth and can state clearly the truth that we perhaps know but have forgotten or buried. They do it in a way that challenges and upends our way of thinking. In the Hans Christian Andersen story it took a child to see that the emperor was naked.

I think about Christmas and am led to think of another child who, in his innocence, swept aside our preconceptions and petty concerns and turned everything on its head. A king born in the muck and stink of a stable; God among us whom nobody knew was there; a man who always retained his childlike clarity of vision, who could see the centre and ignore the periphery and so earn a criminal's death and our salvation.

Perhaps our Church would be a better sign and witness of Jesus if we became more like children, if we had less time for doctrine and dogma and more time for dancing. ■

Painting: *Dance of Grace* by Mark Keathley.
www.infinityfineart.com

Brent McCauley "I am gainfully unemployed. I give my time to family, church, volunteer community work, crosswords, and occasionally painting and writing poetry."

Taking Hunger Seriously

Roger Ellis outlines the scope and some of the causes of hunger in our world. He tells how *Caritas*, with the funds and encouragement of New Zealanders, is addressing hunger in our part of the world.

Food is necessary for our survival and flourishing, and the gathering and sharing of food is a fundamental aspect of community. It is the way we show *manaakitanga*, or hospitality, to each other. It is the way we show *aroha* or love.

Sharing a meal is central to Catholic communities worldwide as food is the result of God's gift and human effort—fruit of the earth and work of human hands. Turning wheat seeds into bread, or growing any other food we depend on, is the result of an interdependent chain of natural forces and human work. However, for many families it is becoming an increasing struggle to put food on the table.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah warned God's people to remove the yoke of oppression, stop evil talk, feed the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted. Matthew's gospel shows the solidarity that Jesus has with the hungry, the thirsty, the lonely, the sick and those who lack clothing, or are in prison. Jesus says that when we see the hungry, we see him. "I was hungry and you gave me food" (Matt 25:35).

When we see hunger we need to take it seriously.

Going hungry in 2016

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UNFAO) estimates that about 795 million people suffer from chronic undernourishment. This represents one in nine people on the planet. Almost all of these 780 million people live in developing countries, but there are also 11 million undernourished people in developed countries.

In New Zealand 33.7 per cent of the population live with low to moderate food insecurity and 7.3 per cent live with severe food insecurity. In real terms, this means children arriving at school hungry with nothing for lunch and families with unhealthy diets that don't meet their nutritional needs .

The problem is not with a lack of productive capacity or technological knowledge. We have that. In fact, the world produces enough food to feed everyone.

"We are in front of a global scandal of around one billion people who still suffer from hunger today. We cannot look the other way. The food available in the world is enough to feed everyone," Pope Francis said when launching Caritas International's global, *One Human Family, Food for All* campaign.

The causes of hunger

The main problem is that many people in the world still do not have sufficient income to purchase food or land to grow enough food for them and their families. In economic terms, the problem is not production.

The main causes of hunger today include:

- Poverty—insufficient income to buy food or land on which to grow food.
- Harmful economic systems—systems of oppression that force the poor majority to serve the interests of a wealthy minority.
- Conflict—such as that in Syria which gives rise to displacement and refugee crises.
- Climate Change causing extreme weather patterns like drought and storms which affect crops.

Poverty and harmful economic systems are major contributors to hunger in the world. There is a massive disparity of incomes and wealth across the world and within individual nations, which is not sustainable. In this environment, political instability becomes a matter of "when" rather than "if". As Albert Einstein was quoted as saying: "An empty stomach is not a good political adviser."

Addressing food needs in NZ and abroad

New Zealand used to pride itself on an egalitarian society where almost anyone could get an education, work hard and flourish. Until the 1980s New Zealand used to be one of the most equal countries in the world. Then in the two decades following the mid-1980s the gap between the rich and the rest increased faster in New Zealand than anywhere else in the developed world.

In that period the average income of a person in the top 1 per cent more than doubled. In contrast, the average disposable income of a person in the bottom 10 per cent is lower now that it was in the 1980s.

In response to this serious issue, *Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand* works in solidarity with those who are struggling to put food on the table through advocacy work. The annual Benefit Impact is one example of this work which helps to ensure that the people most in need can access the government assistance to which they are entitled.

Internationally, *Caritas* addresses today's food problems by working on the root causes of hunger and food scarcity. Promoting investment in agricultural and rural development is one aspect of the social justice agency's work. Another part of the solution to this growing global problem is ensuring that communities are made

Indigenous Cambodian farmers cultivating food. Caritas is supporting rural Cambodians to adapt their farming techniques to a changing climate.

less vulnerable to extreme weather events that are becoming more frequent because of climate change.

An example of the seriousness of these events is the severe *El Nino* weather pattern that is currently affecting Oceania. Beginning in May 2015 with many areas reporting little or no rainfall, the effects have intensified and are predicted to last until at least the middle of this year.

The impact on Papua New Guinea is particularly severe. Drought and frosts are devastating crops and causing widespread hunger, particularly in the seven Highland provinces. PNG Government agencies have reported that 2.4 million people have had their livelihoods, food and water supplies affected.

Caritas is responding to immediate needs in the country and is also continuing to work with local communities on a Sustainable Agriculture and Community Resilience Project. The focus of this project is on assisting ten communities in the provinces of West New Britain, Bougainville and Manus to improve their quality of life by providing agriculture and fishery-based alternative livelihoods, clean water supply and sanitation and hygiene needs.

Each of the communities is located on small outlying islands that are very susceptible to the effects of climate change. Started in 2013 and running until December 2016, *Caritas* supports this project with financial help from the government's New Zealand Aid Programme. It follows on from a very successful pilot project in Kimbe.

What we can do

Pray for the hungry and the oppressed. Pray that our words and deeds make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Learn more about the hungry of the world and support efforts to help communities become self-sustaining.

Write to your Member of Parliament about this issue.

Presently, our NZ government aid budget amounts to $4.20 per fortnight for every New Zealander. Upping that to a weekly total would bring our Official Development Assistance to about 0.5% of the Gross National Income.

Ask your MP to advocate for an increase in the government aid budget.

The Jewish scholar, Jonathan Sacks, reminds us that a better distribution of the world's wealth is good for everyone: "Close to a billion people—one-eighth of the world's population—still live in hunger. Each year two million children die through malnutrition. This is happening at a time when doctors in Britain are warning of the spread of obesity. We are eating too much while others starve." ■

Some links to further information:

- www.caritas.org.nz
- www.wfp.org/hunger/stats
- www.fao.org/home/en/

Roger Ellis is the Community Engagement Manager for *Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand*, the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' agency for justice, peace and development.

WASTE NOT WANT NOT

Deborah Manning explains how her organisation collects "waste food" and redistributes it to local food banks and social agencies. Their efforts address the issue of food waste, the environmental impact of organic material rotting in landfills, and the hunger pangs of individuals and families in the community.

The large-scale loss and waste of food is a national and global problem. The United Nations's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) says that every year approximately one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption gets lost or wasted. That's 1.3 billion tonnes.

The waste is greater in rich countries like our own. In New Zealand the national cost of food waste dumped in landfills during 2014 and 2015 was $872 million each year. This could provide all school-aged children in New Zealand with lunches for three years.

New Zealand's food sector produces enough to feed more than 20 million people. Although that's over five times our population, one in six New Zealanders is "food insecure" — which means they do not have access to safe, nutritious, affordable food to maintain their health and wellbeing. We have children going to school, or falling asleep, hungry.

Even though manufacturers and retailers try to minimise waste, at the end of each day they often have surplus food, which they can't sell, but is still good enough to eat. Most of this surplus ends up in landfills. Thousands of tonnes of edible food are wasted in New Zealand.

> *If we empower businesses and communities to come together we can create positive social change.*

The issue of food wastage is important and affects us all. For example, that food could provide nutrition for families who do not have enough to eat. Over time the effects of poor nutrition create an unnecessary and expensive burden on our health and social systems. Our economy depends on energetic workers and when they're undernourished the community suffers.

And all the resources that went into the food production — water, fuel, energy, fertiliser, etc. — are wasted when food is dumped in landfills. Those resources are becoming increasingly scarce and expensive.

Food dumped in landfill does not turn into compost. Without air, it simply rots and produces methane gas, which is 20 times worse for the environment than car exhaust gas. Rainwater passing through the rotten food produces leachate, a toxic liquid, which can then pollute rivers and groundwater. This makes landfills increasingly difficult and expensive to build. We certainly need to avoid filling them with food.

Bridging the Gap

This issue galvanised me into action and I founded *FoodShare* in Dunedin in 2012.

I grew up in a happy, family home where the vegetable garden provided a continual supply of food. Our trees supplied fruit as well as climbing facilities. My mother preserved fruit for the winter months and was masterful at inventing from leftovers.

I settled in Dunedin in the 90s

and brought up my family. After several years working as a lawyer I felt a personal need to do something different, something more, for my community. I saw the need to bridge the gap between businesses throwing away food at day's end and the food banks and social service agencies in desperate need of food.

After extensive research and planning I began collecting left-over food and distributing it in chilly bins. In the first month the donated food provided 1,000 meals for people in need. It took six months before I felt confident that the system was going to work and that the business model for food collection and distribution was robust and scalable.

The challenge then was to get financial assistance to move *FoodShare* to the next phase. Armed with my big idea, the design for lasting impact and my business plan, I approached a local charitable trust for startup funds. I am grateful to the trustees of the *Harry Wilson Trust* for their faith and confidence in me and the business. Their support helped establish *FoodShare* as a professional business which now provides the equivalent of 45,000 meals locally each month.

Food Collection and Delivery

Our two vans are on the road six days a week collecting surplus food from local food manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers. We collect fresh and frozen food including: fruit, vegetables, meat, cheese, juice, milk, and ready-to-eat meals from the food donors at no cost to them.

We then deliver the donated food directly to an agency, such as Catholic Social Services or St Vincent de Paul, for immediate distribution to their clients, or we bring it to our headquarters where it is sorted and allocated to other agencies for collection. Because the food generally has a very short shelf-life, we take care to maintain the integrity of the food by transporting it in a refrigerated van and storing it in large chillers and freezers until it is distributed.

We process between 750 kg and one tonne of rescued food each day. Over the last three years we have saved more than 330,000 kg of good food from being wasted. This is equivalent to over 945,000 meals and hundreds of nourished people.

Food dumped in landfill does not turn into compost. Without air, it simply rots and produces methane gas, which is 20 times worse for the environment than car exhaust gas.

People who make it work

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of *FoodShare*. We have over 100 registered volunteers helping with tasks, large and small, and across all areas of the business. They accompany our drivers when they collect the donated food, record details of each donation, sort and allocate the food for the agencies we support, wash containers, help at events, clean the vans, and much more.

We have some positions with paid employees. This creates stability, continuity, and resilience and simply makes good sense. We have five part-time employees — Manager, Volunteer Coordinator, Office Administration Support and two Drivers. Most of our fundraising efforts go into supporting their positions, keeping our vans on the road and our chillers running.

The success of *FoodShare* in Dunedin led to the establishment of a second food rescue operation in Auckland, *KiwiHarvest*. (www.kiwiharvest.org.nz).

Helping effectively

I think charities must have efficient and effective business and operating models and need to be able to provide evidence of their impact. Being adaptable and embracing the digital age helps. Most importantly — every dollar must count. We know that every dollar donated allows us to deliver the equivalent of three meals. We are relieving hunger and at the same time we are protecting the environment from the harmful effects of degrading food waste.

We are constantly reviewing our systems, talking to our stakeholders, and looking for ways to improve our service. We have developed corporate engagement opportunities so local and national businesses can become active in addressing the issues of food waste and food insecurity.

Later this year we will introduce community workshops designed to teach fresh food storage, preparation and cooking techniques in a practical setting.

Community Well-being as Profit

FoodShare is a not-for-profit organisation. However, we measure our profit, not in dollars, but in social and environmental outcomes. In April 2016 we will deliver our 1,000,000th meal from rescued food. We think that is a great achievement — and there is still more to be done.

I believe that together we can make a difference and ensure the hungry are fed. We can decrease the volume of organic waste in our landfills and provide a way for businesses and individual community members to exercise their social responsibility. We can invest in our own communities and make a difference. ■

Deborah Manning, CEO of FoodShare, wants to solve food waste and hunger in our communities. "If we empower businesses and communities to come together we can create positive social change."

ORGANIC FOOD

is the way to go - RIGHT?

Photo by Tiago Faifa

Louise Carr-Neil weighs up the benefits and realities of growing and eating organic foods.

Organic food is "trending" right now. Wherever you look, claims to be organic, use organic ingredients and follow an organic philosophy punctuate the food, beverage, healthcare, and beauty industries. But aside from becoming the latest buzz word at cafes along Ponsonby Road, what does organic eating mean for us, and what does it mean for the health of the environment?

Knowing your food

One of the most obvious benefits of eating organic food is that you know exactly what you are buying or as a friend of mine puts it: "I want to buy broccoli, not broccoli with a side of pesticides".

Mainstream farming uses a host of pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides to grow crops and while it is worth acknowledging the debates that surround this topic as to whether chemicals used in food production have an effect on humans at all, it is safe to say that we simply just don't know what the long-term effects of pesticides are when consumed on an everyday basis.

When food is grown as nature intended, it has a higher mineral and antioxidant content as well as simply tasting better. This is because the foundation soil is not degraded by the use of chemicals and is able to provide a more nurturing environment for our food.

> *Subsistence communities often find their traditional diet displaced by the newfound enthusiasm from the West . . .*

The environmental benefits of organic growing also go far beyond soil quality. The use of chemicals causes the pollution of ground water, rivers and streams, whereas organic farming works in harmony with the environment, rather than stripping it of nutrients.

Organics and development

The rise in the popularity of organic food has had surprising benefits for some groups. I've learnt a lot about development in the Pacific region from my job at Oxfam New Zealand. Some of our core projects revolve around enabling farmers to earn a sustainable income from agricultural production. In Tonga, rural villages are benefiting from a long-term coconut oil project, which, through a local partner, trains men and women to produce organic, extra-virgin coconut oil, and vanilla beans. This ensures them stable work and a dependable income.

One of the keys to the success of this model is the new demand for organic produce allowing Tongans to sell to international markets. Coconut is an abundant natural resource in Tonga and this model allows for job creation at many levels, including collecting coconuts, processing, quality testing, and packaging.

Low impact on the environment

Tony, a friendly Englishman who had been living in New Zealand for seven years, is one of the most inspiring people I met in my adventures in managing an Auckland farmers' market. Tony is a committed biodynamic grower and very easily conveys his love for growing fresh, healthy food along with his *kaupapa* of "do no harm". The idea that human consumption should not have a negative impact on the environment in which we live, really resonates with me.

Biodynamic farming works to create a thriving and balanced mini-ecosystem around the farm. The philosophy subscribes to the idea that nothing should be used in food production that doesn't already exist in the environment. The land is prepared for growing with the use of fermented manure, minerals, and herbs that help to restore the land and harmonise the soil. Ultimately it is growing food that is better in quality and flavour. The micro-ecosystem of the farm also interacts with and exists within the wider ecosystem and is guided by the wider cosmos, including the moon and the tides.

Benefit of local organic food

It is almost impossible to outline the environmental benefits of buying organic food without exploring the local food movement. This is an area in which the principles of organic food and the new trend for "organic" have a considerable disconnect.

The argument for local food is pretty simple—buying local food reduces the carbon miles needed to transport food and there is more nutritional benefit from food that hasn't been kept in cold stores for weeks on end. You are also supporting a local farmer. One of my greatest pleasures is to go to a farmers' market and have a yarn with the person who grew my beans and carrots.

Problem with imported food

The disconnect with the organic trend is the mass consumption of organic chia seeds, quinoa and goji berries, to name a few. These touted "super-foods" are indeed nutritionally dense, but they are also transported from China, Tibet, South America and other faraway lands. This equates to phenomenal carbon miles and a considerable impact on the communities that grow these crops.

Subsistence communities often find their traditional diet displaced by the newfound enthusiasm from the West and they are also bearing the burden of soil degradation as traditional farming methods cannot keep up with demand.

A very real example is the story of quinoa, which is grown in the Bolivian Andes. Since the western craze for this low-fat, high-protein grain has taken off, prices have soared, meaning that many Bolivians can no longer afford to eat quinoa. In a region with an incredibly high rate of malnutrition, this is an unimaginable burden for a society to carry.

This example demonstrates that while eating organic food is a positive movement - it's not as simple as "organic is good, non-organic is bad".

Personal challenge

These stories and narratives run deep and the imported food dilemma is one I personally struggle with. Almost seven years ago I became a vegetarian with the proud view of eating a more ethical and environmentally friendly diet. It has been only in recent years that I have started to question the fact that the ingredients of my main staples, such as tofu and falafel, cannot be sourced in New Zealand. After months of angst and stress (and a period of trying to eat only New Zealand produced foods, a time in which I was very, very hungry and my credit card bill was sizeable), I settled on the idea that I would aim to tread as lightly as possible. This means I source as much of my food as I can locally and I make peace with the foods that I cannot.

Organic food has many good points in terms of human health and in terms of the health of our environment. However, I believe that like many good things in life, it is something to come to as you are ready rather than radically trying to overhaul your diet in a drastic and unsustainable way. Luckily enough for us, organic, biodynamic and spray-free food is becoming increasingly available through farmers' markets and supermarkets alike. Growing your own food, even if it is just herbs on your window sill, also provides more control over what you consume, as well as being a rewarding experience in itself. ■

Louise Carr-Neil is a young Auckland native who is passionate about gender equality and human rights. In her spare time she enjoys running and vegetarian cooking.

Feeding the Hungry into the Future

Marion Wood and her husband, Jim Kebbell, developed an organic food company over the last 25 years, with outlets in Wellington and Auckland. Marion compares current farming and organic methods asking which will feed the world into the future.

Jim and I, with five other families, bought a 4.8 hectare land block at Te Horo in 1975. We started a community with "pushed outs" — people coming out of prison or mental hospitals unwelcomed in society. Our romantic idea was to revitalise lives by reconnecting people with nature and working the land. We knew little but we were enthusiastic.

My mother insisted that we grow organically. It concerned us that our food chain was in the hands of the oil companies. They produce herbicides, fertilisers, and pesticides as a by-product of petroleum refining and they hybridise seeds to make the world dependent on their products. So it was our background in social justice that moved us towards environmental justice and the organic movement.

Organic Farming

Organic farming is a development of traditional methods. The essential principle is to co-operate with nature rather than to dominate it. All farming interferes with natural processes in some way and organic farming seeks to maintain a balance between exploiting the land for crops and building fertility.

Building up and maintaining soil fertility is done by recycling organic materials into it, including crop residues and livestock wastes. Green crops return nitrogen to the soil.

Organic farming minimizes the use of non-renewable resources. Weeds, diseases, and pests are controlled by crop rotation, the use of natural predators, limited mechanical or chemical intervention, and biological diversity.

Farming organically creates a virtuous circle. The 2015 Paris Climate Change meeting ended on a hopeful note — that the world stabilises carbon emissions at 1.5 per cent. In Aotearoa-New Zealand nearly half our emissions are from agriculture. The United States' Rodale Institute reported:

". . . recent data from farming systems and pasture trials around the globe show that we could sequester more than 100 percent of current annual CO2 emissions with a switch to widely available and inexpensive organic management practices . . . These practices work to maximise carbon fixation while minimising the loss of that carbon once returned to the soil, reversing the greenhouse effect."

If Aotearoa-New Zealand farmed organically we would address the problem of our carbon emissions, have clean waterways, healthy soil, and feed the hungry.

Organically grown vs processed food

We know we can buy cheaper food in our supermarkets than most organically grown food. But there is no simple co-relation between "cheap" supermarket food and feeding the hungry. Who benefits from cheap food?

Our countryside?

Currently farming methods are destroying our land. In 2013, 60 per cent of our rivers were not fit for swimming. This is the most visible evidence of pollution. In particular, intensive dairy farming externalises the costs of the pollution it creates. So Aotearoa-New Zealand is not benefiting long-term from our farming practices.

Our farmers?

Farming has become commodified, is part of the futures market, and we see the results in the fluctuating global prices for dairy products. This model does not benefit farmers.

Overseas farmers?

Globally small farmers are being driven from their land. There is a natural synergy between fair trade and organics, dating back to the so-called Green Revolution. While the movement aimed to increase yields, it led to a dependency on chemical pesticides and fertilizers which small farmers could not afford. Whole families were forced into bonded labour because they couldn't repay their debts. However, communities found that returning to traditional, organic ways of farming helped break this destructive pattern. And when they organised in cooperatives they became eligible for fair trade and organic certification.

Farm Workers?

Farm workers are among the most exploited in our country and world-wide. Their pay is low and more workers are injured or killed on farms than in any other workplace. Yet in 2015, farming was classified as a "low risk occupation" and the health safety regulator, *Worksafe*, said that prosecuting farmers "would not be a productive way of improving safety in the sector". This contrasts with the approach taken in forestry where a combination of education and prosecutions has seen a dramatic drop in accidents. So farm workers are not benefiting.

The costs of organic farming (and therefore organic products) are currently distorted in Aotearoa-New Zealand because the costs of cleaning up water and soil pollution created by conventional farming are often subsidised by local authorities or the government.

Consumers?

Superficially the answer is "yes"—but further investigation reveals a murkier story. An Auckland University study published in *Journal of Public Health Nutrition* 2015, found that most packaged supermarket food is "unhealthy"—lacking in nurtrients. These unhealthy processed foods are often cheaper than cooking a meal. But does this food feed the hungry?

The availability of low-priced processed food has served to increase the knowledge and skills gulf between those who cook and those who buy ready-to-eat, processed foods high in sugar, salt, and additives. This inequalty is responsible for, at least in part, our obesity problem.

In addition, cheap, processed food has contributed to the reduction in gardening skills across the population. The introduction of gardening programmes in some schools is combating this loss. We support a programme in five decile-one schools in Porirua.

Who benefits from cheap food?

In general, the bigger and more global the food company, the more they benefit. So supermarket parent companies benefit more than individual supermarkets. Their focus on "cheap" creates a race to the bottom and this squeezes the profit margins particularly for owner-operators. The major beneficiaries are the biggest global food companies. And they show little concern for the quality and nutritional value of the food they produce.

The current system is destroying the land we depend on for food, undermining the ability of farmers to make a living, driving them to exploit their workers, and ends up with a product with little nutritional value.

It is ironic that the public relations message from those benefiting from the current system is that organic food cannot feed the world. In reality, the current industrial model of farming means we will soon be unable to feed people at all. Literally, it will cost us the earth. And we have to find a different, kinder, sustainable way to farm and produce food for everyone.

Relearning that food is Earth's gift

First we need to recognise that our survival depends on our respect for the earth and all that grows in it.

We need to respect good food, never waste it, and always recycle it back to the earth.

We need to teach our children about food—how to grow it, how to prepare it and how to share it.

We need to learn the essential principles of growing food organically—to co-operate with nature rather than to dominate it and to apply this principle across the food chain.

We need to extend the principle of co-operation and dismantle the broken agricultural business model, restore the goodness of our land and waters, relearn the skills of growing our own food and, ultimately, enable the hungry to feed themselves. ■

Marion Wood spent 25 years working in the not-for-profit sector and as National Director of the YWCA before developing *CommonSense Organics* with her husband Jim Kebbell.

You Saw Me Hungry and Gave Me Food

Catholic people no longer able to go to the Church can miss out on parish life and Communion. **Ann Gilroy** tells of the effort some parishes make to ensure that no one goes hungry.

Taking Communion to those unable to join the community at Sunday Eucharist is a Catholic tradition and is the reason why we store hosts in the tabernacles of our churches. Many Catholics, like my mother in her 90s, have been devout communicants all their lives and rely on Eucharist for nourishment as they need dinner for sustenance. But when a person can no longer drive and doesn't have family or friends nearby to take them to Mass, it could be easy to drop off the parish radar and be left hungry for Communion.

Knowing this I sent a questionnaire to every parish and pastoral area in New Zealand asking about their practices of taking communion to those who couldn't come to the church. The responses from just over a dozen priests, parish groups or teams, but from all dioceses, were surprising and inspiring.

Communion for many

First, these parishes fed a multitude—at home, in rest homes, retirement villages, hospitals, and hospices. A small rural parish attended to approximately 17 people weekly, while a city parish had around 103 people on the list for communion, 57 of whom were in their own homes. Parishioners took them Communion every week. The priest wrote: "This is a huge part of our parish life. Essentially one-fifth of our 'practising' parishioners are not able to attend Mass on a Sunday."

And parish lists fluctuate according to the health and longevity of those at home. The longest list was 135 the shortest 16. One rural parish area had "Mass weekly at an elderly person's house, and a couple of other people who may not get to the Sunday Mass, normally attend. It is also a good social occasion—we have lunch afterwards."

Commitment of ministers

Second, lay ministers of Communion are very committed in terms of priority and time given, distance travelled and maintaining relationships with those responsible for rest homes. A parish, with many retirement-aged parishioners, had a team of 14 ministers commissioned to give communion to the sick. One was devoted solely to the Hospice. The Pastoral Leader wrote that the ministers drive many kilometres to give Communion and that her husband travelled approximately 50 kms each time.

Another pastoral area had 43 ministers of Communion spread across their region. "Lay ministers are rostered and the time they spend is between 30 minutes to an hour when they take Communion. The time needed in rest homes can vary considerably depending on whether or not Communion is given in a group gathering."

One parish priest said: "Each minister goes to between 5-9 people depending on whether they are going to individuals in their homes or several in one rest home. It takes them a minimum of one hour each Sunday and up to a good two hours—quite a commitment."

Another wrote: "We have numerous ministers of Communion. The amount of time varies, but most enjoy spending time with the person as well as celebrating the brief liturgy with them. Some are not able to receive Communion and the Ministers will often pray with them for a short time."

"Nothing is rushed and depends on the individual recipient. If a Minister has time for a cuppa and a chat—that's fine but is not a requirement. It's about keeping the connection with the parish community."

A Lay Pastoral Leader spoke of a group of eight ministers "who go out regularly each week covering those at home and the eight retirement complexes in the parish. They are very special people who love doing this ministry and are very caring to their people."

Priority given

Third, parishes think giving Communion to the sick is an important community responsibility. Those who responded were emphatic: "We think it is very important. Besides sustaining the faith of individuals, the ministry to the housebound emphasises their important place in the Church and the role they continue to play despite no longer being so active and visible."

"These people are our family. We pray for them in our Masses and services. It is a privilege to serve in this way."

"We have a large elderly population among our parish community. They are given a high priority because in general terms they have 'paid it forward' so to speak and it is very important to them."

"The ministers taking Communion perceive this to be very important, taking Christ and the news of the parish via the bulletin and just the personal contact."

"The fact that the ministers are dismissed from Mass in front of the congregation is important and lets everyone know that this ministry takes place and is available at all times to all who need it."

"They're people of great prayer and love to hear all the news of what is happening in their parish. It can become apparent that some people have been away from the Church and want to make changes. I make sure Father is available for them."

One priest spoke of people becoming communicants again when they came into contact with a minister while they were in hospital or had moved to a rest home.

Keeping the list

Fourth, keeping the parish communion lists updated is crucial. In some parishes the priest organised the list but more often a lay person was responsible—a Pastoral Leader or Associate or Parish Secretary. One priest described the person with this role in his parish as "my right arm".

Parishes used a variety of strategies to keep abreast of who needed Communion—notices in the bulletin, word of mouth from parishioners, contact by family members, visiting hospitals and retirement homes, through the activities of St Vincent de Paul, Legion of Mary, prayer chains, and prayer groups. Some parishes offered regular hospitality and entertainment for the elderly people in their area and kept contact through that means. Most parishes offered a regular anointing Mass in the Church or in a retirement facility.

Not wanting to be a bother

And almost all respondents acknowledged that despite their efforts they may not keep up with all who need Communion.

"Unfortunately there are those that fall through the cracks. There are those who we don't know about. Sometimes the families don't let us know and at other times the elderly person doesn't say anything because they don't want to be a bother."

A few great parishes?

The responses indicate the generosity, fidelity, understanding of ministry, and sense of community of the priests and lay people in a few parishes in New Zealand who share Communion with those at home. We don't know—but we hope—that this is the pattern in all parishes. *Tui Motu* magazine readers might enquire about the arrangements in their parishes.

A story sent by a parish priest about one of his Communion ministers, encapsulates beautifully the mutual communion of giving and receiving the Bread of Life:

"I was visiting one of our rest homes and was told that Mary, one of our parishioners, only had a brief time to live. She didn't have any local family and I wasn't able to stay, so I called Liz, the person who regularly brought Communion and she sat with Mary until she died. Liz was very moved to know, that as she had taken Mary Communion on the Sunday, which was her final Communion, she had been the minister of the Sacrament of Viaticum." *(Names added.)* This is an embodiment of mercy—I was hungry and you fed me for my final journey. ■

Painting: *Jesus Feeds the 5,000* by Melani Pyke

After living around New Zealand and beyond **Ann L Gilroy RSJ** has landed in Dunedin as editor of *Tui Motu*. She's rediscovering domestic arts, loves reading, and is on for adventure.

Photo: Nicholas Thompson

Become Soaked in Mercy

Daniel O'Leary writes that a despairing world comes to know mercy by the contact it makes with those who know the mercy of Christ, who may by their very presence, bring a healing and redeeming touch that transforms the lives of others.

This Year of Mercy is already seeing some powerful articulations and celebrations of divine compassion throughout the Christian world. A million lives will be transformed. A million hopes renewed. A million holy doors opened in human hearts. For this blessed springtime of the soul to continue, Pope Francis emphasises that our celebrations of mercy must reach beyond any routine actions and prayers; they must be fleshed and heartfelt.

In *Misericordiae Vultus*, his bull of indiction of this Jubilee Year, the Pope has urged that this year's season of Lent "should be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God's mercy". For him it is the actual experience of mercy in the giving and the receiving that matters most. In his *Mercy: the essence of the Gospel and the key to Christian life*, Cardinal Walter Kasper wrote that mercy is "the best thing we can feel: it changes the world".

Becoming mercy and love

To accomplish this mission of making mercy and love tangible around us, we need to actually become this merciful love, so that we are in ourselves a sacrament of God's mercy for others. There is a divinity that lies at the heart of us all, of every single thing we do, think, and say. Our faith teaches that divine mercy and love are incarnate in our every effort to "heal the wound", as Francis puts it, in ourselves and others.

It also reminds us that God needs our co-operation to reach a radically distorted humanity. St Teresa knew that the Risen Christ could not fulfil his dream for the earth without the corporal cooperation of our lives and senses. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we sinners are the face of God's mercy.

By a compassionate sensitivity and our inner wholeness, we bring to birth in others the seeds of hope . . .

This is an astonishing dimension of incarnation — that we ourselves, in all our contradictions and imperfections, are the living sacraments of God's incarnate mercy, a mercy that cannot be shown or received except through us. The Christian faith does not waver in its enduring certainty of that revealed reality. In our precarious presence, we are empowered by the incarnate Spirit.

Becoming an influence

Beyond the necessary preaching, teaching and converting, beyond our individual acts of kindness and goodness, there is the deeper, forgotten, redeeming power of human presence itself. This presence is the source of what Blessed John Henry Newman calls the "catching influence" that transforms the lives of others.

As we move further into 2016, we need to reflect with excitement and anticipation on our identity as "other Christs", as the fleshed presence of mercy. To achieve this, we need a deeper understanding of our faith. In baptism we are all called to be the priests and priestesses of incarnation, consecrating the world by the holy work of love and mercy, reminding people that even in the darkest days of death by terrorist atrocities, bombing missions, and human self-destruction, the divine compassion is still somehow alive, even in loveless and demonic places.

We ourselves, by faithfulness to our baptism, and by living eucharistically, are transubstantiating the poisoned bread of rampant evil into a healing food for famished hearts. Do we believe this about ourselves? The Pope reminds us that the Year of Mercy is about a radical transformation in "who we believe we are".

Being a sensitive presence

Our senses, it is revealed, are sacred. They are the real communicators of mercy, providing the actual experience of saving presence in the here and now. Pope Francis has written about the way people catch compassion from someone's sensitive presence. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, he emphasises our personal role in salvation when "touching human pain, touching the suffering flesh of others, entering into the reality of other people's lives through the power of tenderness" (par 270).

By the expression on his face when he reaches for someone who is clearly in trouble, by the warmth of his eyes and in his wholehearted embrace, the Pope himself is a fleshly icon of the mercy he has become. "I'm not contagious," said Vinicio Riva, the man with neurofibromatosis whom the Pope hugged, "but he did not know that. He just did it—he caressed me all over my face, and as he did it I felt only love." There is a maternal devotion in God's ways with us.

By the experience of divine presence within ourselves, we release the divine presence in those we serve. By personally experiencing the felt reality of God's mercy and love, we make real the healing power in others too. By a compassionate sensitivity and our inner wholeness, we bring to birth in others the seeds of hope at the moment of their desperate powerlessness in the face of defiled innocence and a deadly depravity.

Drawing out Divine courage

The holy work of mercy, whether to heal the tragedies on distant shores or in a neighbour's broken heart, is about drawing out, as a teacher does her pupils, as a mother does her child, as the sun does the seed, the original beauty, the hidden self-belief, the divine courage in all who suffer.

When the shutters of a nation are closed to despairing refugees, or the door of a house down the street is shut to an erring family member, nothing will get in there to change anything except raw human hearts full of incarnate love.

Many may think the Year of Mercy attempts to do the impossible in a deeply damaged humanity. Maybe so. But just because something's impossible with women and men does not mean we should not try to do it. We are well aware we will die with our ambitious goals of love unfinished, our projects unachieved. But, trusting in divine mercy, we continue to do the best we can.

Being soaked in mercy

One thing is sure: we cannot be that merciful presence unless we are already soaked in mercy. We ourselves must be on the path of a liberating transformation before others can catch hope from us. It is about who we really are, beneath our achievements or special qualifications.

Being merciful is about being truly present to the daily human struggle to reach beyond the dark. And that reaching for and glimpsing of the light is called resurrection made flesh. The Year of Mercy is also the Year of personal and universal Resurrection. ■

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Irish-born **Daniel O'Leary** is a priest of the Diocese of Leeds UK, an author and teacher. He is an award winning author of 12 books. His website is www.djoleary.com

Community around the Steaming Pot

We have a major fruit and veggie market across the highway from our *favela* on the sprawling edges of Salvador in northeast Brazil—and yet still people were going hungry. "Can´t they beg for food, scavenge just a little at the market?" This was part of a conversation I had with a couple of friends, volunteers from Austria. The decision was made. The volunteers would provide the gas, pots, and an industrial stove; the parish would loan the van; Maria offered her front verandah and we were the willing mugs who would go begging. It all sounded so easy.

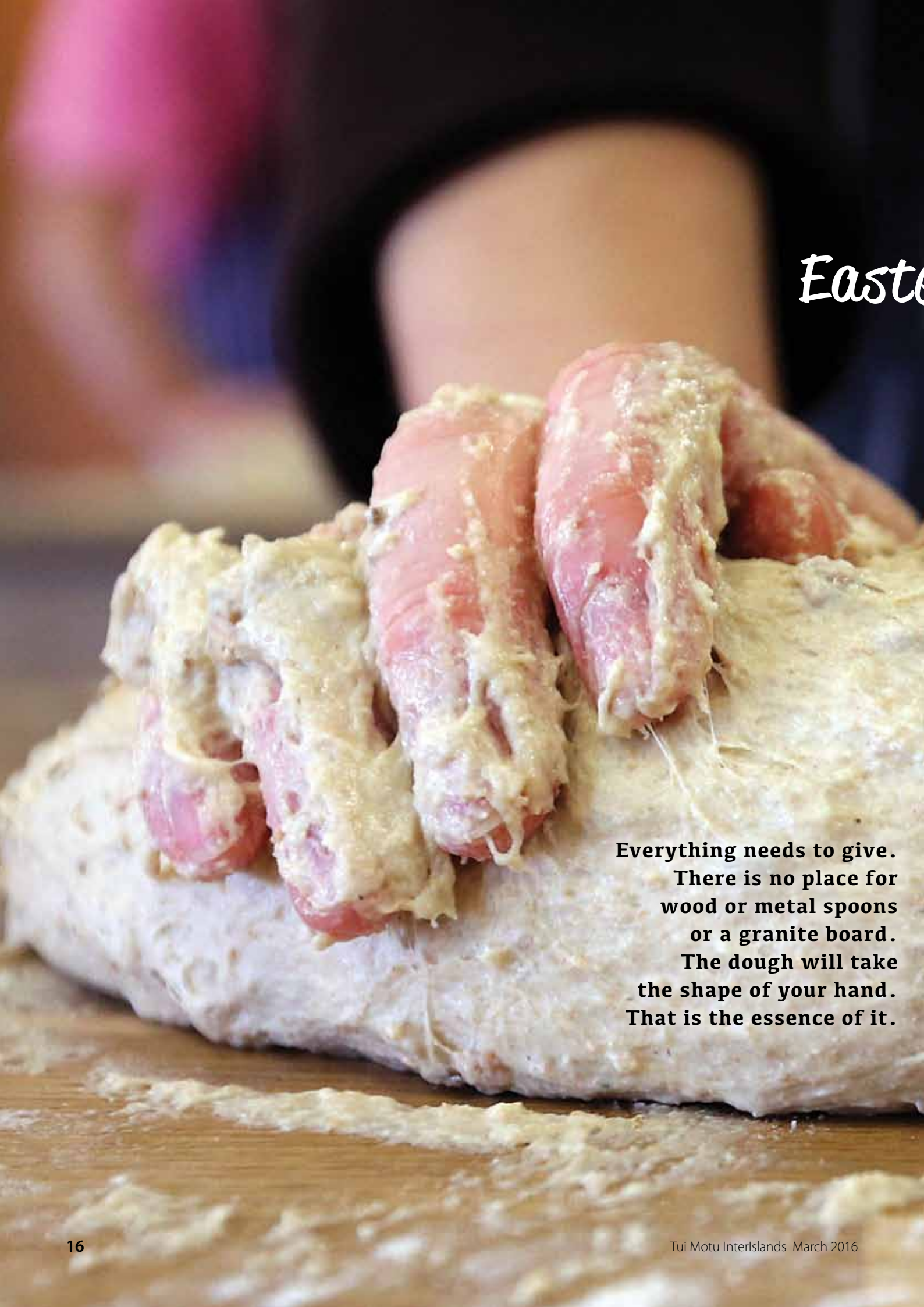
This was not a street or farmers' market for the public but a huge warehouse type of market where food was trucked in from the region and sold to retailers. It was loud, choked with traffic, and urgent. We were jostled around by people too busy to notice us. We barely avoided getting run over by fellows running with monstrous wheelbarrows laden with 20, even 30, boxes or sacks. We gamely approached men who looked as if they were in charge of the selling. What a nightmare! I remembered hearing stories of when our Josephite Sisters used to go begging for the children's and elderly people's homes. Their experiences seemed funny, clean and successful—far different from what we encountered.

The results of our first attempt: hundreds of "come back later" shake-offs and four pumpkins from a friend! We pooled our few coins, bought some spices and figured out a way to convince the community that pumpkin soup wasn't that bad. The women who'd gathered on Maria's verandah to help with the peeling and cooking, couldn't believe we still wanted to cook, let alone go back the next week.

We persisted and roll-on a year, we had a kombi van overloaded with veggies—enough to support six soup kitchens. Women and men gathered in each community to peel, slice, dice, and cook huge steaming pots of food to share with their neighbours. When the produce stall owners realised we weren't begging for ourselves or selling the produce on, they gave. Their confidence in us opened up their generosity.

Sixteen years later the common pot continues in the communities and food and neighbourliness give nourishment and resilience for life in the *favela*. ■

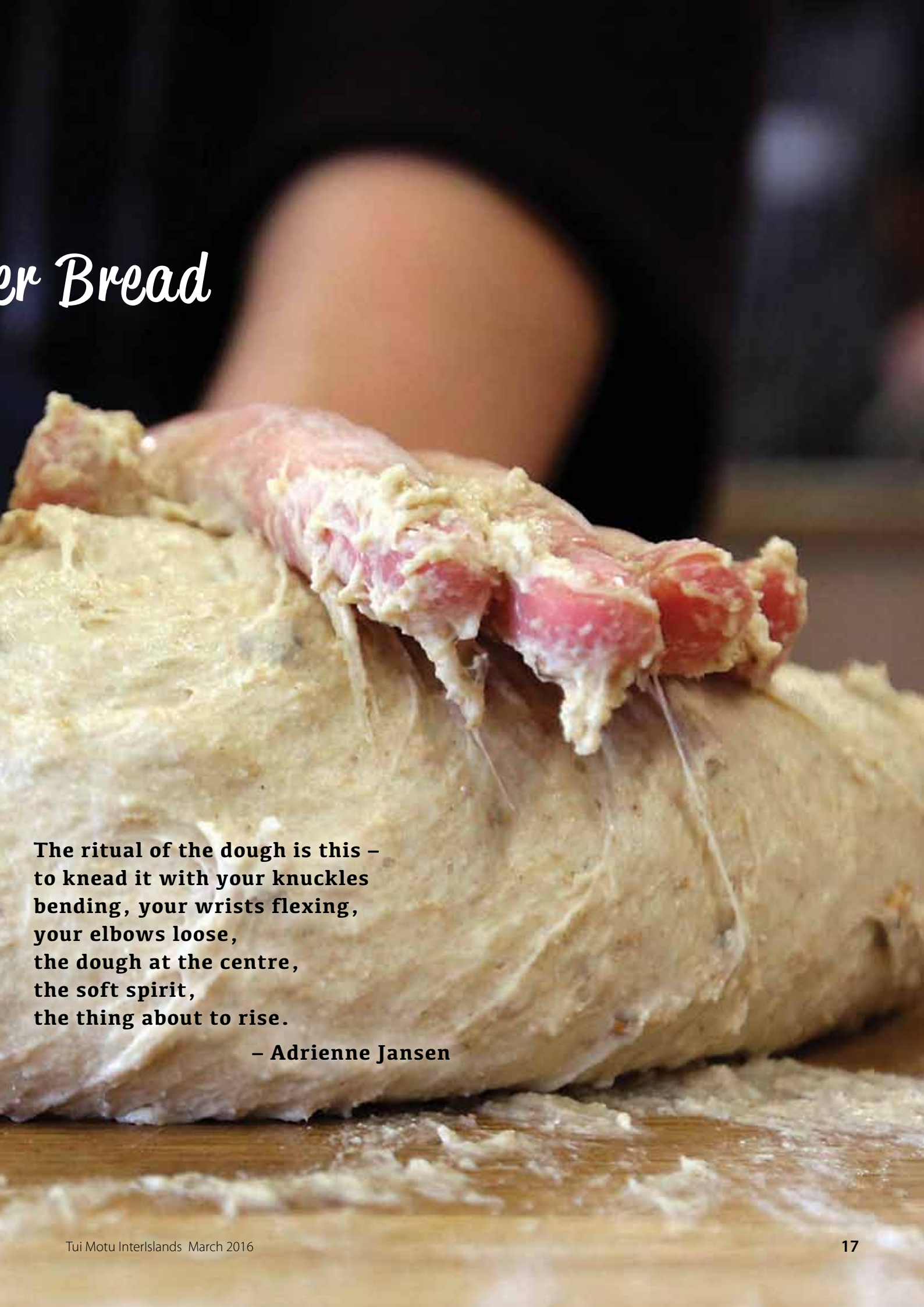
Helen Caughley RSJ taught in Catholic secondary schools in Rotorua and Gisborne before going to Brazil. She has lived with the people of Nova Esperanca since 1998.



Easte

Everything needs to give. There is no place for wood or metal spoons or a granite board. The dough will take the shape of your hand. That is the essence of it.

er Bread



The ritual of the dough is this –
to knead it with your knuckles
bending, your wrists flexing,
your elbows loose,
the dough at the centre,
the soft spirit,
the thing about to rise.

– Adrienne Jansen

Catholic Schools to be Prophetic

In part two, **Ivan Snook** presents three major challenges for Catholic Schools. He encourages them to become critically prophetic in their message, their education, and their communities.

Last month, I characterised the first hundred years of Catholic education in New Zealand as "the struggle for survival" and the 40 years since Integration as "the struggle to be respectable." I then suggested that the next few years might constitute "the struggle to be prophetic." This would mean that the schools would move from uncritical support of government initiatives to a genuine concern for social justice. I noted that "Christians are called to perform a 'prophetic' role in modern-day culture. In both the Old Testament and New Testament, prophets were expected to deliver important messages to their contemporaries. In addition to *speaking their messages*, these prophets often *demonstrated them* to the culture in which they lived." Catholic schools, then, should speak prophetic messages and demonstrate them to the wider society.

According to the analysis undertaken by John O'Neill and myself, three major challenges face society and education in the next decades: (1) climate change and sustainability; (2) technology and work; and (3) population growth, inequality, and living harmoniously.

Climate change and sustainability

Although the extent of the impacts of globalisation on the environment (eg, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, desertification, and pollution) is disputed by supporters of globalisation: "There is strong evidence that changes in greenhouse gas concentrations due to human activity are the dominant cause of the global warming that has taken place over the last half century. This warming trend is expected to continue as are changes in precipitation over the long term in many regions. Further and more rapid increases in sea level are likely which will have profound implications for coastal communities and ecosystems" (*Royal Society*, 2010, p. 113).

Public education has a key part to play in forming skills such as complex problem solving, critical and creative thinking, interpersonal relationships, consensus building, and conflict resolution. The recent encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, issues a stirring call for all Catholic institutions, including schools:

"Humanity," Francis says, "is called to recognise the need for changes to lifestyle, production, and consumption in order to combat this [global] warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it." (*LS* par 23).

Education has a key part to play in making people aware of the science and the economics of climate change, helping them to understand the ethical challenges, and motivating them to work for sustainability.

> *. . . the future will require an educational system which concentrates on broad competences and attitudes and prepares people for life in a complex and diversified world.*

Technology and work

Because of business influence, schools have become obsessed with technology and governments have insisted that more and more vocational education is required for jobs of the future. There are two strong reasons to question these orthodoxies. The first reason is that jobs are changing so rapidly that attempts to predict what is needed will most likely be far astray. As John Kay, columnist for *The Financial Times*, says: "It is a mistake to focus basic education on job-specific skills that a changing world will render redundant in a few years."

The second reason is that, as Brown, Lauder and Ashton have cogently argued in their book *The Global Auction*, the strong connection between qualifications and jobs is rapidly disappearing. This is because global capital can employ well-qualified labour for much lower costs in developing economies and technological advances have led to the automation of many jobs once considered in need of advanced knowledge. This means that a narrow vocationalism must be replaced by

broad general education. Technology is, of course, important but it should be viewed as a tool of information gathering and deployment while educational institutions make sure that, in the words of Greenlaw, they continue to produce "disciplined minds through traditional media as well". Indeed there is mounting evidence that computer-based learning is shallower and less enduring than other forms of learning, so even on this score there is room for caution about the use of technology.

Population growth, inequality and living harmoniously

According to the *United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs* 2015 figures, the number of people on the planet will rise to 9.7 billion by 2050. Many economists argue that this growth in human population will be accompanied by a continued increase in social and economic inequality. They warn that if the market is left unrestrained, there will be a small group of super-rich and a huge group of poor people (the top 1 per cent already own 50 per cent of the world's assets).

If massive social upheaval is to be avoided or even mitigated there is need for radical social change, including policies such as a universal basic income, or a negative income tax. While education is relatively powerless in these matters, it will have its part to play in fostering peaceful co-existence in a resource-depleted world. There will be a pressing need for "global citizenship".

"It is not enough for education to produce individuals who can read, write, and count. Education must be transformative and bring shared values to life. It must cultivate an active care for the world and for those with whom we must share it. Education must also be relevant to answering the big questions of the day." (*Global Education First Initiative*).

Such a universal approach to moral education should be easy for a school system which believes that morality is central to education and that the Church has a substantial body of teaching relevant to sound relationships and a just world.

Conclusion

Analyses of the three major challenges all lead to the same conclusion: the future will require an educational system which concentrates on broad competences and attitudes and prepares people for life in a complex and diversified world. This means, of course, that current educational policy in most societies (including New Zealand) is almost totally misguided, since it focuses on narrow skills, so-called "national standards," standardised assessment, and preparation for paid work.

Since the Catholic school system has in recent years uncritically accepted the direction set by governments, it is ill-prepared to face this future. Yet it has the potential: a shared culture, common values, and rich social teachings.

I would like to hope that the next period in Catholic education will be described in the future as "the struggle to be prophetic." ■

Photo: Rosanna Fouhy, De La Salle College, Auckland.

Ivan Snook is emeritus professor of Education at Massey University. He attends the Quality Public Education Coalition and the Social Justice Group in Palmerston North.

Invitation, Welcome And Appreciating Differences

Simon Rae reflects on the acceptance and growing appreciation of differences in tradition, faith, and culture among us.

In the happy years when the lecturers from Knox College joined with the Holy Cross Seminary community in Mosgiel, professional and academic relationships developed with trust and respect over time. We were welcomed warmly in liturgical celebrations. However it was also necessary to come to terms with the reality that we were not able to participate fully when Mass was celebrated.

My reaction was to develop a kind of eucharistic theology around the words of response: "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed." This might sound a bit Protestant but Teilhard de Chardin wrote of celebrating Eucharist without the elements on his expeditions in China. For me, several things were involved – respect for the occasion, an understanding of the Catholic doctrine of eucharistic unity, a clear sense of being welcome and invited to participate, and gratitude for these words of the liturgy that I could hold on to.

> *More and more the experience of being in someone else's space, and indeed of welcoming others into ours, is becoming a feature of modern life.*

When I went back to Indonesia in 2007 I was given a house close to the great mosque on the campus of Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Every morning around 4am I was awakened by the first call to prayer: "Arise for the greatest work of all – prayer is better than sleep". It was too close to ignore. The call to prayer had become a familiar part of life when we had lived in Indonesia in the 1970s and we missed it when we came home. But in 2007 I felt something more – the recognition that a community of people, who had welcomed me again among them, was just before dawn preparing for the day ahead by focusing their faith in God. The call was more to me than a nostalgic cultural recollection. Addicted to working late, I needed my sleep. I was alone in my big house apart from the watchman out the back. So I took the opportunity to say my own prayer, giving thanks

for those at prayer in the mosque, or in their own places, honouring God as their day began. Then I went back to sleep until daylight.

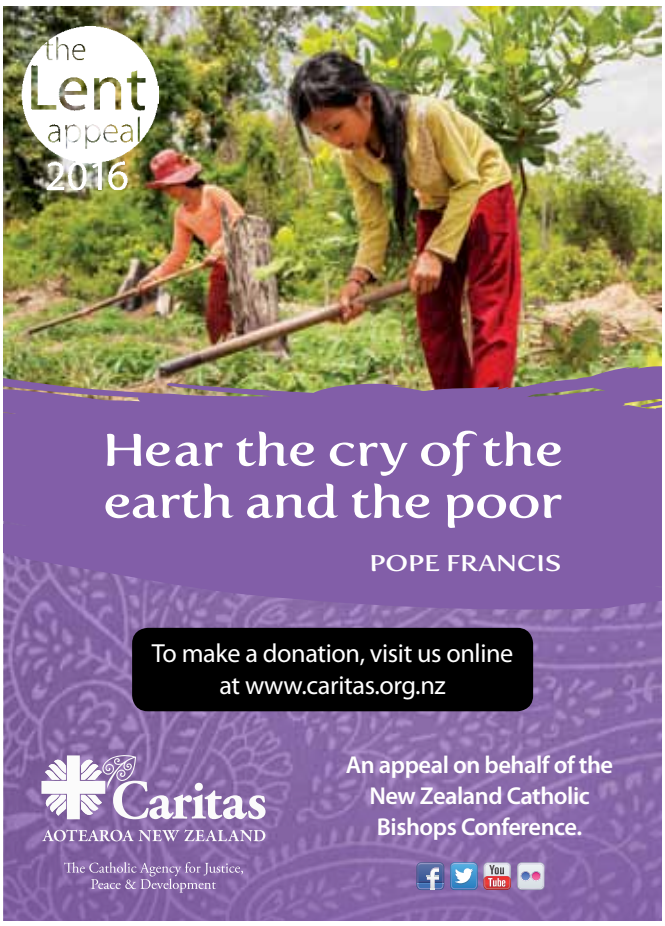
Years ago in Rangoon I had been sent by my Presbyterian hosts to visit important cultural sites, in the hope that I might understand better the context of their life and witness. At the great Golden Pagoda I was offered a simple item, a kind of loose string to tie on my wrist. I realised that accepting or declining would identify me as either a pilgrim or a tourist. I found it possible to make my visit as a pilgrim — in a Christian way. Years later a Catholic friend in Java, who joined in pilgrimage to Javanese Muslim places of religious and cultural significance, said: "I journey with the others but when we arrive I offer a Catholic prayer".

For many pākehā Kiwis the most likely, and perhaps the most challenging, opportunity to be in others' space arises on the marae. Occasions for this come more often now in the slowly evolving bicultural society in which we live, than when I was young. We are now aware that both the marae and its ceremonies have a profound significance for our hosts. Mistakes in language or behaviour can have serious repercussions or cause them deep hurt. We are invited, warmly welcomed and in the generous embrace of Maori ecumenism, religious differences may almost disappear. Even so, we are faced with cultural challenges to understand and respect. We are called to participate with a sensitivity that pākehā society has largely forgotten.

Globalisation has brought the once distant near to our own place. We have opportunities for travel that earlier generations never dreamed of. Political and social disorder has caused unprecedented numbers of people to flee for safety, looking for refuge. In time they seek new opportunities among people they hardly know and in social contexts in which they may, or may not, feel safe, or even welcome. More and more the experience of being in someone else's space, and indeed of welcoming others into ours, is becoming a feature of modern life.

I am profoundly grateful to have been part of the movement of attitudinal change from when I was young. The Catholic-Protestant enmity and suspicion of earlier times has diminished. Now when our differences are respected, we increasingly share our treasures of worship and spirituality, our patterns of discipleship, as well as our spaces. And in New Zealand this pattern is repeating itself among communities of Jewish, Christian and Muslim people. Much of this change is energised by hospitality, invitation, and the generous sharing of our special spaces. Friendships are formed among us, affection grows and we learn that encountering difference can be an opportunity for new understanding. ■

Simon Rae has been a Presbyterian Minister in New Zealand and Indonesia, often in ecumenical or cross-cultural pastoral or academic appointments.



Reading Luke's Gospel with ecological eyes

In part two of her series **Elaine Wainwright** points to how time of day, place, materials and characters all contribute to understanding Luke 5:1–11.

Luke 5: 1 Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, 2 he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. 4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon: "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered: "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying: "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken;10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon: "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people."11 When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

On my first reading of the Lucan text chosen for ecological reflection this month, my senses were alerted to the extraordinary interconnectedness of material and social elements, (which include the human) that weave their way through the fabric of this text. In the weave of habitat and human we encounter the holy. An ecological reading of this biblical story, like the integral ecology that Pope Francis addresses in *Laudato Si'*, recognises that "everything is closely interrelated" (par 137). Therefore this interconnectedness will characterise our reading of the Lucan text so often named "the call of Peter".

Time, place and encounter

Luke 5:1 opens with reference to a particular time in the unfolding story of Jesus ("and it happened" is one way of translating the opening words). The verse closes with a reference to place: he was by the "lake of Gennesaret". (Luke calls it this while the other evangelists refer to the "Sea of Galilee"). Time and space are interwoven explicitly in this opening verse, reminding the ecological reader of a significant aspect of Pope Francis's integral ecology, namely that "time and space are not independent of one another" (par 138). Our attentiveness to the intertwining of both will shape our integral ecological consciousness and reading practice.

It is in this time and space that the narrator tells us that the crowds are "pressing in on him (Jesus) to hear the word of God". Their bodily senses are evoked, particularly that of "hearing", reminding readers that the senses are the vehicles for encounter between human, habitat, and holy. In the crowd's hearing of Jesus, they encounter the holy. The Lucan narrator names their hearing as being of the "word of God".

Fishing under the Romans

Readers might pass over the second and third verses (Lk 5: 2 -3) especially verse 2, as merely providing background to the story of the "call of Peter". Those undertaking an integral ecological reading will be alert to the fishing industry conducted along the north-western stretches of the Sea of Galilee. It was under the control of the Roman empire and subject to a complex taxation system. While the text suggests that Simon owns his boat (Lk 5:3), such ownership did not give exemptions or escape from the system. This reading draws *Laudato Si'*s recognition that "there is an interrelation between ecosystems and between the various spheres of social interaction, demonstrating yet again that the 'the whole is greater than the part" (par 141). Teaching and listening to the "word of God" must also be attentive to such social interaction and its impact on the poor.

We are not the centre of the universe, overseeing or controlling it.
Our place is recognising that we are of Earth, from Earth,
and that we will return to Earth.

Wooden boats

An ecological reader will also attend to Earth's authorising of Jesus' act and art of teaching. Jesus notices the two empty boats and their owners and chooses one boat from which to teach. The weaving of the material and social continues. He sits on the Earth element, wood, used to shape the boat, just as he sits on the mountain side to proclaim the beatitudes in Matthew. (Matt 5:1). The first-century wooden boat uncovered at the edge of the Sea of Galilee in 1986 and housed now in Kibbutz Ginosar, helps us appreciate the materiality in the story. Earth and Earth's materials authorise Jesus' teaching. Even the "pushing away" from the shore allows the boat to be seen by all those gathered and also for Jesus to be heard. It draws in the senses to both the proclamation and reception of the teaching.

Into the Deep

The interweaving of the material and the social continues in the narrative as Jesus invites Peter to put out into the deep water, away from the safety of the shoreline. While the language is not the same, the imagery of "the deep" may remind readers of the tohu vabohu of Genesis 1:2 - the deep out of which the universe was born. The deep into which Jesus draws Peter is in the ordinary place where he and his companions had fished all night. But Jesus draws him beyond what he had come to expect of that place.

In February, a group of international scientists announced the discovery of gravitational waves caused by two black holes merging, about 1.3 billion years ago. The call to us into the deep now, is taking us into unimaginable discoveries in relation to the unfolding of the universe itself. These, in their turn, are shaping our reading of our sacred story anew.

And, like Peter and his companions, we are amazed at what we are discovering as we "put out into the deep" of Earth and of Earth within the universe. It brings with it, as the new experience did for Peter, an awareness of our place. That is not at the centre of the universe, overseeing or controlling it. Our place is recognising that we are of Earth, from Earth, and that we will return to Earth. We are Earth-creatures just as Peter and his companions were fishers. Jesus took the word describing their occupation and shifted its focus from the fish of the Lake of Gennesaret to people.

At this time as Earth-creatures, we are being called by the earthed-Jesus of the gospel to earth-people. We are discovering Jesus anew as we put out into the tohu vabohu/the deep of our universe. We are being called to leave behind old ways of acting which ignore Earth's others and to find the new. The words of Jesus to Simon will accompany us too: "Do not be afraid". ■

Boat photo: Joao Silas

Elaine Wainwright RSM is the Executive Director of Mission and Ministry for the Mercy Sisters in Australia and Papua New Guinea. She is an international biblical scholar.

Jesus, the Woman and the Pharisees John 8:1-11

Painting: *The Woman Caught in Adultery* by Chris Higham www.builtonrock.co.uk

Although the story of Jesus, the woman and her accusers is thought to go back to the life of Jesus, it was not until the third century that it was included in the canonical tradition. Even then, this incident took a long time to settle into John's gospel where we find it today, in John 8:1-11. Some ancient manuscripts place it in two other places, others in Luke's gospel, and some omit it altogether.

The story was opposed and suppressed because Jesus' forgiving words were at odds with the ancient Church's penitential discipline. Augustine, for example, wrote that men feared this story would "make their women immune to punishment for their sins."

Scripture scholar, Raymond Brown, described the essence of the story as a "succinct expression of the mercy of Jesus." Augustine had also commented on the woman and Jesus — "only two remain, the wretched one and the incarnation of mercy." The delicate balance between Jesus' justice in not condoning the sin and his mercy towards the woman, invites us to ponder our practice in this Year of Mercy.

Scene one: "To stone such women"

It is early morning. "All the people" come to Jesus, who begins teaching in the Temple (Jn 8:1–2). Three scenes follow about both the Scribes and Pharisees, and the woman (Jn 8:3–6a; Jn 8:6b–7; Jn 8:8–11). In the first scene, the Scribes and Pharisees led to Jesus a woman caught in adultery, to ask him to join in condemning her because the Torah said: "Moses commanded us to stone such women."

In her recent novel about the morally complex King David, *The Secret Chord*, Geraldine Brooks describes stoning in the voice of Batsheva, David's eighth wife. Batsheva was Uriah's wife when David watched her bathing during her ritual purification and desired her. David sent for her and raped her in the palace. Batsheva asks: "Have you ever seen a woman stoned to death, Natan? I have. My father made me

watch when I was a girl so I would know what became of faithless wives. And when my monthly signs did not come, I thought of that woman, the sounds of her moans, her mashed flesh, her shattered bone . . . At the end she had no face . . ."

It is important not to pit Jesus against Judaism, by seeing the stoning of women as unique to the Jewish Torah. According to the New Testament scholar Luise Schottroff, "every legal system of antiquity threatens women, whose sexuality is the possession of a man (father or husband), with severe punishment or death in the case of adultery or pre-marital intercourse."

Stoning is an execution performed by a group, or community, that is threatened by a particular deed. Men throw stones at the victim in a specific order related to the rank of those who were injured, or claim to be so.

An account of the stoning of an allegedly adulterous Iranian woman in 1990, records that her father threw the first stone, followed by her husband, the Imam and then her sons. Each man was plaintiff, judge, and executioner. A crowd participated in the collective rage. The woman was buried in a hole up to her shoulders. The mayor drew a chalk circle around her. She was in the middle.

"In the middle"

Jesus faces a real event not a theoretical debate. The stoning is imminent. The woman is placed literally "in the middle" (Jn 8:3) – other translations have "in full view of everyone" or "before them all". She is facing death. The Scribes and Pharisees expected Jesus, a Jewish male, to be responsible and to condemn and to participate.

However, not all Scribes and Pharisees (or Imams and their communities) behave in this way. The ones in the Johannine text are zealots, indignantly enforcing the Torah. They are intent on finding fault with Jesus by opposing him to the Torah. They have no interest in the woman, her allegedly wronged husband, or the other man. If they had, both the man and woman caught in adultery should die (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).

Scene two: Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees

The collective nature of the way the woman was seized and condemned calls on Jesus to take his place in the male hierarchy. They expect him to collude with the male collective as judge and executioner. But he does not answer.

Jesus bends and writes on the ground with his finger. His action disrupts their expectations. They continue to press for an answer so Jesus stands and addresses them directly: "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her" (Jn 8:7).

Jesus has a sureness of touch; he can handle the situation . . . because he has nothing to be afraid of in himself . . . He must have completely accepted and integrated his own sexuality. Only a man who has, or at least begun to do so, can relate properly to women.

Scene Three: Jesus and the Woman

Then Jesus again bends, writing on the ground. The crowd of accusers leave one-by-one, according to rank. Then Jesus speaks to the woman for the first time: "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

He addresses the woman as "you" (Jn 8:10). She is no longer an object. Through unconditional forgiveness, she is able to enter into a relationship with Jesus. On the basis of this relationship, Jesus can challenge her to sin no more. "From this moment on" (literally "from this now on"), the moment of her encounter with Jesus, she is offered the possibility of new life: physical life and a life of right relationship with God.

Civic Moral Courage

Jesus, as an independent interpreter of the Torah, places the offence of adultery, which in patriarchal society made women vulnerable to unjust allegations and treatment, on a level with offences such as theft and defamation. He disputes the status of adultery (shared with idolatry) as a crime requiring death. Scripture scholar, Luise Schottroff, calls his action, civic moral courage.

This story shows gender social constructions. The paper, *Women as Actors in Addressing Climate Change*, from the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, 2015, defines it as: "the array of 'socially constructed' roles, behaviours, attributes, aptitudes, and relative powers linked with being a woman or a man in a society at any given time. The term 'socially constructed' means that they are not 'innate' or 'natural' characteristics but constructions and products of a society and, as such, can be modified and transformed."

Jesus acted with courage. Benedictine Sister, Maria Boulding noted: "The Pharisees are tense, but [Jesus] is calm and relaxed throughout; he accepts the woman openly and lovingly, as an adult and as a person. He has a sureness of touch; he can handle the situation with her because he has nothing to be afraid of in himself . . . He must have completely accepted and integrated his own sexuality. Only a man who has, or at least begun to do so, can relate properly to women."

This year of Mercy is our opportunity to practise courage too. ■

5th Sunday Lent
13 March 2016

Kathleen Rushton RSM tends her vegetable garden, walks in the hope her feet will allow her to tramp again and delights in learning about Scripture.

Photo: St Mary's Catholic School, Rotorua

EDUCATION THAT GROWS WISDOM

I have been watching the erosion of the New Zealand education system since I arrived here in 1985. I left an ailing, fretful education system in the United States and found a healthy, vibrant one in New Zealand. I puzzled and puzzled about what made one work and the other fail because the professionals in both hemispheres were equally diligent and sincere. Then *Tomorrow's Schools* came to Aotearoa and I understood instantly what the difference was. Faith was removed and replaced with scepticism. Goodwill was replaced by duty. The regulatory services provided by the Department of Education for all New Zealand Schools were broken open and each school was now able (required) to regulate itself, and thus, compete for its share of the funding afforded to education.

Unsurprisingly, a thick layer of bureaucracy snuck in. Collegiality was slowly overgrown with competition. Schools and teachers who previously shared resources, ideas, and time learned to posture against one another as it became necessary to compete for students in the newly developed "bums-on-seats" funding formula.

A power pyramid, made up of many smaller power triangles, was created. It appears efficient but it works against harmony. A supply chain emerged just as in manufacturing. The Boards of Trustees were put in charge of the schools. They feed the government and are fed by the schools' administrations. The administration links the Board to the staff by establishing what data needs to be gathered and then gathering it in order to formulate reports. Teachers maintain an overview of what areas of the curriculum are to be covered. But teachers are always being nudged to shape lessons towards measurable outcomes that can be reported on.

It's (the system) too impatient to wait until knowledge turns into understanding. And it cannot tolerate an investment that takes 20 years to mature.

This is not the "child centred" system that it claims to be. It is more focused on reports and documentation. It's been shaped around a market model. Just as in business where profit is either being made or it isn't, in schools students are making progress in a narrow direction, or they're not. Wisdom is not learned in such a model. This system doesn't value the germination of an idea. It is too impatient to wait until knowledge turns into understanding. And it cannot tolerate an investment that takes 20 years to mature.

Numerous strategies galvanise this human-based industry to perform like a market-based one. National standards, performance pay, key performance indicators, bulk funding, appraisal documents, refined Astle testing, and targeted learning echo in staffrooms like the snap of a whip. They remind schools what really matters to the government which has become a belly with an insatiable craving for statistics. I wonder what will be released after all the data has been digested? Will it make good fertiliser? Will it help New Zealand sustain a dynamic, visionary, sturdy society?

What place do we have in our system for inspiration or initiative? Regardless of the rhetoric, learning for the sake of learning is becoming a thing of the past. Now every aspect of a student's learning is carefully measured against specific learning outcomes and the school is held responsible as to whether those outcomes are successes or failures. Growing child poverty, profound increases in disruptive and violent student behaviour, and a more transient and evolving society are not measured in the assessment package despite their enormous influence on outcomes.

Students are encouraged to "inquire" but their pool of general knowledge has become so shallow that it's difficult to generate authentic currents of curiosity. Teachers are gently guided away from developing their own professional judgment and instead are groomed to adapt to every new "best practice model" that is rolled out.

Tomorrow's Schools didn't change the essence of education. There will always be children who want to learn, teachers who want to inspire, and parents who want to support. *Tomorrow's Schools* just added a layer of static interference when it promised to offer better reception. Do we not suspect this? The policies have made us skeptical and stolen our faith in the system. It is disappointing and unproductive to have the noble aspirations of a nation for real education stymied by a system with a lone question: "Yes, yes, that's all well and good — but can you prove it?" ■

Zella Downing has over 33 years teaching experience in New Zealand primary and secondary schools. She has also served on school Boards of Trustees.

NO to offshore detention

With the Australian High Court ruling recently that the immigration policy is legal, the Government looks set to deport 267 people, including 37 babies, to its offshore Nauru detention centre. This is the same centre that, along with Manus Island, has produced horror stories of hunger strikes, riots, self-harm, mental illness, and sexual abuse.

When a country like Australia unrelentingly and systematically condemns anyone, let alone children, to rot in such conditions it begs the questions: What will become of them? And perhaps just as importantly: What has become of us?

Under the current government, time spent in Nauru has increased more than five-fold with refugees spending an average of 445 days in detention. Almost a quarter of those already in detention have spent more than two years there.

It makes me wonder — to what end? These detention centres and the people they contain, are Australia's responsibility despite which developing country we hide them on.

So what are the "Processing Centres" on Nauru and Manus Island producing exactly? At current estimates there are 1,500 refugees in the two facilities. They can blame Australia, the very country they turned to for asylum, for years of abuse.

In whose interest is it to traumatise innocent people mentally and physically in the name of sovereignty? How can a government that publicly claims to have people's welfare at heart, condemn them to the kind of treatment Australia's own Human Rights Commission has called "toxic"?

If their policies are part of a campaign to deter refugees from journeying to Australia, then it seems that the Australian government is committed fully to subjecting these people to a violence similar to what they are fleeing.

By shipping refugees overseas, the government thinks it has found a way to wash its hands of wrongdoing. And it has made it a criminal offence for officials, doctors, and teachers to speak out about conditions in these centres and made it near impossible for journalists to visit and report on the facilities.

Even while the centres are operated by Australian officials, it is clear they are not subject to the same laws, or transparency, Australia expects of its other institutions.

The Government and the Opposition Party — which has forgotten what the word "opposition" means — are standing strong on these policies even in the face of the increasing outrage of the Australian public.

In February there was an outpouring of public support by thousands of people in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Darwin, and Adelaide demonstrating for 267 refugees to be allowed to stay.

Their actions and attitude are in direct opposition to the politicians' refusal to make any concessions to policies, that while deemed 'legal', are far from moral.

In February, too, the Government rejected New Zealand's offer to resettle 150 asylum seekers annually. No doubt now these asylum seekers will call the inside of a cell home instead.

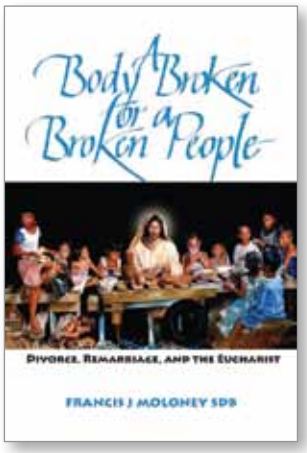
And the allegation that Australian officials paid people-smugglers 30,000 USD to return their 65 person-cargo from Australian waters to Indonesia last year, makes implausible any claim to legitimate policy. If the allegations are true, and the government has not denied them, then we will have created an even more lucrative employment option for people-smugglers.

If the Australian government is, as it claims, committed to a policy of deterrence — to stop people-smugglers profiting and asylum seekers putting their lives at risk — it ought to find an alternative policy subject to compassion and morality.

Australia has become a country that boasts of multiculturalism and decency but we have a government that practises these principles only when it suits. Their deterrent policies try to make Australia appear less attractive as a place to call home. But compared to the disruption in asylum seekers' own countries, Australia will always remain desirable.

It seems to me that the longer we allow this barbaric treatment of already vulnerable people to continue, the more we are in danger of infecting our society attitudinally and the uglier we are making Australia. ■

Jack Derwin is a student, writer and journalist living in Sydney after time in Mexico.



A Body Broken for a Broken People: Divorce, Remarriage, and the Eucharist

Third edition
By Francis J. Moloney SDB
Published by Garratt Publishing
Reviewed by Teresa Wackrow

The stated aim of this revised and expanded work is "to guide Roman Catholics, and especially Catholic leaders, in our attempt to rethink some traditions in the light of the difficult questions that contemporary Catholic life has posed to the Synod on the Family".

Francis Moloney's concern in this volume is with the *meaning* that the early Church gave to the traditions it received in the celebration of the Eucharist. Chapter One raises questions in relation to our eucharistic practice: "What are we doing in memory of Jesus?" and "For whom was this memory evoked?"

The second chapter looks at St Paul's first letter to the Christians at Corinth, which contains the first written witness to the Christian tradition of the practice of the Eucharist. Following chapters look at each of the four Gospels in turn to uncover the Eucharistic thought and practice of the early Christian communities. Moloney reminds us that the Eucharistic tradition was lived out by these communities even before Paul's letters and the four Gospels were written.

The bread miracles and the accounts of the Last Supper are examined in the chapters on Mark's, Matthew's and Luke's Gospels. In addition Jesus' practice of meal-sharing throughout Luke's Gospel and the journey to Emmaus are also reflected on in the fifth chapter. Moloney looks at the approach of the Gospel writers to telling the story of Jesus and what each wanted to say about the Eucharist. He shows that each writer puts before us failed and broken disciples who are touched by the presence of the Lord in the bread broken and shared.

The chapter on John's Gospel focuses on the last discourse, foot washing and the giving of the morsel to Judas. Jesus' love for his own *to the end*, "even to those who will deny him, betray him, and misunderstand him," illustrates that "the Eucharist celebrates and proclaims the presence of Jesus to the broken."

In the final chapter Francis Moloney warns that his study must not be used to argue for "free-for-all" admission to the eucharistic table. However, on the basis of the *authentic Tradition* found in New Testament evidence and the pastoral approach of the early Christian communities toward the divorced, he calls on the Church to examine its Tradition.

This thoughtful and thought-provoking study steeped in scholarship is truly a gift to the Church and its people as we face the challenges in contemporary society. ■

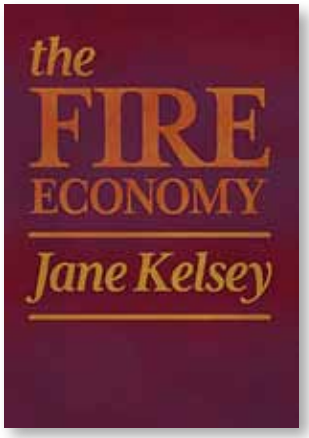
Spotlight

Directed by Tom McCarthy
Reviewed by Paul Sorrell

By now, everyone will have heard about this film and the pioneering work done by a group of American journalists to prise the lid off a casket full of ugly secrets that the Catholic Church worked hard to keep from seeing the light of day. Yet *Spotlight* is not an attack on the Church—it has been reviewed favourably in the Catholic press—but rather a tribute to the power of good investigative reporting and the unremitting search for the truth without bowing to fear or favour.

One of the Church's strongholds in the US, the Boston diocese under Cardinal Bernard Law, came to resemble a large corporation—unaccountable, self-serving, and closed to public scrutiny—rather than an embodiment of the Kingdom of God and the values of Jesus. In an all-too-familiar scenario, flawed pastoral oversight meant that some priests and brothers were given what amounted to a free hand to prey on children. When complaints were made, the offenders were moved to other parishes and the families paid to keep silent.

In 2001, the newly appointed editor of the *Boston Globe*, Marty Baron—a newcomer to the city and a Jew, and so outside the Boston Establishment—encouraged his *Spotlight* team to investigate the clerical sex abuse scandal unfolding in the city.



The FIRE Economy: New Zealand's Reckoning

By Jane Kelsey
Published by Bridget Williams Books with the New Zealand Law Foundation, 2015
Reviewed by Neil Darragh

There is a widespread sense in New Zealand that we have survived rather well through the succession of financial crises, including the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, which have caused havoc and hardship in many other countries. Be alarmed rather than complacent, says Jane Kelsey, because New Zealand's economy has many of the features that have precipitated those crises: a credit boom, rapid financial expansion, skyrocketing property prices, massive household debt tied to housing, and burgeoning private and external debt.

Jane Kelsey is a Professor of Law at the University of Auckland and a well-known critic of neoliberalism especially in its New Zealand form. In her recent book, *The FIRE Economy: New Zealand's Reckoning*, she sets out to expose the paradox that financialisation and neoliberalism are fragile, unsustainable, and yet resilient because they reinforce each other.

"FIRE" is an acronym for *finance*, *insurance*, and *real estate*. The "FIRE economy" is a metaphor for the shift in global capitalism since the 1970s in which finance has replaced industry as the driver of wealth creation in affluent countries. Hence the term "financialisation".

The FIRE Economy is an attempt to catalyse a debate about the dangers that confront New Zealand as a result of three decades of neoliberalism. Kelsey notes the features of our FIRE economy often critiqued by international commentators: inflation-targeted monetary policy, unfettered expansion of finance, and the escalation of household, private and external debt, plus the idea of self-correcting financial markets relied on to justify the light-handed role of the state in New Zealand.

Many *Tui Motu* magazine readers will have already noticed in this review a rapid-fire succession of words that are outside their comfort zone even for serious reading. This book is not an easy read; it is directed towards readers with a background in economics and law. Yet the main lines of its argument are still clear to the persistent reader with a sense of social justice and citizenship. It is alarming how much ordinary people have become collateral damage in a light-handed, risk-tolerant government policy that maximises freedom and profits for the finance industry while leaving the community to carry the costs of corporate risk-taking and failure. New Zealand has a regime of financial regulation that is high-risk for consumers, citizens, businesses, taxpayers and the state, and low-cost for the hugely profitable finance industry. This is a financial sector that rules rather than serves the economy.

While Kelsey's analysis is alarming, it is not without hope. Her intention is to propose what she calls a "progressive transformation" beyond the risks. She lists the prerequisites and the pathways for achieving such a transformation, including the urgency of popular demand for it. She concludes with the hope that New Zealanders have retained enough sense of social justice, community and *manaakitanga*, and enough strength in our domestic polity, to rethink the social, cultural, and economic foundations that currently define our future in a turbulent and fractured financialised world. ■

By dint of clever detective work and sheer persistence, the team—whose key members are played convincingly by Mark Ruffalo, Rachel McAdams and Michael Keaton—calculated that 6 per cent of Boston clergy, or around 90 individuals, had been involved in serial child molestation. A series of breakthroughs allowed them to confirm their hunch and, eventually, to prove that Law ignored the problem, assigning offending priests to new parishes where their crimes persisted.

This busy, fast-moving film covers all aspects of this unfolding tragedy. The *Spotlight* team takes the audience with them as they interview abuse survivors and leaders of advocacy groups, a harassed prosecution lawyer struggling to deal with 85 separate cases, slick defence counsel employed by the Church, a psychologist who had worked on a rehabilitation programme, and Law himself.

A turning point in the film comes when Baron suggests that the investigators shift their focus from individual offenders to the church structures that have allowed them to flourish. In the end, no one involved in this sad tale comes off unscathed. In a telling scene, team members express regret that stories of abuse that emerged as early as the 1970s were sidelined by the press, the evidence disregarded.

Fair, thorough and as dispassionate as its subject matter allows it to be, this disturbing and timely film deserves to be seen by every Catholic. ■

CROSSCURRENTS

Jim Elliston

End of Physics?

Over time scientists have divined an enormous amount about the workings of the universe and presumed the increase in knowledge would continue. But recently The European Organisation for Nuclear Research physicist, Harry Cliff, threw a potential spanner in the works. He suggested that the laws of nuclear physics themselves may make it impossible for much more information to be gleaned. He said: "The next few years may tell us whether we'll be able to continue to increase our understanding of nature or whether maybe, for the first time in the history of science, we could be facing questions that we cannot answer." He bases his wondering on incompatibilities between what is observed and what is theorised about first, the strength of Higgs field (through which particles pass to gain mass and eventually comprise the atoms that make up all that is around us) and also, the complex phenomenon known as dark energy presumed responsible for the expansion of the universe.

Current physical theories do not give an explanation as to why observation does not coincide with theory. Cliff says: "We may be entering a new era in physics. An era where there are weird features in the universe that we cannot explain. An era where we have hints that we live in a multiverse that lies frustratingly beyond our reach. An era where we will never be able to answer the question why is there something rather than nothing."

Leadership

In his latest book, *Boundaries*, Brian Turner remarked that we elect followers, not leaders. Whatever people regard as leadership is tied up with values. Values differ and we need to discern some kind of hierarchy.

All political parties in NZ espouse worthy values yet they offer quite different and often contradictory programmes. How do we choose?

Abraham Lincoln defined democracy as: "Government of the people, by the people, for the people." I want to insert the word "all" into each of those three, because it is extremely difficult to find a party whose programme is beneficial to all our citizens rather than a particular segment.

In order to effect policy a political party needs to stay in office. It either sets out simply to ensure that it retains power or tries to introduce necessary change while bringing people along. The former can be designated a follower whereas the latter can claim the title of leader.

John Quincy Adams said: "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more — you are a leader."

Excerpt from Pope Francis's Easter Homily 2015

"We cannot live Easter without entering into the mystery. It is not something intellectual, something we only know or read about. 'To enter into the mystery' means the ability to wonder, to contemplate; the ability to listen to the silence and to hear the tiny whisper amid great silence by which God speaks to us.

"To enter into the mystery demands that we not be afraid of reality: that we not be locked into ourselves, that we not flee from what we fail to understand, that we not close our eyes to problems or deny them, that we not dismiss our questions.

"To enter into the mystery means going beyond our own comfort zone, beyond the laziness and indifference which hold us back, and going out in search of truth, beauty, and love. It is seeking a deeper meaning, an answer, and not an easy one, to the questions which challenge our faith, our fidelity, and our very existence.

"To enter into the mystery, we need humility, the lowliness to abase ourselves, to come down from the pedestal of our 'I' which is so proud, of our presumption; the humility not to take ourselves so seriously, recognising who we really are: creatures with strengths and weaknesses, sinners in need of forgiveness.

"To enter into the mystery we need the lowliness that is powerlessness, the renunciation of our idols . . . in a word, we need to adore. Without adoration, we cannot enter into the mystery." ■

TUI MOTU InterIslands
Independent Catholic Magazine

Tui Motu – InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge, and contribute to its discussion of spiritual, social, and ecological 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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We welcome letters of comment, discussion, response, affirmation or argument of up to 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge longer letters, while keeping the meaning.

We do not publish anonymous letters except in exceptional circumstances.

THANK YOU FOR WRITING

The February offering from Michael Fraser was beautiful and needed to be said for a long time, as was the article by Greg Coyle.

June Swain, Wellington

TREATY COMMITMENTS TO MĀORI NOT HONOURED

I dispute Robert Consedine's statement (Feb 2016) that we can "make the proud claim that we are a country which honours the solemn commitments made to our indigenous peoples."

Government's successful brainwashing of the majority has been achieved by Treaty Settlements which unjustly exclude their principal victims. For example, when the Government settled with Government-created and "approved" *iwi* in North Taranaki, they did so knowing Ngatiawa (whose area it was) were made to "disappear" by falsifying history to cover up settler-Government crimes of genocide. This deceit is compounded by legislation preventing their excluded victims from "settlements" or taking the Government to Court.

Actual history shows corrupt police planning attacks on Māori then protecting the criminals; crooked lawyers and judges (past and present); Governors and Government fettering judges and passing laws to prevent their crimes against Māori reaching the Courts.

The "settlement" process is designed (a) to create a Māori business elite with the intent they stay out of, and "encourage" Māori activists to stay out, of politics, (b) to emasculate further traditional Māori authorities and to remove thoughts of *rangatiratanga* — further breaching the Treaty.

Ray Watembach, Waitara (abridged)

ERROR IN ACKNOWLEDGING THE PALESTINIANS' LAND

I enjoyed the overall theme of mercy in the February edition. I would like to point out an error in the labelling of the photo on page 24. The Mount of Temptation is not situated in Israel but in the Occupied West Bank. The illegal and cruel occupation of the West Bank should not be accorded legitimacy anywhere, least of all in a magazine such as *Tui Motu*.

Martin Griffiths, Christchurch.

SUBSCRIPTION PLEASE

I'm in prison in Auckland. I'm HIV positive and deal with mental health problems. I have been a Christian for about three years now.

I found a copy of your magazine here left by another prisoner and have enjoyed it thoroughly. I cannot afford a subscription due to my circumstances but would love to receive your magazine and share it with others here in prison. It's a big ask and I don't know if it can be done.

LSMcK, Auckland.

Editor: *Subscribers' donations ensure that LSMcK will receive a* Tui Motu *subscription. Thank you!*

NEW PRAYER RESOURCE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

In response to the article *Catholic Schools Face Challenges* by Professor Ivan Snook (Feb 2016) I would like to highlight a newly published resource.

Snook questions how ready the Catholic schools system is for the major challenges ahead in education, particularly the prophetic role they are called to perform. He points to the New Zealand Bishops' recommendation that staff and Boards of Trustees receive regular training in the principles and application of *Catholic Social Teaching* (CST).

The Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand (TCI) has published a new resource to respond to this challenge. *A Prayer Companion — for Catholic School Boards in Aotearoa New Zealand* is linked to the NZ Bishops' document to support the ongoing formation of Boards of Catholic Schools.

Every Catholic School Board and Principal will receive a copy at no cost. Information is available on the TCI website. www.tci.ac.nz

Catherine Gibbs, Catholic Institute of Aotearoa New Zealand, Wellington (abridged)

Looking **OUT** *and* **IN**

A hot afternoon and we're scrambling down to the river. The rocks are coarse sandpaper, grainy, warm with colours of bleached ochre and slate. My bare feet grip the boulders, tacky as a gecko's on a ceiling. My seven-year-old pushes past the rattling dry branches and runs towards the dark pools: "I'm going to be first in the water!"

"Oh no you're not. I'll leave you in the dust. Watch me swim, suckers!" calls 13-year-old son. A chamois, bounding down the steep rocks and dusty path, he chases his sister.

The chamber music, a lush cicada sonata in 3-D sings me onward. The young chamois lithely leap ahead but I walk with one of my older girls, pondering with her strategies to survive another term of calculus. She stops suddenly: "See in that rock pocket. Are those eyes?"

We admire the frog shading herself in her cute, tiny pebble-sized cave. Or is she a toad? See how dry her skin is! The calculus gets parked with the toad in a hole. It can wait.

Under a waterfall, the thrumming on my back and head is a perfect massage — lacy, zingy, joyous. We stretch like lizards on the rocks, letting warm boulders meet soft white bellies then, blood-warmed, scramble, slither, and slide on further downstream.

My tall 19-year-old nephew struts high on a rock shelf, limbering 10 metres above the dark pool below. Suddenly he leaps over the edge. The falling human arrow flies down for a few breath-stopping seconds, then splashes into the water and emerges grinning in a cappuccino swirl of water.

I take a few photos and clips of our children as they turn to hurl themselves into gravity and water with their cousins. Shrieks, gasps, whoops, splashes, smiles.

I decide it's time for Mum to show her water-hole jumping skills. It's a while since I jumped off a cliff into water.

Wahooo. Flying? No, falling. Fast. Smack! Slap! I've tipped back in freefall and my butt hits the hard skin of the water. Ouch! A blast of water up my nose and now I'm slicing down through the dark deep waters. And then as fast I'm pulling my way back up to the sparkling surface, a blurry benevolent blue sky arched above. Swim to the rocks. Climb the steep gritty sandstone cliff. Back up to the sun.

Two days later I'm thousands of kilometres away and back home in India. I smile as I sit down gingerly. Never mind the broad bruise, it was a great finale to a Southern summer, shape-shifting from mountain goat to lizard to fish. Water hole jumping rulz OK! ■

Photo: Kaaren Mathias

Kaaren Mathias, with husband Jeph, and their 4 children spent 7 weeks in New Zealand over summer including afternoon tea at the *Tui Motu* office. All have now returned to school, life and work in North India.

Blessing

May the freshness
ripeness
and abundance of our food
nourish us into gratitude
nudge us to share
compel us to conserve
urge us to advocate
so that no one is left hungry –
Bread of Life.

From the Tui Motu *team*

Bread photo: Nicholas Thompson