Tui Motu

InterIslands

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YEAR OF FAITH 2013

this faith-filled year

'The Door to Faith' (*Porta Fidei)* is the beguiling title of Benedict XVI's letter introducing the Year of Faith. It reminded me strongly of the doors which appeared on the cover of *Tui Motu*'s issue last July. They complement the magnificent image on this month's cover.

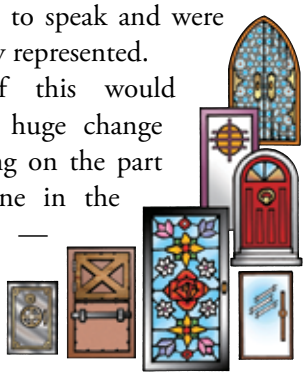
Symbolically all these images talk to me of the Year of Faith as doors to transformation, windows to renewal in bright and brilliant ways that we cannot imagine. For some, it may be a 'ho-hum' event, just another year of faith-filled living. For myself, and I hope for many others, it must be a time to look again at the underlying theology of Vatican II; a time to re-open the Council's timeless theological insights and daring newness, yet founding our study and action on them firmly in the present world situation with its inevitable change. In 1962–65, who knew anything about inclusive language, climate change, globalization, and the Chicago school of economics fostering economic liberalism and efficient free markets? Now we need to put our current situation alongside what we have learned from Vatican II. The relevant principles are still there to guide us. We are required to develop them to fit our rapidly changing times.

One door that needs opening is that to a fully empowered lay leadership within the Catholic Church, something which the laity has not yet experienced. The place of the laity in the Church has been a subject of much good thought since the 1930s, especially through the practical efforts of Joseph Cardijn. In Vatican II's document on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, their place as the people of God is recognized as being at the heart of the Church. However, I often hear it said there is no place where the voice of the laity can be heard on its own terms and with its own stamp. Many people with vision and energy have left the Church because there is no avenue by which their voices could be heard.

Other churches have models which could give good guidance. But however the structure of a new body is composed, a number of things would need to be included. It would need to be a place where the laity can meet themselves, recognized by the church as their place and space, their *turangawaewae*. It would have its own authority, and would be able to elect those who would represent them at other official church gatherings. It would provide the place where the local church would come together on a regular basis to raise and debate important and urgent questions. And this could be done at all levels within the Church. In effect, it would give the laity the new voice they seek as the heart of the people of God.

With this in place, it would be a small step to imagine a general synod of the Church at which not just the bishops but all the baptized had their own right to speak and were powerfully represented.

All of this would require a huge change in thinking on the part of everyone in the Church — bishops, clergy and laity,



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Front Cover illustration: official logo of the Year of Faith 2013

but it is an opportunity to be risked for the health and the common good of all.

As you receive this edition of the magazine, the people of Aotearoa New Zealand will be celebrating their national day, Waitangi Day (6 February). It is largely by chance that there is a good deal of thought given in this issue to Māori questions, topped off with a centre-spread to highlight this. Baroness Stern's more objective vision of the inherent racism of our justice system, especially regarding the prisons; Pa Henare Tate's seminal book on indigenous theology as reviewed by Bishop Peter Cullinane; Robert Consedine's comment on native title — all these very different slants encourage us to think again about deep questions entailed in the relation of Māori and pakeha within our society and church. Most of us find that 'think-again' process difficult. Nevertheless, confronting issues of indigenous rights in our community may be a good 2013 Lenten spiritual exercise leading to fresh ideas and different action.

Finally, I hope that many of you who haven't seen *How Far is Heaven* will be inspired by Paul Sorrell's review to search for it in local cinemas. This film works at a number of levels, one of which is a gentle affirmation of the gift of Sisters of Compassion to the Jerusalem community over generations. Enjoy your reading! **KT**

direct credit payments

As we begin the New Year at *Tui Motu* we are happy to inform all our patient subscribers that we are inching our way into more modern forms of exchange and banking. We know that our difficulties with direct credit payment of subscriptions have been frustrating for many of you. We are grateful for your forbearance.

We do realise that cheque books and form-filling are not the favoured way for many of you to conduct transactions. But we do not have the staff needed to follow up items which appear on our bank statements with insufficient information.

However, we shall accept your promptings and honour your patience by offering the option of direct transfer of funds into our bank account. The option will be included on renewal notices sent out from February onwards. For those who prefer to pay by cheque or credit card, there will be no change. For those who prefer a more direct payment method, the bank details will be included.

Now we ask your help. On the top line of the label on each *Tui Motu* envelope your personal subscription number is on the left and your renewal date on the right. It is important that you use the subscription number when making a transfer from your bank to our account. If we have your name and your number, we shall be able to record your payment correctly.

But to ensure accuracy we would ask you to send a short email to tell us when the payment is made, the amount transferred and any details relating to donations that you are including, so that we can send you a receipt for tax purposes. We hope this extra step will not cause too much inconvenience. The details you need are:

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Thank you for your cooperation. We'll let you know how it works for us and will welcome your feedback also.

Happy New Year to all our readers! ■

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Tui Motu – InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed.

The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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is this our tradition?

Holidaying in Rarotonga recently, I couldn't help noticing a tight group of people, including a friendly blond woman, moving through the market together. This was Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State, said to be the second most powerful woman in the world, taking time out. On a web-site of the '100 most powerful women in the world', Hillary Clinton ranked second. Others included: eight heads of state; one reigning monarch; 25 CEOs; and 11 billionaires.

I couldn't help reflecting on the attitude of our Catholic church when it comes to not allowing women to have any position of authority. Recently we have seen deacons ordained. No woman can be offered that position. Under John Paul II's direction we were not even allowed to discuss the idea of women's ordination.

Would someone enlighten me why our modern Catholic church has this attitude? Please don't tell me that tradition dictates our church's attitude. If so, our mass would be said in Aramaic (the language Christ used) and all our priests would have to be drawn from the ranks of Jewish fishermen.

Barry Smyth, *Whangarei* (abridged)

the tipping point

About 15 years ago, around the corner from where we lived, a new church opened. They advertised their presence in the neighbourhood with flyers in the letterboxes. "Worried about your mortgage? How you are going to pay the bills? Teenagers causing you problems?" I thought at the time if you were searching for something beyond your daily life, you would be far more likely to give this church a visit, than cross the mysterious threshold of our local Catholic Church.

Daniel O'Leary's excellent article 'Brightest Presence in the Darkest Places' writes of the "irrelevance of Sunday worship to people's lives". At age 70 the 'tipping point' for me that he talks of, was the new/old translation. I felt outraged by the church administration in their wisdom taking us backwards.

Jesus is still the centrepoint of my life. I pray and care deeply about the welfare of others. I daily see examples of sacramental grace in the lives of those of some faith or no faith, trying to live decently under difficult circumstances, and I feel more nourished by these examples than I do by the liturgy. I don't expect that to change in my lifetime.

Robyn Beckingsale, *Nelson*

definition of marriage

Paul Armstrong (*TM*, Dec '12) seems to have forgotten what Jesus said about marriage in Matthew 19: 4, 5, 6: "Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female? This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body." Are these words of Jesus to be dismissed as being an historical embarrassment'? If so, what other words of Jesus are up for scrutiny as 'historical issues'? This sounds similar to me to what the Protestant Reformers said about teachings of the Church they disagreed with.

Kathleen Kenrick, *Dunedin*

varieties of the baptised

Following upon the letter of Peg Cummins in your last issue I support what she says. While gaining appropriate academic qualifications, I exercised several ministries including RCIA, hospital chaplaincy, presider of Communion and liturgy of the Word services and special minister of the Eucharist. I considered these a privilege for a lay person. If the reader views this as being called by God then so be it. But the tension arises between such a position and the ordained person who has the privilege of dispensing the Sacraments.

In recent months I have listened to seminarians declaring that they have been called by God to become ordained priests indicating that lay people are by default excluded. All baptised are priests but fall into the secondary ranks of the institution as do women.

☞ letters to the editor

We welcome comment, discussion, argument, debate. But please keep letters under 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge, while not changing the meaning.
We do not publish anonymous letters otherwise than in exceptional circumstances. Response articles (up to a page) are welcome — but please, by negotiation.

The new/old liturgy with words like 'men' (gender discriminatory) and 'consubstantial' (illiteral to say the least) introduces a spiritually offensive liturgical mechanics — from the Roman medieval monarchy.

In my experience, we have an institution in retreat, afraid of the future where the ordained may be contaminated by lay people introducing a reality of life into the gospels as opposed to them forcing a mythology of history that predominates the actuality of Christ.

Let's dispose of the blackshirts and collars of the ordained and let them come down to where we are — the shock troops of the gospel — those who live as best they can, having a confidence to live life and not constantly asking for forgiveness but arising out of their own faith to meet Christ as a cohabitator.

Gordon McConnell, *Papakura (abridged)*

a response to paul armstrong

I respond to Paul Armstrong's letter (*TM*, Dec '12) as follows.

Personal relationships are a private matter, not a public one. They are of no interest to society as such. Marriage, however, consists of a personal relationship which has a distinct social dimension. It produces new members for society, ensuring its continuance; hence its special legal status.

To recognize officially homosexual relationships as legally equivalent to marriage would be, indeed, the apex of absurdity.

LETTERS continued on page 21

whither saint dorothy day?

Jim Consedine

Whenever people suggested to Dorothy Day that she was a saint, she always replied, "You can't get rid of me that easily." And indeed we can't. Her prophetic reply has come back to haunt her legacy.

There are official moves afoot to have Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, canonized an official saint of the Church. Recently, all 230 members of the US Catholic Bishops Conference voted unanimously for that course to be pursued. Already she has been declared a Servant of God, the first step on the road to canonization. Given some powerful backers, it seems only a matter of time before she becomes Saint Dorothy Day.

One would imagine that Catholic Workers around the world would be delighted with such progress. Some may be but most it seems are not. So what's the problem? Why are Catholic Workers generally at best indifferent, at the worst skeptical, even hostile, about the possible canonization of their founder?

At its essence, the answer lies in the paradox that was Dorothy Day's life. In life, Dorothy was an orthodox Catholic in matters of doctrine and morals, a daily Mass attendee, a great woman of prayer.

But her social analysis was anything but orthodox. She had a vision of the Gospel and what Church might mean that involved a radical commitment to the poor and a steadfast resistance to all forms of war and violence. Dorothy's agenda was a meaningful application of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy as found in the Gospels. 'Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned. Blessed are those who hunger for justice. Blessed are the peacemakers.' Dorothy lived these beatitudes. She challenged others to do likewise.

She was committed to following the non-violent Jesus as revealed in the New Testament. Like the Christians in the early Church, she shared all she had with the poor and practised pacifism to the point of rejecting all violence, all war.

Her analysis of capitalism was blunt and unequivocal. She called it 'this filthy rotten system'. She had no time for the modern consumer society and its materialist idols. The US national ideology of imperialism and war-mongering was anathema to her.

The US bishops made no mention of these things in media comments after their vote. They highlighted her repentance after an abortion, her conversion experience and entry into the Catholic Church, her enforced celibacy when she couldn't marry the man of her dreams, her prayer life and orthodox doctrinal views. These things do form an important part of the complex picture of Dorothy's life.

However, they are not the first things that spring to mind when one considers her life's work. Fifty years editing The Catholic Worker espousing justice issues comes to mind. Decades of serving in soup kitchens because people were too poor to eat. Witnessing at countless vigils opposite police lines. Nationwide speaking tours opposing injustice. Numerous arrests and imprisonment for direct action against war, racism and imperialism. These things come to mind. They speak loudly about her life, and her understanding of Church.

In her lifetime, she begged the bishops to oppose war and live the beatitudes more fully. Few took any notice. She was marginalized for her radical commitment to the Gospel. When she died in 1980, dubbed the most 'influential Catholic in America', no bishop attended her funeral.

Dorothy Day was a woman of her time, yet before her time, a prophet in every sense of the word. As a single parent raising a child during the great Depression, she lived freely among the poor, identifying with their needs. She spent 50 years writing and speaking to those who would listen about the gospel ideals she practised. Her stance on non-violence and feeding the poor, on war and racism, on economic justice and homelessness, still give radical insight into the teachings of Jesus for today. Her open-house policy of hospitality "because it is where we meet Christ disguised," led to the establishment of more than 100 houses of hospitality around the world.

Dorothy lives on in her followers every day. She remains a prickly witness to the hard teachings of Jesus that mainstream churchgoers tend to ignore. She is no plastic figure, no candidate for a plaster-cast statue. Most Catholic Workers don't want her as one, sanitized beyond recognition. They have already acclaimed her a saint, a holy iconic figure.

For them, canonization seems almost superfluous. Hence the indifference. ■

Jim Consedine is a priest of the Diocese of Christchurch, a member of the Christchurch Catholic Worker Group and editor of the 'Common Good'.

this year of faith – 2013

The writer takes a look at the Year of Faith through the lens of Pope Benedict's letter Porta Fidei.

Neil Darragh

Abraham and Sarah left their own country and travelled to an unknown place that God would show them. This is the apostle Paul's great example of faith (Romans 4:1–25; Genesis 12:1–5). Many of the early Celtic monks, important spiritual ancestors of Christian faith in New Zealand, also set out on journeys with no known destination. They had faith that God, through the movements of wind and sea, would lead them to the destined place of their own resurrection.

The Year of Faith (11 Oct 2012 to 24 Nov 2013 — from the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council to the feast of Christ the King 2013) was initiated by Pope Benedict XVI in his apostolic letter *Porta Fidei* (2011). http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/motu_proprio/documents/hf_ben-xvi_motu-proprio_20111011_porta-fidei_en.html

At first reading, the pope's letter seems to be simply a summary of traditional church teaching on Christian faith and an exhortation to live out this faith more intensely and publicly. So it all looks like business as usual — nothing new, just a reminder of the basics and let's get on with it.

There is a lot to be said for the simple repetition of basic truths of course. But is there any particular reason to stress faith at this particular time? What is new or urgent or relevant about faith that we should have a particular 'Year of Faith'? One of the common responses of New Zealand Catholics to the proposal that this year should be a special year of faith, has been "But isn't every year a year of faith? Isn't faith something we do all the time?" A fair question many would say, but perhaps we should look at the pope's letter more closely.

faith in a secular society

The pope's letter refers to a profound crisis of faith that has affected many people. Within the letter there is some nostalgia for an earlier Europe when faith and culture were more closely intertwined. And the letter is concerned about a modern mentality that "limits the field of rational certainties to that of scientific and technological discoveries".

We could conclude from this that the letter is more concerned with issues of Christian faith in the more secular societies of Western Europe than with the more religious cultures of Asia, South America, or Africa. New Zealand has its own form of a secular society that overlaps with, but is not the same as, that of Western Europe. So does it apply to New Zealand?

Nearly every New Zealander I know, Christian or otherwise, wants to live in a secular society in the sense that we want a democratic government that does not favour one religion over another. We don't want Catholic or Anglican or any other religious hierarchies running the state. Nor for that matter do we want a Hindu, Islamic or Buddhist state as is the case today in some other countries. On the whole, we are happy with a secular state and a pluralist society.

Most of the people I know believe in the value of scientific method, but hardly anyone believes that it is a universal way of thinking about how we live our lives and conduct our politics. Very few of us, Christian or otherwise, think that scientific research is enough to bring about such things as peace, justice, fairness, or personal happiness.

Our attitudes to the secular aspects of our society are then mainly positive even if we do wish more people were Christian. Yet there is some kind of crisis affecting nearly all the Christian churches in New Zealand. Attendance at Sunday services has been decreasing in most churches for several decades and where there is an increase it is due in most cases to immigration from the Pacific and from Asia.

This may well be a crisis of the *church* rather than a crisis of faith. The pope's letter does recognise that faults within the church itself may be contributing to a crisis of faith among church members.

Let us focus here however on the broader issue of *faith* rather than the particular crisis of the church. New Zealand dioceses and parishes are currently working on a New Zealand response to the call for a Year of Faith. Often this takes the form of particular actions or study that we could undertake during the course of this year.

Underlying these actions are more basic attitudes that could lead to an enlivening of faith if we get them right, or a deadening of it if we get them wrong. I want to consider two of these here.

an outward-reaching faith

One of these attitudes is that we (Christians in general or Catholics in particular) already have the truth. If this is the case, then all we need to do is learn the Catholic tradition more fully and express it publicly to others.

Yet adopting this 'we know best' attitude would return us to the church of the early 20th century which often saw itself as the defender of the faith against a hostile surrounding society. Papal documents do sometimes still have this tone about them. But it would be a mistake, I think, for us to interpret the Year of Faith in this way.

Faith may have its own certainties but it is still a journey of discovery in which we seek to learn and to go wherever the Spirit may be found. God is still a quest, an exploration, or an unexpected flourish of grace, not a ghetto to be safe in, or a set of traditions to be defended.

A journey of faith is not a contest of Christian faith against secularism. There are many faiths within New Zealand society. Some of these are explicitly religious. Many of us have already learnt a good deal from friends and colleagues of other religious faiths. There are also faiths and commitments that we would not normally call 'religious'. We all know people who have strong life commitments to humanitarian causes, to fairness in our public life, to ecological integrity, and to social and restorative justice. These are demonstrations of faith commitments in practice.

At the same time there are other faith systems in this pluralist society that most of us would not want to be part of. The now common belief in the rights of the sovereign individual to maximize their choices and pursue their own goals as prior to all other rights is not a faith that is easily compatible with Christianity. Nor for that matter is the also common commitment to justice in the form of vengeance.

If we do undertake special actions for this Year of Faith, let them then be those that discern and connect with where the Spirit of God is alive in the world outside as well as inside the church, not to ones that return us to a complacent ghetto church and its exclusive practices.

conservation and creativity

A second attitude that is basic to anything we do for the Year of Faith is the way we balance the past and the future.

In response to the crisis of faith, the pope's letter proposes greater study of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* approved by Pope John Paul II in 1992. In fact in practical terms, the main thrust of the Year of Faith seems to be the promotion of this Catechism. This is reinforced by an accompanying document from the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith entitled *Note with pastoral recommendations for the Year of Faith* (2012). http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20120106_nota-anno-fede_en.html

The Catechism of the Catholic Church is a resource of traditional and official Catholic belief. It is a resource I often make use of as do many other priests and teachers. But this *Catechism* is a conservation of the past. It conserves the teachings of the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s and the traditions which lie behind that council. http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM

So the promotion of the Catechism is fundamentally an act of conservation. It conserves the beliefs and values of Christianity over a long period of history, but it also conserves some of the liabilities of that history. It bears witness to the tradition of faith, hope, and love, but it also carries autocratic, sexist, and ethnocentric burdens from that tradition.

There is a strong argument for conservation of our heritage of faith in order to maintain our own identity and to resist the pressures to individualism and sameness in a liberal democratic society like our own. But we would want to balance this conservation movement with a creative dynamism that seeks to go further and create a new future.

A Year of Faith that is creative as well as conservative might look, for example, to promote Christian contributions to a more equal and less violent society, or to take deliberate steps towards better appreciation of other cultures within and outside the church. The heritage of faith is also a heritage of hope for the future. A Year of Faith might be the occasion for Christian communities to take deliberate faith-inspired action to create new hope for people whose own hope has been diminished through disability, victimization, or unfair treatment. It might inspire us to more respectful treatment of God's planet Earth. For all of us then, faith can be an adventurous journey into God's future rather than just reaching back for what we used to have. ■

Neil Darragh, a priest of the Diocese of Auckland, is a theologian and writer.

what will the year of faith look like at marist college?

The Director of Religious Studies at Marist College Mt Albert, intimately involved with the school faith community, sketches out some of the implications of the Year of Faith for the young women whom she guides.

Susan Brebner

The Catholic Church worldwide is currently in a 'Year of Faith'. In the Auckland Diocese, this was launched with a Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral. There has been a whole raft of information sent to schools and parishes to inform us of this celebration and to encourage us to join in. In our busy lives it would be easy to consign the emails and fliers to the 'must look at later' pile but this is too important just to let slip. I was born as Vatican II began and while I have a vague memory of the 'old' mass, the majority of my faith experiences have been informed by the world since Vatican II. I have enjoyed reading articles in *Tui Motu* about this important event.

What will the Year of Faith look like for our young people? Do they even know it is happening? For us at Marist College it means that some things will continue as normal, while others will become more explicit. We will be focusing on the Creed and the Beatitudes, what we believe and how we put this into action. We will talk more about Vatican II; an event some students will know nothing about.

every year is a year of faith

It is important, however, to note that in Catholic schools every year is a year of faith. We are continually learning about what we believe and how to live this out. The *Understanding Faith* curriculum document puts it like this: "Catholic schools are established to carry out the Church's mission. Schools provide a Catholic faith environment which enables young people to develop the knowledge, skills and values to become active and committed members of the faith community and to contribute positively to the world community." (p7). "The Catholic School is intended to be a community in which the faith and practices of the Catholic Church are passed on and experienced." (p9)

All of this goes hand in hand with evangelisation. As a teacher of Religious Education in a Catholic school evangelisation is part of my job. But what is evangelisation and how do we do it?

a desire to belong

I believe that a desire to belong is one of the greatest of all human needs; the need to be part of something and to have a sense of belonging. Teenagers have conflicting simultaneous desires to find themselves as individuals, and to find a sense of belonging within a group.

At Marist College we are quite explicit in talking about belonging to the family of God. We talk about being Catholic first and foremost, about what it means to be a 'Marist

Woman' and how all of this helps to connect us to the wider world.

There is a well-known expression attributed to St Francis of Assisi, "I preach the Gospel everyday, sometimes I use words". In part this is what we do, and the unspoken can be very effective. Students learn much by seeing how we interact with one another; how we meet and greet, how we work as a team towards a common goal.

examples of belonging

At Marist College the Social Justice Action Group involves over half the College population. It is an umbrella group that includes Young Vinnies (St Vincent de Paul); Caritas; The Catholic Caring Foundation; Amnesty International; Environmental Group; Knitting Club; Marist Maybelles: to name but a few. We are involved in activities such as food drives, work with foster children, singing at a local rest home, working to protect our local environment, knitting for prem babies.

Through all of this (and many other activities) we have learnt what it means to be part of a family, what it means to make our love real and active (1John 3:18), to love our neighbour (Matthew 22:39), to act justly, love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8). We have learnt that our neighbour is our brother and sister in Christ and we work with them because we are all part of the family of God. Sometimes our neighbour is someone in our school community, sometimes it is the people of Christchurch, or our sponsored child or The Catholic Caring Foundation.

liturgical participation

Liturgically we work to involve as many students and staff as possible in our masses and liturgies working on the premise that participation is more important than perfection. We have Mass each week organised and led by each Religious Education class in turn, six full school Masses, a number of liturgies during the year that relate to the Church's calendar (e.g. Ash Wednesday) and others that relate to the school's calendar (e.g. farewelling Year 13 students at the end of the year), along with a weekly student-led liturgy at school assemblies. The unexpected also occurs, such as the funeral of a student or a staff member. All of these events, happy or sad, teach our students many things and also give them a sense of place, of who they are as members of a Church community and what they are able to contribute.

when they leave school

These things are all very well while students are at school, but what happens when they leave? Many people speculate as to how many students in a Catholic School (primary or secondary) go to Church on Sunday on a regular basis. For those who don't and who (along with their family) see school as their faith community, it is important that we find ways to connect them with the wider Church community. For us in Auckland there are a number of options: involvement with Diocesan Youth Masses, LOGOS, St Vincent de Paul; and for many at our school there is involvement with the Edmund Rice Network.

A number of our girls have already appeared in this magazine: Sally Curtis talking about her involvement with LOGOS (*TM*, May 11, p 23); Rebecca Bergin, Stephanie Burgess and Bronwen Peterken whose involvement with Edmund Rice led them to volunteer in Africa for three months (*TM*, August12, p 8). Other students from our College, having completed their studies, are now back teaching in Catholic primary and secondary schools; students who have worked as youth leaders in various dioceses around New Zealand; a student who worked at Challenge 2000; one who is completing her novitiate in America; another who is currently discerning her call to be a Marist Sister.

I am a very proud member of this school community, but we are not alone in what we do. Wonderful things are happening in Catholic Schools all around the country. Amazing young people are graduating and moving on to secondary and tertiary education. Others are leaving and going straight into the work force. Most have an experience of faith that has helped shape them, helped them to understand what it means to be Catholic and has helped them be people who make a difference in our world.

The Year of Faith is a wonderful opportunity for us to celebrate our young people and to offer them as many opportunities as possible to be involved in the wider life of our Church. ■

Susan Brebner is the Director of Religious Studies at Marist College, Mt Albert, Auckland She is married to Mike and the mother of two girls (or 772 girls, depending on who you ask).

evangelisation: a proposal

What would be the practical implications for the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand of taking up the challenge to make adult baptism the norm?

Patrick McMullan

The first time that I officiated at a baptismal ceremony in South Korea is a cherished memory from my early years as a missionary. There were 23 adults to be baptised that Sunday Mass and the church was packed. Nothing, it must be said, could have prepared me for the shock I received when I began to read the baptismal promises and, in unison, approximately 250 people loudly and enthusiastically affirmed their faith. I was left in no doubt, at least for that moment, that these people believed and, what is more, were proud to announce their belief to the world.

privileged glimpse of faith

The strength of their fervent response was infectious and empowering. I immediately felt my spirit revive as I struggled with the Korean of the ritual. From a deeper perspective, however, I knew I had been given a privileged glimpse into the kind of faith which has taken root in Korea. Over the years the power that lies behind those simple words, "I believe," has lingered in my consciousness demanding respect and understanding; and prompted over the last quarter of a century significant effort to understand the particular historical context of Korean Catholicism, and my own personal experience of being a missionary coming from Aotearoa New Zealand and working in Korea.

Put another way, from a Korean perspective, and repeated in churches across the Peninsula, this enthusiastic response is normal. In fact, it would seem strange if that were not the case. However, from my perspective, this natural response was totally unexpected, way beyond what I 'knew to be normal' and expected to hear. This disjunction between the presumption of normality and reality has forced me to ponder the lack of enthusiasm that seems to permeate my own faith heritage.

The years since have taught me to be cautious about religious fervour and sceptical about simplistic comparisons. Either or both of these tendencies usually lead to simplistic generalisations that obscure and frustrate more fruitful reflection on evangelisation and the nature of authentic witness to the Gospel of Jesus. That is to say, the Church in Korea, just as anywhere else in the Universal Church, has its own particular combination of historically and culturally shaped strengths, idiosyncrasies, and failings.

> The cross of Jesus reminds us all that gospel-success is something entirely different from an expanding congregation.

a cautious comparison

In this vein then, the cautious comparison that I wish to draw between the Churches of South Korea and Aotearoa New Zealand concerns the seeming vibrancy of one institution and the sense of weariness, or ennui, that seems to engulf the other. The comparison that I am not making concerns the authenticity, or otherwise, of either Church's response to the Gospel. It is with this word of caution that I proceed.

The statistical profile of the Church in South Korea tells a remarkable story of outward expansion. Official Korea Government sources report that by 2006 the *membership in the Catholic Church has increased by 74.4% in the ten years from 1985 until 1995*. Furthermore, according to statistics provided by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea, by *the end of 2011the number of Catholics in Korea was 5,309,964, an increase of 2% (104,375) over the previous year. This accounts for 10.3% of the total population, up from 6.6% in 1995. The total number of Catholics in Korea has slightly and consistently increased at a yearly average of 2–3% during the past 10 years*. Across all denominations, Korea is now second only to the United States as a missionary-sending country.

how to explain this growth

There are many historical and social factors cited by commentators to explain this expansion including the witness of the Korean martyrs; the legacy of the Korean War; an attractive hierarchical structure and liturgy; the moral leadership of the Church leaders (especially during the military dictatorship years) and the Church's social involvement; the impact of rapid urbanisation, development and industrialisation. The more faith-orientated theories tend to promote the work and influence of the Holy Spirit. Obviously, no one factor is an exhaustive explanation but, taken in different combinations, they converge to portray not just a 'successful' Catholic Church, but more widely, a vibrant, pluralistic, and religiously-tolerant landscape. Secularism does not have a stranglehold on societal life in South Korea.

Nevertheless, these statistics are seductive. They actually tell us little more than the fact that over the years a lot of baptismal water has been poured and, as a result, that the institution of the Catholic Church has grown dramatically

in size and influence. We are left with little knowledge of the deeper processes of evangelisation, such as how the Korean culture is being regenerated by an encounter with the Gospel? (*Evangelii Nuntiandi,* § 20) Nor do we know how this particular church has responded to the demands of solidarity with the poor or the contemporary ecological crisis? The cross of Jesus reminds us all that gospel-success is something entirely different from an expanding congregation. Dramatic as they may be, evangelisation is not measured by numbers.

Adult baptism in South Korea.

focus on adult baptism

Narrowing the focus somewhat, an important key to understanding the phenomenon of the Church in Korea is its focus on adult baptism. In particular, the energy that invigorates a group of believers when an adult makes a deliberate, public choice to participate in the life and worship of the community, embracing its shared values and moral code. This infectious energy creates a positive dynamic within the group that invites rather than compels: this is a good place to be. Practically, it means a lot of adults who take their conversion seriously are keen to learn about the meaning of their choice, and to participate actively in the life and service of the community.

I believe there is a genuine missionary opportunity opening up for the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand. Like many others, I find myself grieving for the decline of an institution in which I have invested my life. Yet, I am oddly comforted by the gospel image of Jesus as one who keeps moving on despite his success (Mk 1:36-37) and even commands those who love him not to cling to him (Jn 20:17). I am deeply conscious of the fact that the call to mission comes in the context of seeming failure and capitulation, as the end of the Gospel of Mark painfully reminds us: "But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid." (Mk 16:7-9)

a way forward

Fine words need a plan of action. Hence, I would like to make the following proposal as a way forward: the Church in Aotearoa New Zealand make a deliberate choice to move away from child baptism (as the practical norm) and promote the adult reception of Baptism and related sacraments. The concrete mechanism to move forward is found in broadening our understanding of the 'Rite of Election' through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the RCIA. Thus, children would have their names enrolled as members of the 'Elect', meaning that their families wish them to be educated in the faith and be brought, at the appropriate time, to the sacrament of Baptism.

The relevant Church law is found in Canon 206: *§1.*

Catechumens, that is those who ask by explicit choice under the influence of the Holy Spirit to be incorporated into the Church, are joined to it in a special way. By this same desire, just as by the life of faith hope and charity which they lead, they are united with the Church which already cherishes them as its own.

§2. The Church has a special care for catechumens; while it invites them to lead a life of the gospel and introduces them to the celebration of sacred rites, it already grants them various prerogatives which are proper to Christians.

This Rite, adapted and broadened in scope, could also function as a birth rite, something that the sacrament of Baptism should never be reduced to. With formation in the faith as its primary concern, membership of the Elect confers the individual's right of entry into Catholic schools. Moreover, the Elect have the prerogative of a Christian burial, which should help alleviate unconscious concerns about Limbo and original sin. Crucially, the freedom of adults to choose, or reject, the sacraments of Initiation is not only preserved but also enhanced.

Obviously, a change of this magnitude would be energising but traumatic for the community. However, if we are taking evangelisation seriously then creative reinterpretation of our sacramental practices is not enough. Instead, we, as a community, must be actively engaged in creative responses to the signs of the times. That is, we must be seen to be modelling social, economic and political justice, promoting a broadly inclusive society, and explicitly practising ecological hope for those who come after us. Then indeed we will be in a good place! ■

Patrick McMullan is an ordained Columban missionary working in South Korea, as a chaplain to a group home for adults with special needs and also as chaplain to the English speaking community at Seoul National University.

‘rowan in the boat of st peter . . .’

The Archbishop of Canterbury states in his address to the Synod of Bishops that meditation is key to living in this confused world of ours — contemplation and evangelisation are profoundly connected. This inspires a reflection on the significance of this challenge for us and those who are at the edge of church and society.

Michael Noonan

The Catholic Church is on a tight rope to its future. When Pope John XXIII opened the Vatican Council he described opening a window in the church. The council was as much about establishing a deeper credibility in the world for the Church as it was about clearing out rust ‘clinging to forms that meaning had already left’. Fifty years later, Pope Benedict also senses a need to take the Church to a deeper place. It is for this reason that in October last year he convened the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to treat the topic: ‘The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith’. The opening of the Year of Faith, during the Synod, coincided with the 50th anniversary of the second Vatican Council and also the 20th anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

confronting ‘isms’ of the day

At a time when the perceived authority of the Church to speak on matters of sexual ethics is at an all time low, she is confronting an aggressive form of secular liberalism which in many countries is actively seeking to sever their links with their Judaeo-Christian heritage. This ‘new wave’ of fear of religion, and its followers, has sprung from many sources. Modern manifestations of this fear are attributed to religious warfare and terrorism, bigotry and what is seen as hypocritical control from a clerical class which itself lacks self control and awareness.

minimal space for dialogue

As a consequence, the easy dismissal by liberal secularists of the beliefs of people of faith is legitimated. The space for dialogue under these conditions is minimal. From the Catholic Church’s point of view, perhaps the most urgent symptom of this is the question, bubbling to the surface in many western countries, of the re-definition of marriage. Given the lack of room for measured discussion, one gains the impression that the parties in this important discussion, just as in the discussion about abortion, euthanasia and about many of the important issues of our time, are shouting past each other.

new evangelisation

It was Pope John Paul II who initiated a call for a new evangelisation. Pope Benedict has taken up this call and invited the Church to be courageous in finding new paths in responding to the changing circumstances and conditions faced by the Church in her call to live and proclaim the Gospel today. The new paths he speaks of are essential if the tired old endless arguments are to cease.

In a stroke of inspiration, Benedict invited fellow theologian and the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, to offer the opening address to the Synod. I say ‘inspiration’ because Rowan Williams, perhaps more than anyone else, has had to live with and lead the tensions within his own communion, of people with passionately held views shouting past each other and rehearsing arguments that appear to have no end.

+rowan’s address to synod

Rowan Williams’ address to the Synod, born from this experience, was quite remarkable. He named a profound connection between contemplation and evangelisation. I cannot do justice to the depth and richness of his thought in this article, but I do encourage *Tui Motu* readers to view the address online at: http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2645/archbishops-address-to-the-synod-of-bishops-in-rome

Importantly, Rowan Williams named evangelisation as something which should not be solely outwardly directed. “A true enterprise of

evangelisation," he says, "will always be a re-evangelisation of ourselves as Christians. By allowing us to open our hearts to God's wishes, contemplation helps us grow and become fully human."

open to transformation

By the simple act of looking at God in ongoing contemplation, we are transformed. We catch, we imbibe, we marinate in something of God's Joy and Love. This is important, because if as Christians we can tell people only about what they should and shouldn't believe or what they should or shouldn't do, we are on a path of diminishing returns. If, however, we can show the world a face that is shining with love, a face, a heart and a mind transformed by the beauty of God, a revolution will follow. Sterile arguments cease in front of love, and people are won for Christ. "The face we need to show to our world is the face of a humanity in endless growth towards love, a humanity so delighted and engaged by the glory of what we look towards that we are prepared to embark on a journey without end to find our way more deeply into it."

"Contemplation," he said, "is very far from being just one kind of thing that Christians do: it is the key to prayer, liturgy, art and ethics, the key to the essence of a renewed humanity that is capable of seeing the world and other subjects in the world with freedom."

an example from l'arche

I have a picture of Rowan Williams sitting with two of the people with intellectual disabilities from our community of L'Arche in Liverpool. Colin, on the right does not speak, Robert is on the left. My wife, Maria, and I were members of that community in the 1970s and 80s. Colin and Robert were part of a group which we were asked to prepare for Communion and Confirmation — Colin in the Catholic Church and Robert in the Anglican. There are two things I want to say about that group and one about the picture of Rowan, Robert and Colin. First, Maria and I learned in a powerful way the necessity of being re-evangelised through that group. Although we were the leaders of the group, we needed to find a way of presenting the truths of Jesus with simplicity so that both Colin and Robert, both of whom could be easily bewildered by language, could understand.

But a simple expression of truth challenged us far more than a wordier, more complex and intellectually satisfying expression of it. We began to recognise that our intellects were 'rescuing' God from being God. In order to teach it simply, we had to be fully convicted by it. We began to discover a new freedom in our faith as we began to sift in order to discover the simplest way of passing that faith on to Colin and Robert. Secondly, we learned how valuable it is to work ecumenically.

> "A true enterprise of evangelisation will always be a re-evangelisation of ourselves as Christians. By allowing us to open our hearts to God's wishes, contemplation helps us grow and become fully human."

no divided face

As Rowan Williams named in his address, "if we have a robust and rich account of what the word 'spiritual' itself means, we shall understand spiritual ecumenism as the shared search to nourish and sustain disciplines of contemplation in the hope of unveiling the face of the new humanity." It is important that the new humanity he speaks of does not weaken the mission of Jesus by presenting a divided face.

the discipline of simplicity

My observation about the photograph itself is that it depicts the archbishop enjoying the company of Robert and Colin and being present to them in a simple way. Not everyone can manage that. In Liverpool L'Arche, we had a succession of Religious, sent by their orders to discover 'values of the heart'. Sometimes, like the Archbishop, they would be people of fearsome intellectual calibre.

I well remember sitting at a community meal with a Jesuit tertian, Robert, Colin and others from the community while the said Jesuit tertian was making a series of points about an earlier point he had made. Holding down his last left hand digit, he solemnly intoned, "And tenthly…" without a hint of irony or showing any understanding that most of those seated in communion with him at table could not follow him! Getting out of his head and into his heart was a challenge, that at that moment, he could not rise to!

I think Rowan Williams could spend some relaxed and joyful time with Colin and Robert because he knows how to contemplate. "To learn to look to God without regard to my own instant satisfaction, to learn to scrutinise and to relativise the cravings and fantasies that arise in me — this is to allow God to be God." Then it is possible to "love human beings in a human way, to love them not for what they may promise me, to love them not as if they were there to provide me with lasting safety and comfort, but as fragile fellow-creatures held in the love of God."

go deeper

When the voices and the arguments are shrill around us, we need to go deeper. When those around us are deeply wounded or fragile, we need to go deeper. When people have stopped listening to our efforts to evangelise, we need to go deeper. We are part of a church that urgently needs this Year of Faith and which urgently needs to be re–evangalised. Contemplation — looking at God and letting God look at us — is indeed the key. ■

Michael Noonan is an international delegate for L'Arche, who lives in Dunedin.

work to last a lifetime

Baroness Vivien Stern, Member of the House of Lords, talks to Michael Fitzsimons about her lifelong campaign for prison reform. Aged 71, she still has plenty of passion for the cause.

The Baroness is a little puzzled. Our lovely little country — friendly, affluent and 100% pure in a tourist sense if not an environmental one — has the second highest rate of incarceration in the OECD.

Norway manages to imprison only 73 people per 100,000. New Zealand imprisons 197 per 100,000.

why so many in nz prisons?

"What is it?" asks the Baroness over a soothing cup of tea in the Amora Hotel lounge. "Why is this the case, why don't you fit your profile? Considering your other characteristics, New Zealand has an extraordinarily high rate of imprisonment."

She comes back to the question several times.

"It's probably that imprisonment is used here when it might not be used in other countries, and it's probably used for quite a long time, and it's probably harder to get earlier release. That will all add up to the high numbers."

In countries all round the world, the justice system bears down more heavily on those at the bottom of society, says the Baroness. Why is this the case when criminality is not restricted to the poor and disadvantaged but is widely spread throughout the community?

"The people that mainly populate prisons are people from disadvantaged sectors of society: people who are poor, people who have missed out on whatever it is society provides to its citizens, people who have already been victims — especially the women who have already been victims of a lifetime of abuse, violence and neglect — and of course whichever population is already in the minority. There is no question that Māori are grossly represented in the population of people locked up."

Māori men make up approximately 51percent of the prison population and Māori women 70 percent against an overall Māori population in New Zealand of about 18 percent.

a case of racial discrimination

"If rates of incarceration of Maori were the same as European, your incarceration rates would be in line with most European countries, and not at all remarkable. The Human Rights Commission has called it discrimination, and I'm sure the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination would view it, too, as in some way racial discrimination."

Baroness Stern, a member of the British House of Lords, began working in a criminal justice NGO a long time ago, "nothing at all unusual and then one thing led to another. Then you discover it's not really a job, it's more a life's work."

> "There is no question that Māori are grossly represented in the population of people locked up."

She's in New Zealand accompanying her husband who is here for the Ombudsman's Conference. She doesn't believe in taking it easy, even though she's now over 70. During her short visit, she gives the Robson Hanan Lecture, meets with Ministers, MPs, Justice and Corrections officials, and addresses members of the Wellington Club. She's encouraged by the 'change of mood' that seems to be prevailing.

Baroness Vivien Stern

a mood change

The mood change seems to be an acknowledgement of several realities. Last year Deputy Prime Minister Bill English described New Zealand prisons as a 'moral and fiscal failure'. It's now widely acknowledged that prisons as they currently operate do a very poor job in rehabilitating prisoners and on the fiscal front, they are very expensive to run. It costs over $90, 000 a year to incarcerate a prisoner and there are currently more than 8,500 people in New Zealand prisons. Once released, many of them reoffend.

increasingly unaffordable

Our addiction to punishment is becoming increasingly unaffordable. And the costs don't just stop there, says Baroness Stern.

"It's expensive to have a person in prison not only in terms of the annual costs — upkeep, wages, whatever goes on in the system — but everything that surrounds it. What happens to the dependents of the person in prison: do they need state

benefits? What social damage has been caused, and what will have to be spent when the person comes out: maybe mental damage was there, and it got worse in prison, and the health care bill is now greater.

"Maybe the person becomes homeless. Generally the social costs of the damage you do are also substantial. There's much to recommend various attempts to divert and find another solution to all low-level criminal acts."

a small prison role

According to the Baroness, there's a small role for prison in our society, not a big one. Those put in prison should be kept to a minimum compatible with public safety and security, and the money freed up should be spent on measures that reduce crime.

"With prisons the money isn't being spent on anything except containment. It isn't being spent on the person with the problems, and it isn't being spent on the neighbourhood from which the person comes, which may be bereft of the things which encourage people to behave well. It's an ethical question, but it's also a political and economic question: what is the best way to spend this money, which can go only so far? How much over-incarceration can you afford?"

the example of texas

That's a question which the State of Texas in the United States has wrestled with and come up with a surprising solution. Remember 'hang-em-high' Texas is the toughest state of a nation which locks up more offenders than any other in the world. More than 1 in every 100 adults is behind bars.

The revolution in thinking was brought about by looming financial disaster. In 2006 the Texas State budget signalled the fact that if current trends continued they would need to accommodate a predicted 17,700 extra inmates by 2012. It was simply unaffordable.

an amazing turnaround

So a previously unthinkable alliance of liberals and right-wingers formed to keep people out of the prison system and tackle the social problems that led to their incarceration. Instead of building more prisons, Texas funded sophisticated rehabilitation programmes, which included alcohol and drug treatment programmes, counselling, specialist services for the mentally ill, as well as housing and employment assistance.

> "This work shows you the extremes of human life. You see the inside of how societies work. You see amazingly tragic things, and things that you know have to be changed, and you meet some extraordinarily wonderful people."

The remarkable thing is that this package of measures worked. Figures show violent crime dropping at twice the national average, while cutting costs and reducing prison populations. In 2011 crime rates in Texas fell 8.3%, a far greater drop than in other States. The success of the Texas initiative has led to other 'deep red' Republican States following suit.

The Texas experience is very telling, says the Baroness.

"Prison isn't designed for rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is done in prisons despite their unsuitability for making people better, and their main outcome is to make people worse. It's a destruction of self-worth, and people don't function well when they think they're useless.

"Rehabilitation is most likely to be achieved outside prison. That's an argument to keep people out and to spend the money on whatever it is that is driving their antisocial acts."

Baroness Stern has spent a good part of her working life working for prison reform. Over that time, she says, a huge amount has been done.

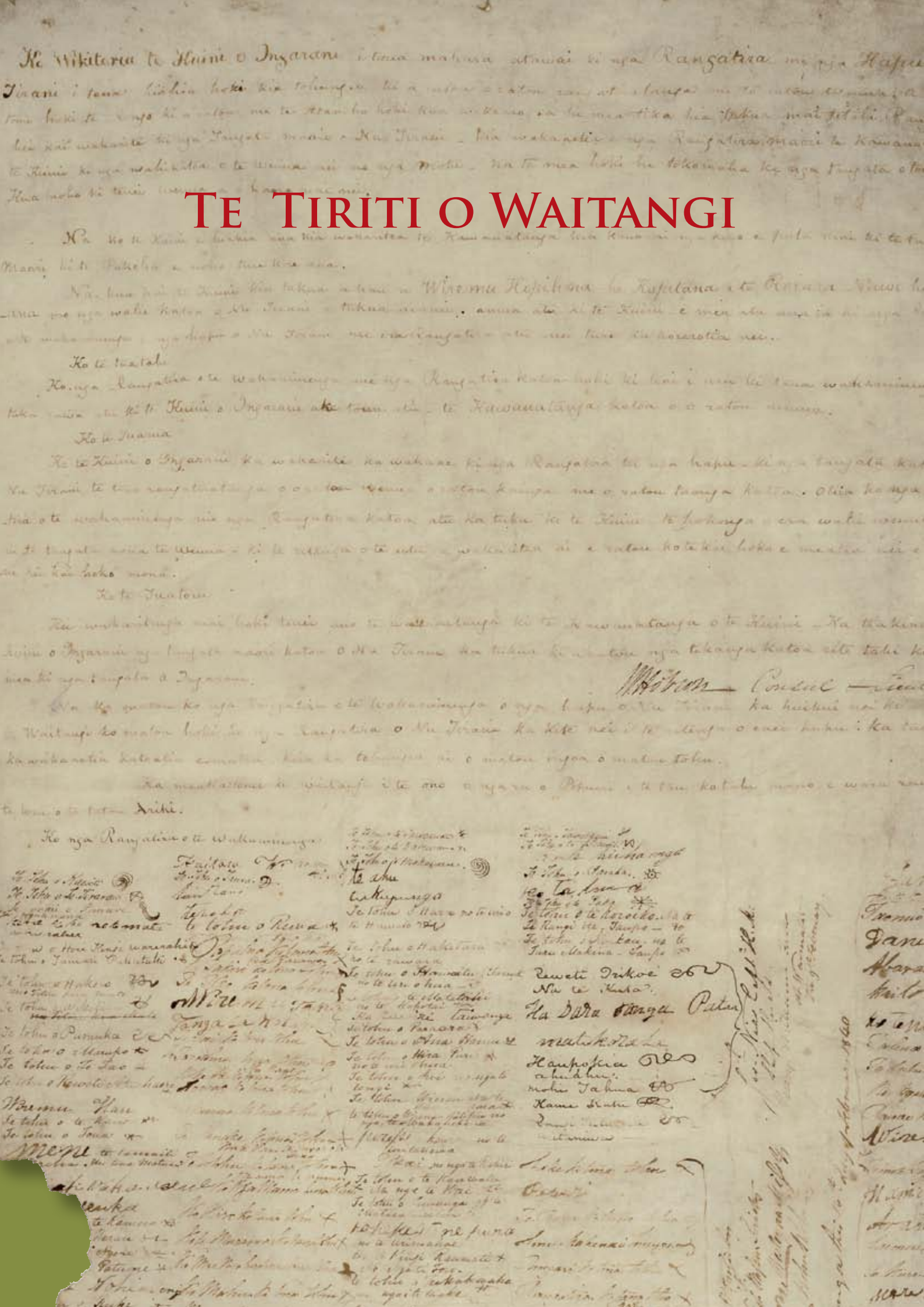
"I've been astonished by the growing acceptance of the idea that when you lock people up it has to be done within an ethical framework. That's what the world expects, now, that's what the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights says everyone must do. Gradually, as the world has changed, more and more countries accept that they should do it. I find that a rather remarkable achievement for human kind."

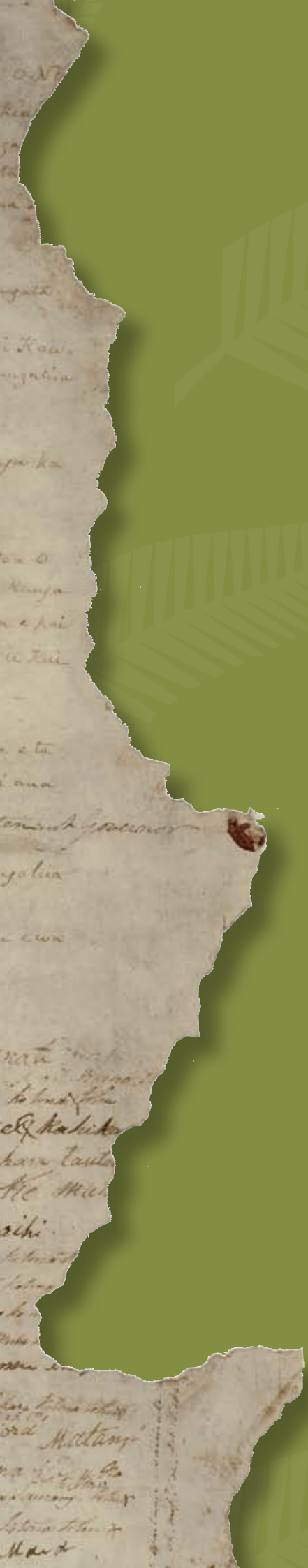
On a personal level her work in penal reform has been fascinating.

"It's about justice and human rights: one is at the edge, in some ways. But the prison reform community is a great community. There are people all over the place, in so many countries, that do amazing work. This work shows you the extremes of human life. You see the inside of how societies work. You see amazingly tragic things, and things that you know have to be changed, and you meet some extraordinarily wonderful people.

"It's amazing to meet someone drawing some amazing pictures in an art class, and to have them tell you they were on death row, and that they're now doing quite well actually. There are many astonishing things that go on in this world." ■

Te Tiriti o Waitangi





PRAYER FOR WAITANGI DAY

God of ages, God of nations,

widen our vision

beyond the narrow confines of our own little worlds

to embrace the horizons of knowledge and love

that span all boundaries.

Each person, young or old,

of whatever race or calling,

is your own unique creation;

and to each of us you have said:

"I have loved you with an everlasting love."

Help us to love one another, with the love you loved us;

through Christ your son.

Amen.

grace and radiance

Beauty is a pillar of faith, alongside goodness and truth. In an often dark world, we struggle to ensure that its importance and sacramental quality are not lost, for at the deepest level of our being we already know beauty and resonate sympathetically with it.

Daniel O'Leary

Across the ward, a man is struggling. His body is writhing on the chair near the bed. His right leg, arthritic and misshapen, is kicking against the cubicle curtain. Sweat edges down the furrows of his grim face. I want to help him but I myself am anxiously recuperating. Taut and strained with the intense effort, he makes one last concentrated twist. And before a passing nurse can assist him, he utters a hoarse growl of triumph. The battle is over. Calm now, he proudly begins the long and complicated manoeuvre of buttoning up his cardigan — the cardigan that Dan had just managed to put on.

Why do I still remember Dan's small victory when I have already forgotten the world records of the recent Olympic champions? It has to do, I think, with a certain simplicity, a concentration, a determination on Dan's part. It was neither contrived nor attention-seeking. It was utterly honest; it was total and it was real. It was, I now believe, beautiful.

Here, according to D.H. Lawrence, was a man "in his wholeness wholly attending". There was no distraction in Dan's single eye as he battled with his uncooperative cardigan. If beauty is "the product of honest attention to the particular" then I was privy to a small epiphany in a Tralee hospital that August morning. Did it, I wonder, somehow facilitate my own healing as I watched? And did an invisible healing grace dance through the ward at that moment? I do not know.

But what did dance through the hospital the following day, though not down our wing, was the newly crowned Australian Rose of Tralee. There was no denying the grace and beauty there. But not only there, shining as it was. The mystic in all of us will recognise the hidden shimmering at the core of everything, even the imperfect; the quiet music in all that happens, the world itself as sacramental. St Thomas Aquinas saw divine harmony, God's radiance and beauty in all of Creation.

That is why true beauty is always redemptive. In *The Idiot*, Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote that "only beauty will save the world". Philosopher John Macmurray writes in Freedom in the Modern World: "I am inclined to think that the worst feature of modern life is its failure to believe in beauty . . . If we want to make the world better, the main thing we have to do is make it more beautiful."

The Church has lost that blessed imagination. Beauty was always included with her two sisters, goodness and truth, in the traditional pillars of Christian faith. But the still virulent strains of Gnosticism and Manichaeism, with their fear of enfleshed beauty, have distorted the true vision and reality of Incarnation.

In *The Minister*, R.S. Thomas pulls no punches:

Protestantism – the adroit castrator
Of art; the bitter negation
Of song and dance and the heart's innocent joy –
You have botched our flesh and left us only the soul's
Terrible impotence in a warm world.

In his *Art and the Beauty of God: a Christian understanding*, Bishop Richard Harries, too, believes that all real beauty, no matter what its form, carries a divine radiance. He writes: "The material and the immaterial, the visible and the invisible, the physical and the spiritual interpenetrate one another. The physical world becomes radiant with eternity ... This means that all everyday experiences have a sacramental character." He also believes that this radiance of God "can be fully present in failure and ignominy".

In *Waiting on God*, the French religious thinker Simone Weil wrote: "Like a sacrament, the beauty of the world is Christ's tender smile for us coming through matter." Drawn towards God, as we always somehow are from birth and baptism, we carry an unconscious attraction towards becoming small reflections of that beautiful smile. "We do not merely want to see beauty," wrote C.S. Lewis in *The Weight of Glory*. "We want something else that can hardly be put into words — to unite with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it."

But why is this desire so faint within us? Because of a condition called spiritual blindness.

In Alice Walker's novel *The Color Purple*, Shug Avery reminds us how fed up God must feel when we walk through a field of poppies and fail to notice the colour purple. On the final Judgment Day, Rabbi Lionel Blue tells us, we shall be called to account for all the beautiful things we should have enjoyed, but didn't. Sin is blind to beauty. It lives in a flat world, it fears the edges, it does not notice colour. It is graceless. And it is graceless because it has no imagination.

"The imagination", wrote the Irish poet and priest John O'Donohue, "creates a pathway of reverence for the visitations of beauty. To awaken the imagination is to retrieve, reclaim and re-enter experience in fresh new ways . . . To put it in liturgical terms: each of us is the priest/priestess of our own life, and the altar of our imagination is the place where our hidden and beautiful life can become visible and open to transformation."

The theologist and writer Ronald Rolheiser reminds us that at the deepest level of our being we already know beauty and resonate sympathetically with it. "That *Imago Dei,*" he writes, "that deep virginal spot within us, that place where hands infinitely more gentle than our own once caressed us before we were born, where our souls were kissed before birth, where all that is most precious in us still dwells, where the fire of love still burns — in that place we feel a vibration *sympathétique* in the face of beauty. It stirs the soul where it is most tender."

My cousin, the poet Eugene O'Connell, writes about a beauty that took many decades to perfect. In *Crossing the Fire*, he wrote about my Auntie Nell and her husband, Johnnie:

. . . So when Johnnie died we wanted
Nell to sit on his side of the fire,
Out of the way of the draught and
the traffic up to their room.
But she kept to the habit of
their life together, and preferred
the visitor to sit on his chair.
Afraid that if she crossed the fire
that there would be no one
on the other side to return her gaze. ■

Fr Daniel O'Leary is a priest of the Diocese of Leeds, England. His website is www.djoleary.com

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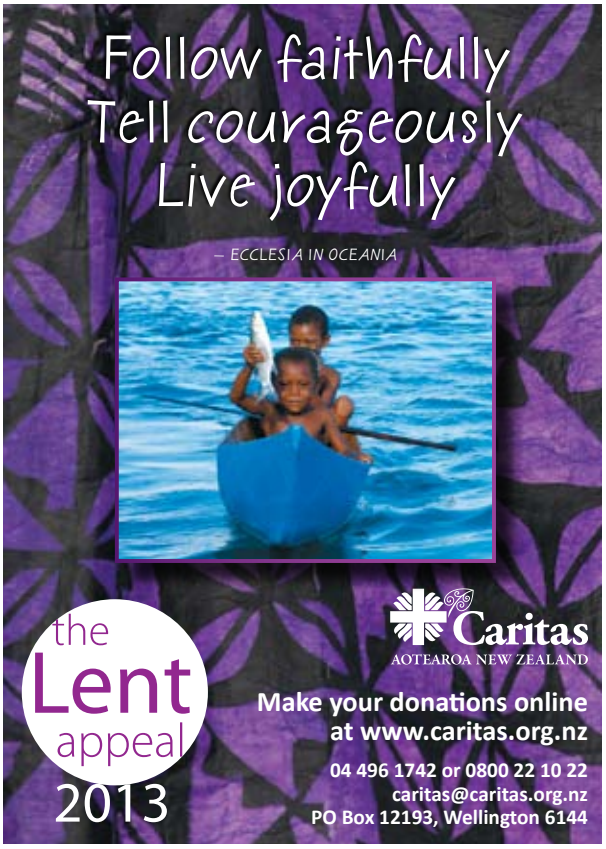


cathedrals for our time

An architect takes a tilt at the new religion, 'the new age of faith', in which belief is everything, and outlines some of the implications of the way the world follows this phenomenon.

Tony Watkins

The twenty-first century will be remembered as one of the most deeply religious periods of all time. Not only have whole populations of individual countries become ardent believers but also most countries in the world have been united by a common faith and a common love of their god. This has become an age of belief founded on faith.

One result is that all over the world there has been a massive upsurge of religious architecture, such as has not been seen since medieval times. In the Age of Enlightenment faith had given way to reason, with buildings which may have had logic and been fodder for academics but lacked soul. Now there is a new age of faith. Belief is everything. Even truth has become known as non-fiction. Believing in sustainability has become far more important than doing anything about it. Architects are believers.

A few people wonder about the wisdom of a total commitment of the scarce resources of the world to religious architecture but they are laughed at. Architectural books and magazines are devoted to glossy religious architecture, awards are granted, and the only challenge seems to be for the next building to be more magnificent than the last. Medieval buildings were lost in love. Now winning is everything. Humility reeks of apostasy.

After years of confusion about saving the Amazon rainforests or Auckland's volcanoes the real meaning of sustainability has finally become crystal clear. It means sustaining the faith. The peasants are filled with wonder and feel that no sacrifice is too great to achieve such astonishing architecture, just as they had been in medieval times or in ancient Egypt.

Everyone knows that in thousands of years, when civilisation has passed away, the buildings will remain giving glory to god. They will continue to be admired as having given form to the new religion.

Future students of architectural history will admire these symbolic buildings, just as they admire the Parthenon or the pyramids, without fully comprehending that having great designers is never enough. Only faith can underpin such achievements.

Just as no one questions the environmental cost of religious architecture so no one questions the faith itself. A few non-believers do raise their voices from time to time but they are swiftly dealt with by the police, assisted by the army and the navy. Our modern-day inquisition metes out injustice as necessary to prevent the possibility of revolt.

Over the years there have been some theological debates, but no schisms. We laugh at other cultures steeped in superstition, prejudice, and uncertainty. We have risen above all that to find the one, true god.

At first the new religion was simply an established state religion, but before long religious leaders moved into government and the traditional role of government became forgotten. Now the role of government is to manage and support the new religion.

This new religion is, of course, called the economy and the god of believers in the economy is money.

Even National Radio devotes a great

deal of time to reporting on religious news and three times a day there are prayer sessions, with adherents facing the stock exchange in adoration as they listen to the litany of Private Wealth giving the figures.

Sport has been replaced by religious spectacle as franchise plays against franchise to allow believers to cheer on their favourite franchise. God supports elite sport because actually playing could make believers restless.

Throughout history institutionalised religions have always, we know, run into problems. Megalomaniacs rise to the top on the shoulders of believers convinced that only a Lotto ticket comes between present hell and future heaven. Giving loans to people who are not yet winners is bound to lead to trouble. Fortunately we are constantly recovering from the recession so that provided the people at the bottom tighten their belts the people at the top who benefit will keep belief alive.

The good news, if there is any, is that the 92,000 stalwarts in the college of cardinals who control everything are a jolly lot. Not unlike the Greek gods, and not really so different from the rest of us. Plenty of debauchery, licentiousness, double-dealing, corruption and infighting, as well as a tendency to pinch other cardinal's wives.

The real, unrecognised vulnerability of the new religion is that the world comes free, and the only chance of stopping people from just enjoying it is to create a built environment which shuts nature out and charges people to get in.

Architects more than anyone else understand that if you can charge people for something which is free you can go on having fun building. The party venue is the Wynyard Quarter. Come on down. Why enjoy what you have when you could buy something else? ■

Tony Watkins is a New Zealand architect, educator, planner, urban designer, author and international peace activist.

letters to the editor continued

These are personal relationships which, by their very nature, do not produce new members for society, and hence lack the very basis for such a recognition.

Kees de Leeuw, *Mt Maunganui*

for all the saints – including rutherford waddell

It was so good to read Michael Hill's report on the forgotten prophet, Rutherford Waddell (TM, Nov '12).

It was a significant reminder of my own faith and ministry. St Andrew's was my family church, the church of my great-grandparents, and Rutherford Waddell was not for us a forgotten prophet.

So what would 'the prophet' say to us a century later? As Waddell focussed especially on the needs of women, today he might well focus on the plight of children, the well recorded poverty of a significant number of New Zealand children — not to forget the abuse, sexual and violent, of too many among them.

This would lead Waddell back to the causes of our present woes — the large and growing disparity of wealth and power between those in high places — not unlike the 1880s Dunedin business men — and the unemployed.

However many good labour laws we have passed since then, the struggle is still between the bosses and the workers, the haves and the have-nots. Perhaps Waddell would write the New Zealand version of that book *The Spirit Level* with his own pun on the word 'Spirit'!

Would he also take up the fight against the 'booze culture' and the publicity power of the Brewers? Perhaps he would help found a 'Union of Youth' for responsibility in the liquor trade.

And what might he be saying to our church leaders? How would they — together or in our continuing state of division — speak on child poverty and abuse, on booze, or indeed take up the sins of violence and war?

Thank you, Rutherford Waddell, for showing us the prophetic way.

(Rev) John Murray, *Wellington (abridged)*

building act for the homeless

Susan Smith asks "what can we do to remove this (housing) scandal?" (*TM*, Dec 12) The answer is not complicated. If you want a house, build one. However, anyone who takes this obvious step will discover an army of bureaucrats on handsome salaries paid out of rates and taxes, waiting to prevent them from building themselves a home. Our system protects the profits of the 'construction industry', protection needed because the industry has a poor reputation having built, and continuing to build, 'leaky homes'. It is an industry notable for systemic failure. Owner-builders in contrast are socially responsible, but their choices have been taken away.

Building a house is not impossibly complicated, although a sense of humour and some strategic thinking may be needed. If someone does not know how to cook they begin by learning how to boil water. Cup of tea in hand, they might then learn to poach an egg. Multi-tasking can come with a slice of toast to go with the egg. Bake your own bread with camp-oven and open fire if you cannot afford the bread. Admiring neighbours will add some love and *manakitanga* into the mix. We are lucky that the government has not yet stopped us cooking our own meals to protect the profits of the 'restaurant industry'.

Our political system is the scandal. We made it and we can change it. We can change the game and challenge the power structure. Passing a new Building Act, which would protect the right of owner-builders and put a roof over their families' heads, could get the scandal out of the way.

Anyone wanting to learn a little more about owner-building might enjoy reading my book *The Human House.* Grandma can tell you how to boil water.

Tony Watkins, *Karaka Bay (abridged)*

memories of a lost springtime

The author reflects by way of 'shared memory' on Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.*

Patricia Stevenson rsj

In his introduction to the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* in Abbott's translation of *The Documents of Vatican II*, Avery Dulles SJ made two important observations which I believe colour the spirit of all the documents of the Council.

The first was to highlight that instead of beginning with structures and government the document began with the Church as "the people to whom God . . . communicates in love".

Secondly, the document made every effort to speak in language which the bishops hoped would be readily understood by the community, other christians and all people of good will.

I want to focus on liturgy. Over these last months many books and periodicals have offered articles in this time of jubilee on the ground-breaking *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (CSL). As a practitioner who for the last 50 years has worked with parish groups both here in New Zealand and in Australia helping communities understand the spirit of the CSL, my contribution will be a shared memory.

principles

Key principles that are underlined in my copy of the CSL, and simplified here, are:

- Liturgy is part of the unfolding of the revelation of God through attention to the scriptures, particularly the life, death and resurrection of Jesus (paras 5–7).
- Liturgy is the work of the whole mystical body of Christ, both head and members (para 8).
- Liturgy unites the Cosmos in one song of praise and thanksgiving (para 8).
- While liturgy is the great work of the Church, it is not the only work. It is preceded by the response to the call of faith and reorientation of one's life direction (para 9).
- Two great metaphors, 'source' and 'summit', provide a constant against which to evaluate and develop our understanding of what liturgy is (para 10).
- Pastors need to realise that more is required than observance of the laws. They must help the community participate "knowingly, actively and fruitfully" (para 11).
- The spiritual life is not confined to liturgy but includes our personal prayer which is the outflow of our meditation on the scriptures (para 12).
- Popular and local devotions should not cloud, or take from, the importance of the role of liturgy (para 13).

The remaining sections of the CSL develop these principles.

diocesan renewal

It was understood that the renewal of the liturgy in each diocese would go hand in hand with education in the scriptures. Study groups sprang up and for many this took the form of a focus on the Sunday readings. Some people were inspired to go further and looked for courses such as Introductions to both the Hebrew scriptures and the Christian scriptures. Books became available and there was a spirit of enthusiasm as people came to understand that the Word was truly alive and active in the community.

enthusiasm

That the liturgy is the work of all was also received with enthusiasm. No longer were the laity to watch on while the priest recited ancient words and performed sacred actions. No wonder prior to the renewal people came to Mass armed with devotional books to allow them to fill the time prayerfully.

A change to the language of the people (what was called 'the vernacular') opened the door to deeper understanding and allowed meditation on the text: "... we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God". (Acts 2:11) The Māori language became recognised as one of our own unique liturgical tongues.

Changing to local languages also clarified our appreciation of the variety of roles. The priest became the presider over a celebrating community. Ministries evolved primarily in the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

It was taken for granted that ministers would undertake training for such important work.There grew up around the core more communitarian involvement. People became more conscious of other roles and participation grew.

The renewal of the triduum helped restore the commemoration of Easter to its rightful place at the heart of the church's year.

use of metaphors

I found that reflection on the metaphors of 'source' and 'summit' was a way of helping the community to enter into a way of seeing liturgy as more than an engagement in tasks; rather a participation in an action with a mystical dimension. We New Zealanders can relate easily to the strength of these images as mountains, springs, rivers and the sea are part of the spirituality of our place.

> The angel then showed me the river of life-giving water, clear as crystal, which issued from the throne of God and of the Lamb. On either side of the river grew the trees of Life which produce fruit twelve times a year, once each month: their leaves serve as medicine for the nations. (Rev 22:1–2)

The cosmic song of praise is just emerging in our consciousness.

education in spirituality

Education in an appreciation for our spirituality opened the gates for a renewal of our understanding of prayer. As we understood that faith was more than a content, so saying prayers was but a small part of praying. Many became interested in the Divine Office also called 'the Prayer of the Church'. There was an abundance of books on prayer. We rediscovered the writings of the great saints Augustine, Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, Gertrude and discovered names like Thomas Merton, Teilhard de Chardin, Evelyn Underhill and many others. Their writings became sources of life and hope.

While the deepening of our own spirituality was a great enrichment of our lives and spilt over into liturgy, I believe that it is only now that we realise that the missing element is the spirituality of liturgy. "Spirituality is understood as faith, lived in love, sustained by hope." (Wilfred Harrington OP)

developing CSL principles

CSL's chapter two is devoted to 'The Most Sacred Mystery of the Eucharist' but I believe that this was treated to a great extent by an emphasis on theological understanding and less on its spirituality. This could be a factor in the loss of attachment to our Sunday assembly. The inherited theology was also wanting in that it had perhaps assumed, rather than clarified, a unity between liturgy and life. Theologians have since provided us with a more nuanced theology of liturgy. The New Zealand contibution has been particularly helpful.

It was the development of these principles that allowed communities to understand the changes as they worked through and with diocesan guidelines to develop a meaningful local liturgy.

The NZ bishops in their dioceses embraced the call to renewal in their dioceses and began a process of helping all in their care to take to heart the call to meaningful participation. Individuals were educated as leaders through centres of liturgical education set up in some parts of the world. On their return they shared the fruits of their study. I experienced the work of the Carlow centre in Ireland and of Boston College in the USA. Both centres taught through actual planning and participation as well as theory. Parishes sent to local diocesan centres people who then returned to spread the word. Bishops invited liturgists, scripture scholars, and musicians to come to our country and share with us.

People became leaders in the music ministry and the work of such as the Medical Mission sisters and the monks of Weston Priory soon became part of new repertoires. This was followed by an abundance of hymns with words which carried the new liturgical understandings. Parishes learned to select music appropriate to the season of the church's year.

CSL chapter seven is entitled 'Sacred Art and Sacred Furnishings'. We learned that the building should reflect the action of the eucharistic liturgy. Three pieces of furniture were anchors of the celebration. The altar, the ambo/lectern and the president's chair. Personal or local devotional items such as statues or images were to be located in a space suitable for the purpose. These changes were nesessary to enable all to focus on the eucharistic action. Such furnishings as hangings, candles, vessels were to serve the action, adding beauty and cohesiveness but not intruding.

While the spirit of the period was one of enthusiasm, for some it was a painful letting go of favourite aspects and parishes through their priests and councils had to provide support during that time of change.

Recently the momentum of renewal has been lost. Our own tongue is losing ground to 'romanised' English. There is a loss of participation not only in liturgical ministry but in the celebration itself. Our culture is less evident. For me this is a time of mourning, for reflection on loss. One sign of hope, for there is always hope, is the biblical myth that out of chaos comes new creation. In this fallow time we wait and watch for the stirrings of a new springtime.

This deathless spring, hidden in living bread,

Brings life to us who, lacking it, were dead.

For it is night....

This living spring, so very dear to me,

Is here, within the bread of life I see,

Though it is night.

Song of the Soul that rejoices to know God by faith. John of the Cross ■

Patricia Stevenson, a Sister of St. Joseph residing in Motueka, is a writer, and facilitator of parish groups.

heart speaks to heart

A former student of Avery Cardinal Dulles SJ sketches the life and works of one eminent 20th century American theologian.

Stuart Sellar

There is a photo of Cardinal Avery Dulles that I find incredibly sad. In this photo he is gaunt and crippled, hardly able to speak. As for sitting down as the Pope greeted him, that would offend his gentle sensibilities and good manners. Yet even in this photo his spirit is not diminished. In his eyes you can still see the sharp-witted, highly intelligent man who served the English-speaking Church through teaching and especially through his 27 books and over 800 articles, the scholar who taught at Fordham University in New York for the last 20 years of his life. So, despite his physical disabilities, I can still see the priest I came to know and admire.

student at fordham

I came to know Fr Dulles SJ in 1988 when I was studying at the Jesuits' Fordham University. Fr Dulles had recently arrived at Fordham after teaching at the Catholic University of America in Washington. At that time he was 70 years old but with a penetrating mind that stayed with him to the very end. We had been told by the Dean that we could approach anyone on the Faculty to supervise the writing of our thesis. As I looked around the different theologians in the university, I thought that there was nothing to stop my asking Fr Dulles to accompany me on this task. After all, if the very best is available, why not?

Pope Benedict XVI and Cardinal Avery Dulles

exploring 'revelation'

So it was that every two or three weeks I would climb to his office at the top of this lovely bluestone building, looking out over trim green lawns and the abundant trees of the inner campus. There for much of the time we explored the implications of one chapter in his book *Models of Revelation*. For him the word revelation meant much more than the teachings and creed of our faith, though it certainly included them. To him there was real significance in the original meaning of the Latin word *revelare*, to unveil, so that he understood revelation as a progressive unveiling of mystery; the mystery of Christ who in turn unveils the mysteries of God.

There was one part of this book that fascinated me, where he dealt with revelation through the power of symbol. Dulles made a clear distinction between signs and symbols. For him, a sign had a clear unambiguous meaning that was widely known and accepted within society, such as a red traffic light at an intersection. On the other hand, in line with the writings of philosophers such as Paul Ricoeur and Mircea Eliade, he understood that a symbol has a depth and multiplicity of meanings and cannot be tied down to one only exact meaning. For example, the scriptures use the image of fire, but fire can be a gentle light from a lamp to lead the way, or it can be a raging forest fire, a place around which people gather, or a fire to enkindle action, as happened at Pentecost. In other words, the symbol of fire is most appropriate to describe measureless mystery, such as the mystery of the Holy Spirit. As one writer put it, trying to understand mystery by reason alone is rather like trying to inspect a snowflake in the light of a blowtorch.

transformed by mystery

As people approach mystery symbolically they discover that in pondering it they enter a process of being transformed by the mystery so that it influences their behaviour. That is why Blessed Cardinal John Newman, took as his motto, "Heart speaks to heart." It always intrigues me that such an intellectual should choose this image of the heart, but he did it because he knew that the depth of mystery is best comsmunicated through symbol.

a life

As our meetings progressed, Fr Dulles was reluctant to talk about himself, though in his autobiography, *A Testimonial to Grace*, he did write about his life. Many of his forebears had been Presbyterian ministers and others were involved in politics. In fact, Fr Dulles' own father was John Foster Dulles, the US Secretary of State to President Eisenhower. As a child Avery was not at all religious. Most of his early education was in private schools including one in Switzerland where he became fluent in French, something that would later prove to be very useful. Then came the beginnings of his university career, studying at the Harvard Law School.

One winter day in 1939 as he walked beside a river he looked closely at a tree in bud. At that moment he came to a profound awareness that would change his life. He explained it this way, "The thought came to me suddenly, with all the strength and novelty of a revelation, that these little buds in their innocence and meekness followed a rule, a law of which I as yet knew nothing . . . That night, for the first time in years, I prayed." He had experienced the power of symbol, a bud, unveiling mystery. No wonder he loved the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, with lines like, "The world is charged with the grandeur of God," and "Christ plays in ten thousand places, lovely in eyes, and lovely in limbs, not His."

becoming catholic

The following year he became a Catholic but his studies were interrupted when the United States entered World War II after Pearl Harbour. He joined the US Navy as an intelligence officer, with special responsibility for liaison with the French forces. His study of French at that school in Switzerland allowed him to communicate easily and effectively, so much so that the French Government later invested him with the Legion of Honour.

In 1946, Avery joined the Society of Jesus where he began his long preparation for ordination in 1956. Postgraduate studies followed in Rome at the prestigious Gregorian University. His graduation with a doctorate in theology marked the beginning of his theological teaching, spanning 48 years. At the time of Vatican II he had only recently completed his doctoral research, so he never contributed to the Council's work, though in subsequent years, his writings helped readers understand the meaning of conciliar documents.

dulles by name . . .

For someone with such an agile mind his lectures were dry and lifeless, so much so that students used comment that he was certainly true to his name. However, in a tutorial or individually he would use a Socratic method, asking questions that would lead students to discover the answer for themselves. As a fellow student once described it, he would take your argument and then through questioning lead you further and further into its implications, and then would come the master stroke – 'Is that where you want to be?' He was always an explorer into the deeper mysteries of the faith though as he wrote in *The Reshaping of Catholicism*, "a measure of conservatism is inseparable from authentic Christianity."

made a cardinal

To everyone's surprise Fr Dulles was named a cardinal by Pope John Paul II in 2001. Normally it is an office bestowed on eminent archbishops, but in recent times the cardinal's hat has been conferred on theologians who have made a significant contribution to the church by their scholarship. That is how everyone saw it, and also as a recognition by Rome of the important part he played in keeping communication open between the Vatican and some Catholic theologians in the United States.

As a young man, while serving in the Navy he had contracted polio which left him unable to walk, but the symptoms disappeared. However, they reappeared about ten years prior to his death, affecting his leg muscles, a condition that became progressively worse. Ultimately, his arms and throat were affected, leaving him unable to speak, yet he could still work his computer keyboard and his mind remained completely clear and active to the end.

Cardinal Dulles died on 12th December 2008. The final words of his 2007 farewell address to the University, read on his behalf by a former president, Fr Joseph O'Hare SJ, were:

"Suffering and diminishment are not the greatest of evils but are normal ingredients in life, especially in old age. They are to be expected as elements of a full human existence. Well into my 90th year I have been able to work productively. As I become increasingly paralyzed and unable to speak, I can identify with the many paralytics and mute persons in the Gospels, grateful for the loving and skilful care I receive and for the hope of everlasting life in Christ. If the Lord now calls me to a period of weakness, I know well that his power can be made perfect in infirmity. "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" ■

Stuart Sellar, a priest of the Diocese of Dunedin, is lecturer in pastoral theology at Good Shepherd College, Auckland.

the transfiguration

Luke 9:28-36 — Second Sunday of Lent (24 February 2013)

Kathleen Rushton

The bus went only so far. Then it was into taxis which swept around spine-chilling hairpin bends on the road winding up Mount Tabor. I gasped and looked down as we edged upwards. I longed to be walking up with Jesus and the disciples as I had in my prayer earlier that morning! Locals hold that the real reason the disciples did not want to leave the place was they did not wish to take the taxi ride down!

One can feel the aura of this sacred mountain where since the dawn of history people have experienced the sacred. Psalm 89 exclaims: "Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your name." The gospels do not name it but it is not surprising that tradition located the transfiguration there. From its summit, the mountains of Upper Galilee are seen to the north. To the east snow-capped Mount Hermon is visible in neighbouring Lebanon. To the south is a panoramic view of the plain of Jezreel bound by the Carmel range and mountains of Samaria. All the eye can see evokes biblical history.

mirror of our transfiguration

The transfiguration is a mysterious event in the life of Jesus. Cardinal Martini, (*TM*, Oct 12, published his last interview), helped my understanding when he refers to the apostle Paul's transfiguration rather than his conversion. The historical events of suffering in Paul's life led him through inner change to transfiguration. The cardinal makes this link to encourage each one of us to ponder our transfiguration.

Mount Tabor, Israel

Our point of reference is, of course, the transfiguration of Jesus: "And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became *dazzling* white." (Lk 9:29). Luke makes a link between this and Paul in his second book, Acts. The word 'dazzling' is derived from the same Greek word root as the word 'flashed' used in the story of Paul's conversion, when Paul "was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven *flashed* around him." (Ac 9:3). Here, enveloped by the glory of Jesus, Paul is being transformed into the image of Christ.

'The transfiguration' of Paul refers to the increasing brightness and transparency that occurs within Paul, in his pastoral ministry and letters. Nearly 2000 years later behind his words, we sense a living, breathing, dynamic, inspiring person. The transfigured Paul attracted people as he lived and preached. This was the fruit of a long winding journey of trial, suffering, constant prayer and confidence.

Paul's transfiguration gives us a mirror with which to compare our own transfiguration for Christ's transfiguration has touched us too. The Greek Church uses it to describe what happens to Christians through the on-going integration of our baptismal gifts — we are transfigured into Christ. Paul has three inner attitudes and two modes of action that are typical of this kind of transfiguration.

three inner attitudes

In all Paul's letters, we find the first attitude of a *great inner joy and peace* even in conflict: "I am overjoyed in all our affliction." (2 Co 7:4). True joy deals with difficulty, burdens and unpleasant things (2 Co 4:8-10). Paul seems to be melancholic in temperament and subject to depression and discouragement. Something much stronger emerges in him. His is outward going joy: "We are workers with you for your joy" (2 Co 1:24). The Philippians community is his "joy and crown" (Phil 4:1).

Flowing out of the first is the second inner attitude. Paul has a *great capacity for gratitude.* He often combines joy with thanksgiving (Col 1:11–12). His letters begin with a prayer of thanksgiving. In what are most likely the first words of the New Testament

to be written, he wrote: "Grace to you and peace. We always give thanks to God for all of you" (1 Th 1:1–2). Through his transfiguration, Paul is gifted by God to see the good first and value the positive in the community to whom he is writing even though later he does address negative things that need to be said.

The third attitude is *praise.* Paul continues the praises of the Jewish tradition of blessings which he expands to encircle every concern of the communities: "Blessed be the God … of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing…" (Eph 1:3). Although we find prayers for intercession, his first spontaneous expression is praise even in his darkest moments (2 Co 1:3–4).

two modes of action

The first mode of action that indicates Paul's transformation is his *never-ending capacity to bounce back.* On the very day when "a light from heaven *flashed around* him" and he went on into Damascus where he preached, he had to flee. On he goes to Jerusalem, preaches and is made to leave. He stays in Tarsus until he is called back. Again he has to leave. In Lystra, he is stoned. In Athens, he is humiliated and mocked. He leaves to go to Corinth. He begins and leaves over again. No matter what happens, Paul is convinced: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit…" (Rm 5:3–5).

The second mode of action, *freedom in the spirit* brings Paul to a place where he no longer acts through external pressure or conformity. He has a sense of total belonging to Christ which gives him the freedom to love and serve his sisters and brothers (Ga 5:1–13).

our transfiguration

By looking at Paul's transfiguration — his inner attitudes of *great inner joy and peace, capacity for gratitude* and *praise* and his modes of action, *never-ending capacity to bounce back* and *freedom in the spirit* — we see, as in a mirror, the possibility of our own transfiguration into Christ through the on-going gifts of our baptism on our long winding journey.

In Lent, we climb with Jesus and the disciples up Tabor where "a cloud came and *overshadowed* them" (Lk 9:34) and us. We see new possibilities. In the biblical tradition "cloud" indicates the nearness of the unseen God (Ex 13:21–22). The first time Luke used the word "overshadow" was the "overshadowing" of Mary by the Holy Spirit to bring about her conceiving of Jesus (Lk 1:35). We, too, are "overshadowed" and conceive Jesus. ■

Kathleen Rushton is a Sister of Mercy working in adult education in the Diocese of Christchurch.

Prayer is . . .

A facebook friend Patrick Harris asks, "If God can't intervene in earthly affairs, what is the point of prayer? And if he can, why is there suffering?"

Given that I don't believe in a super-being he-God who arbitrarily alleviates suffering for the select, the question remains 'what is the point of prayer?' Here is my answer this day [and I'm aware some of these paragraphs contradict each other].

Prayer is noticing how big and beautiful the world is, the significance of it all, and being swept into it all.

Prayer is being aware of our links to one another. We are all cousins, for better or for worse.

Prayer is like thinking: I have no idea really when I'm doing it or why I'm doing it. Indeed prayer is more like 'being it' rather than 'doing it'.

Prayer is like dancing: a movement to match a rhythm. Prayer is not about achieving something but being in step, being in time, with no thing.

Prayer is like breathing: inhaling goodness and exhaling fear and enmity. It is an act of hope.

Prayer is about speaking up for what seems right, enduring criticism, and learning how to stand against the prevailing wind.

Prayer is about waking up and believing we can make a difference; then going and being that difference. ■

- Glynn Cardy

psalms renewed

Psalms: Songs from a Pierced Heart

by Patricia Stevenson rsj

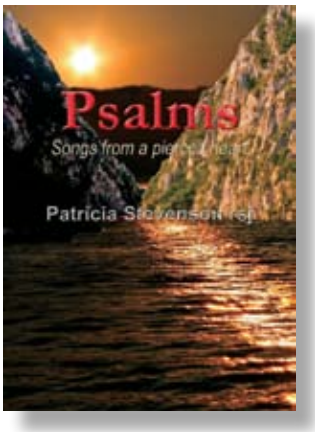
Published by: see advert p23

Reviewer: Teresa Hanratty rsm

Psalms: Songs from a pierced heart is written by Patricia Stevenson, a New Zealand Sister of St Joseph, who has worked with adults in both Australia and New Zealand in group development, facilitation, spirituality and liturgy. It is a book which plumbs the depths of human emotion expressed in the ancient biblical literary genre of the psalm. These contemporary outpourings of anguish and comfort, despair and hope, are forecast in the subtitle as 'songs from a pierced heart.'

One psalm that impacted strongly on me was the new look Psalm 51 with six verses:

Have mercy, gentle God.
Let the waters of your grace wash over me.
You see me for what I am,
your justice reveals my inadequacies...
The gift I bring to you is a spirit
once broken,
now healed by your love.



This rendition of Psalm 51 is in contrast with the much longer biblical psalm which emphasised our sinfulness from birth, our brokenness, and our transgressions. The 'broken spirit' is still there and the good news is that our spirit is healed by God's love.

I recall from my novitiate days that Psalm 51 was of sufficient length for us to recite it in full as we processed from the chapel to the dining room for lunch on a Friday. It took the edge off my appetite to be reminded so forcefully of my inadequacies. Nowadays I would prefer to sit with my sandwich and speak the words written by Patricia.

The illustrations in *Psalms: Songs from a pierced heart* are by Donald Moorhead. They are in the form of mandalas, circular drawings potent with significance. I particularly liked the illustration on page 53 showing a small shoot arising out of a crack in the ground. It seems to promise hope to the cracks in Psalm 60 on the opposite page:

You have broken down my defences, God.
Help me repair the cracks before I fall apart.
I have experienced hardship and pain
and I feel bewildered.

I would love to see Donald's illustrations in colour.

When I first opened *Psalms: Songs from a pierced heart* I looked for a contents page. There is no contents page but I soon realised that the numbers at the top of each page refer to a particular biblical psalm on which the modern psalm is based.

Psalms: Songs from a pierced heart was first published in 2003. The new and enlarged edition was published in 2012. It is a precious resource for prayer and reflection in the midst of the challenges of modern daily life. It could be used for personal prayer, in a prayer group or in a liturgical context. It has the capacity to stimulate one's own heartfelt outpourings in the form of contemporary psalms. ■

in the river's embrace

How Far is Heaven

Directors: Christopher Pryor and Miriam Smith

Reviewer: Paul Sorrell

How Far is Heaven is about the coming together of two worlds — the Māori community at Jerusalem/Hiruharama on the banks of the Whanganui River and the Sisters of Compassion who have maintained a presence there for 120 years. Today there are only three Sisters left. Sr Margaret Mary, a teacher in the village school, is earnest, hardworking, compassionate and dedicated to her young charges. Sr Sue, who carries on their founder's interest in cooking and gardening, is warm and relaxed, with a gift for supporting people by simply getting alongside them. Ninety-four-year-old Sr Anna Maria is a living reminder of the Order's long presence in the community, and her unhurried yet determined approach to life reflects the world around her.

What stands out about the film is its simplicity and lack of pretension. The big names associated with Jerusalem — Mother Aubert, James K. Baxter — are all but passed over, and instead we are offered a privileged insight into the lives of the small and humble. Nevertheless, one of Suzanne Aubert's sayings, shown after the credits as a kind of epigraph, suggests that what we are about to see is a work in progress: "It is by loving that we learn to love." The film shows the Sisters as a loving presence in the community, represented mainly by the children.

towards an indigenous theology

He Puna Iti i Te Ao Mārama: A Little Spring in the World of Light

by Pā Henare Tate

Libro International
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Price: S75-00

Reviewer: Bishop Peter Cullinane

E te amorangi, e te tuakana, e Henare, tukua rā aku mihi aroha ki ā koe, otirā ki tēnei tākoha nui kua tukuna ki ngā tai e whā.

Pā Tate's aim is ultimately pastoral: Māori people are crying out for a form of Christianity that is 'theirs' (13,227). He is right. Evangelisation falls short of its own goal if what it offers leaves people feeling like guests at someone else's place. The issue here is inculturation, and it is disappointing that in spite of the Second Vatican Council, official recognition of this urgent need has been grudging and lame.

The author's method involves research into key concepts of Māori tradition, then creating from them a coherent world-view, and only after that, introducing the Gospel. The need, he says, is for Māori to 'make sense' of what is already theirs so as to dialogue more fruitfully with what comes from elsewhere, namely the Gospel.

Pā Tate researches the key concepts of Māori thinking as they are evidenced in traditional rhetoric, song, stories and custom, and as he has learned them over the course of his own life, and across the spectrum of different *hapū* and *iwi*. His work was a doctoral thesis and so it has the hallmarks of academe about it. But it is genuine scholarship, and I suspect it will come to be regarded as an authoritative reference work.

The concepts themselves, as Pā Tate explains them, bear a gratifying resemblance to ethical requirements of Judaeo-Christian faith. Likewise, the profound unity, even communion of life, that binds individuals, the community, the ancestors and future generations together, and that unites God, the people and the land, seems a remarkable foreshadowing of the Gospel. After all, "in Christ" the whole of creation, human and cosmic, is united.

It is fundamental to Pā Tate's thesis that a Māori Christian theology must be "sourced" in Māori religious and cultural experience (23). For this reason, some readers might have welcomed a fuller explanation of the part to be played by what has to be "imported" for Māori theology to become Māori Christian theology. The need for a clearer indication of this is heightened by some references that give rise to further questions. For example, Pā Tate queries the "presumption that something needs to be introduced into an indigenous situation, rather than the indigenous theologian finding the meanings that will be integrative and liberating for them in their own culture" (27). Let's remember that even Hebrew religious and cultural experience could not adequately 'source' or articulate what the Christian community would need to say after Jesus' resurrection. The bottom line for all of us (Māori and Pākehā) is that Christian faith is rooted in events that took place elsewhere and in a different culture, and we come to it 'through hearing'.

Pā Tate's presentation is intense, but very clearly set out, and is accompanied by extensive footnotes, a glossary and a significant bibliography. An index of subjects would have been helpful, all the more because this will be an important reference work. It is rewarding reading for those who find joy in the discovery of all that is true, right, noble and good. ■

We see most of Sr Margaret Mary in the classroom, but two of the children, DJ and Chevy, are also developed as characters. The children are a lively, cheeky bunch, but darker stories of family violence and gang influence are hinted at.

The filmmakers spent a year at Jerusalem, observing the community through the changing seasons. We see pigs being butchered, horses herded, cattle driven, and kids playing in the river. We also see the Sisters working, relaxing and praying together. Ironies abound. Stopping to admire a waterfall coursing down a bushclad hillside, DJ exclaims, "That's just like in Avatar." After the pupils have been asked to write down their dreams in life, the film cuts to a scene where village women are being asked to sign up to an Amway-type scheme peddling a 'French' perfume called *La Rêve*. In another home, two boys are playing a shoot-em-up computer game called *Jerusalem*. At the same time, the children are discovering their own culture. They are (sometimes hilariously) well informed about the *taniwha* that lives under the bridge, and the gifts and dangers that the river presents.

This is not a romantic vision of Māori rural life. Instead, we are presented with snapshots of a community in all its contradictions and complexity. We are not asked to judge, but to question and consider. What do the Sisters bring to Jerusalem? According to Sr Sue, "At a major level they do not need us." Yet it is clear that they are accepted and valued by the *tangata whenua*. As Sr Anna Maria remarks, "What is is what's important." Rising above all the questions and problems that exist at ground level, the camera repeatedly cuts away to reveal the village embraced by the great slow brown river winding though bushclad hills. ■

Crosscurrents

Jim Elliston

leadership

A few months back leadership of the Labour Party was in the spotlight; for some years now so has leadership of the Catholic Church.

What constitutes effective leadership? We tend to think in terms of 'following the leader', but some leaders inspire people to act from inner conviction. Leadership implies movement. Movement has three major components: a starting point, a goal, and rate of change. If the starting point is faulty the movement will be futile, no matter how valid the goal. If the goal is not perceived as desirable there will be no followers. Unless the leader can induce people to accept the rate of change, failure is inevitable.

Dictatorships and oligarchies aim to maintain the status quo for their own benefit. The revolutionary wants instant change — by force if necessary. The populist's goal is personal glory. They all lead through deception. The honest leader articulates the goal, together with practical steps to achieve it, in a manner that evokes a response in people's hearts. Practical concern for opponents' views is vital.

In other words, leadership for positive change requires a clear vision of the desirable goal, a realistic appreciation of the current perceptions of those one wishes to lead, and an effective strategy to bridge the inevitable gap between these perceptions and reality. This gap is frequently overlooked; moreover, the leader can confuse perception and reality, so the starting point is faulty. Sometimes a significant event, such as the Indian rape-murder tragedy, or the ongoing clerical paedophile scandal, can trigger an attitudinal change in an influential group that eventually pressures leaders to effect an institutional change.

Leadership, whether political or religious, requires attention to those three components. To be effective, change must be accepted. Mere conformity, for whatever reason, breeds contempt for both the authority imposing it and the message. Exhortations, unless backed by credible explanations and an overall strategy, are a waste of time.

Four men in particular, born between 1810 and 1817, stand out for me as leaders with relevance to both politics and evangelization in 2013. They were all concerned with the living conditions of ordinary people. One is Karl Marx.

google glasses

What do 'Google Glasses', Karl Marx and the New Evangelization have in common?

It appears a new type of fashion accessory will soon be 'street tested' in the US. It is a mini display system in a flexible frame that carries a camera, microphone and computer. With it we can check e-mails, take photos, go on the internet etc. Wonderful is the ingenuity that produces such marvels generated for the voracious appetite of the consumer society! However, it behoves us to dig a little and see there is a dark side. That is where Marx comes in.

Marx (1817–1883) had the brilliant insight that people's nature is affected by the economy under which they live. His conclusion was that the correct type of economic system will perfect human nature, which he (mistakenly) held to be completely malleable. An essential step is the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' that will impose the system; this will bring about a self-perpetuating society (the state will wither and die) where work is fulfilling, and people are loving and productive. The final paragraph of the *Communist Manifesto* states: "you have nothing to lose but your chains" and "working men of all countries: unite." It is easy to appreciate how this vision appealed to both the exploited masses living in squalor and to idealists. Former leading English communist, Douglas Hyde, wrote that many converts were former Catholics seeking a movement committed to improving the living conditions of their fellow citizens. They rejected a religion that preached saving their soul through doing purely church-centred things.

Marx's error: human nature, though partly malleable, is fundamentally unchangeable. Thus his conclusions were illusory. His positive contribution was to show that social structures can be changed. Educational pioneers like Paolo Freire use the term 'conscientization' (consciousness-raising) to describe a process employed to help people discern the forces determining social structures.

The task of evangelization in our society must take account of the prevailing view of life whereby consumerism — the irresistible drive to seek solace by accumulating possessions — lies at the heart of the current socio-economic system. It is a form of addiction that shapes so many people's values.

a foot in the door

At the end of the second session of the Vatican Council Belgian Cardinal Suenens asked how it was possible to discuss the future of the Church when half of the Church was not even present. The Council agreed. Fifteen women were invited and allowed to participate in some of the working parties. This inspired one bishop to write the following:

Said Suenens in one *Congregatio*:
I'm weary of this *Segregatio*.
The *Patres* are churls,
Let's bring in the girls,
Though there's sure to be some
admiratio.

(*Patres* — bishops; *admiratio* — in this context, disapproval) ■

native title – aotearoa/new zealand

Robert Considine

Despite my familiarity with our colonial history, which I have been teaching in Treaty workshops for more than 25 years, I am still shocked at the level of criminality perpetrated against Māori by successive Governments from the 19th to the 21st centuries. The current Government's claim that '*no one owns water*' simply continues this reprehensible tradition. Governments continue to ignore Māori common law rights.

This is the legal position. The common law of New Zealand recognises the pre-existing property rights of indigenous people as a burden on the 'radical title' of the Crown. This is known as the legal doctrine of 'Native Title' and is part of New Zealand law.

In 1839 the British Government solemnly recognized as 'indisputable that Māori have title to the soil and to the sovereignty of New Zealand.' Māori Sovereignty and 'native title' were subsequently guaranteed and strengthened in *Te Tiriti* — the Treaty signed by most Māori.

Put simply, there was no change of property rights with the acquisition of sovereignty. By law Māori continued to own New Zealand — land, fisheries, forests, estates, water, foreshore and seabed — until that ownership is extinguished by statute. *This can be done only with the consent of the natives.*

Māori see land and water as one holistic entity.

All land and waters in New Zealand were once Māori property held in accordance with *tikanga* — customary practices. The British right to govern did not create or extinguish this property right.

Justice Chapman re-affirmed this position as early as 1847 by ruling that '. . . Native Title cannot be extinguished (at least in times of peace) otherwise than by the free consent of the native occupiers.'

The now discredited *Wi Parata* ruling in 1877 reversed earlier rulings which favoured Native Title by denying the existence of customary law which protected Māori rights and interests. The judge referred to Māori as 'primitive barbarians' and ruled that the Treaty was a 'simple nullity'.

Solemn Treaty commitments made to Māori were violated as early as 1841. This happened when the Crown introduced pre-emption (the power to exclude other Europeans from acquiring the discovered lands) into the Land Claims Ordinance which stated that "lands not actually occupied or used by the Māori belong to the Crown." This is in direct violation of Article 2 of the Treaty.

Customary law was resurrected in the *Ngati Apa* case (2003) (Nelson/Marlborough Foreshore and Seabed claim). The Court of Appeal stated: 'When the common law of England came to New Zealand its arrival did not extinguish Māori customary title . . . title must be lawfully extinguished before it can be regarded as ceasing to exist.'

Despite the fact that Māori won the case in New Zealand's highest Court we were sharply reminded that statute law (Parliament) can trump the common law (law made by Judges). In law, Crown title is superior to Native title. Parliament is supreme.

The water issue is not new for Māori. Māori proprietary claims go back to the 19th century. The (2012) Waitangi Tribunal interim report lists nine reports since 1984 which document Māori concerns about water and which made findings as to Treaty rights and interests in freshwater and geothermal resources.

New Zealand has a long history of sacrificing Māori interests in the interests of a self-serving, hostile, ill-informed majority. We can only hope that the iniquitous response by the Labour Government in 2003 to the favourable Māori ruling in the Court of Appeal over the foreshore and seabed, (Labour confiscated Māori property rights by statute) is not repeated by the National Government over the water issue in 2013. ■

Robert Consedine
www.waitangi.co.nz

a Mother's Journal

by Kaaren Mathias

[Photo: G Bayldon]

Tousled West Coast waves. *'The Frolicsome Tasman'* my 13 year old calls it. Wind races over the white caps at the Manukau Heads, and swoops blue, salty and exuberant all around me. We tumble out of the cars and whoop along the beach. Two families, a grandmother and a dog converging on Hamilton's Gap to see out 2012. The wind has chased away most other folk keen on a West Coast New Year's Eve. There are just a handful of us here.

At the top of the mega dunes sand whips and stings my legs. White tangled breakers stretch way out to sea. South of Awhitu, I can just see the bulky slumbering Mt Pirongia. Or is it the Waikato Heads?

Rohan and Isaac beat me in our sand-spraying race down the dunes. But Tiki the terrier is even faster than ten year olds. More legs I guess.

"Time for a swim!" Off race the four teenagers. Choppy, tangled, foamy, white surf joins the swirling wind and tumbles laughing kids. Splash, body surf, jump, dive. Sentinel adults stand thigh deep with a handful of T shirts and towel, intermittently herding the Invincibles back and back to the safer shallows.

Grandma stumps off to look at terns at the far end of the beach.

Emily and Jalori start on sand dribble castles. Supra-Gaudian, more Dr Suessian really in their extraordinary wobbly *Sagrada Familia* turrets. The big kids exit the surf laced with white doilies of froth. Shiver, huddle, then shake dry like Tiki the dog. *"Let's have a race to the rock pools!"*

Now the middle sized kids go for a tentative and very short swim. But they got wet. Tiki in excesses of deep joy races from rock pools to terns, to sand castles, to adults chatting in the sun. A blur of white happy fur. Meanwhile I run back and forth between car and beach and clusters of frantically happysandycold children, a crazy beach version of an air hostess bringing towels and sweatshirts and drink bottles.

A huge and urgent hunger descends and gathers eight children and five adults around a box of hearty cheese scones.

Driftwood hunting to build the fire is a ritual we perform too infreqeuently. It is generously rewarded with wind scoured treasures. The setting sun complexions us a golden claret. The manic wind picks up the vibe, slowing into a more contemplative space, now just tickling the tussock on the smooth skinned dune, Tiki too slows down, digs and finally settles into her warm black sandy hole near the fire. Before we eat dinner we wave 'good bye' to the sinking sun. We draw ourselves into a circle and share 'a Good Thing about 2012'. Travels to a new country, winning interschool races, a cool new job, a healthy grandparent, playing with a silly friend, Wednesday morning bike rides . . . Lots to be thankful for.

The fire burns high and then dies to a bed of hot coals.

"Find a damper stick, its all ready for cooking!"

Coals of a warm fire, and the patient act of cooking sticky dough glooped on the end of stick, stills and quietens us too. The smoke of a beach fire and smears of jam and butter (and a little black sand) make most things taste good.

Only two hours now until 2013. The wind is fully still. All urgency and haste dissipates. Night gathers and so does furry tiredness. In the dark we collect up jandals, blankets, sleepy children and sandy togs. We scatter sand over the embers of the dying fire. What's done is done. What's not done is not done. All will be well. Roll on Twenty Thirteen. ■

Kaaren Mathias lives and works in community health and development in North India with her husband Jeph and four children.