Tui Motu

InterIslands

Women in the Church

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The buried talent

The chance remark of a friend led me into a reflection I would like to share. Which, did I think, was the deadliest of the seven deadly sins? He suggested *sloth*. He was thinking of more than just dodging keyboard drudgery. More along the lines of Edmund Burke's famous dictum: that more harm is done by the inaction of the good than by all the machinations of the evil.

Take for instance the appalling scandal of sexual abuse in the Church, blown up afresh following a House of Commons investigation into the forced emigration of children from Britain to Australia and New Zealand in the late 40s. The Christian Brothers in Australia have once again been put in the spotlight, and serious questions have been asked about the connivance of people in authority. Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, in an important article, deals penetratingly with various aspects (*pages 18-20*) of this painful issue. One of these is the denial or avoidance which family members or those in authority may practice when faced with an accusation. People will instinctively try to protect their personal comfort zone when suddenly faced with the horror of sexual abuse. At worst they will turn a blind eye and so become passive collaborators. Or they will try to cover the issue up for fear of scandal: the perpetrator is protected with little consideration for the victim. What we are really dealing with is culpable inaction – the sin of sloth.

Recently we have been anguished by some tragic deaths, like the killing of the autistic girl by her mother (See *Postscript*, *p 32)*; or the suicide of the young boy for fear of being sent back to Mount Eden gaol. How many such cases would never have happened if the authorities had provided appropriate machinery for dealing with them before they reached the point of irretrievable crisis. *The Minister stated that everything possible was being done*, we hear – but was the real story that the problem had been set aside into the 'too hard' basket? Another case of sloth – at the price of human life.

I wonder whether the loss of vitality, of the evangelising spirit, which characterises some of the mainline Churches in our times, does not at root spring from sloth. The processes which the Catholic Church especially uses are often clogged by inertia and by fears of 'rocking the boat'. How many parishes, dioceses, administrative boards – indeed the corridors of the Vatican itself – need a good shake-up and the honourable, but rapid, retirement of time-serving personnel? The Second Vatican Council was an object lesson of the sort of revolution that can be achieved by extended debate, consultation, listening to the Spirit, and openness to change: in four short years the Church pulled itself up by its bootstraps out of its post-mediaeval slough – indeed from centuries of cerebral sloth!

Many of us foolishly hanker after the quickfix results achieved by a ruthless autocrat. Few applaud the slow but inexorable change wrought by the ponderous wheels of the democratic process. The collaborative, consultative model is unwieldy and tortuous – but it is often the only way a just outcome is achieved. We have been observing it taking place in the Beehive over recent weeks. The cartoonists and the pundits have a field day. But who of us would really want to change our democracy for the way Saddam Hussein runs Iraq or the iron fist wielded by Suharto in Indonesia for 30 years? We may accuse Mrs Shipley of many things – but never of sloth.

Inaction, passing the buck, procrastination, avoiding responsibility, turning a blind eye: sloth masquerades under many disguises. It surely qualifies as the most lethal of the deadly sins. ■

M.H.

Women in the Church

...building bridges, ...making connections

Mary Eastham

In her book, *The Transformation of Man* (sic), Rosemary Haughton describes two types of religious community: *formation* communities and *transformation* communities. The former is the community which gathers on a Sunday, as well as the community of our Catholic schools. It is a self-conscious community of people who want to live the Christian way of life. Therefore the three elements of Christian community are present: liturgy, community and ethics.

Transformation communities, however, are more difficult to describe because transformation is a process which is deeply personal and open-ended. In essence, one simply commits oneself to become the person God created one to be – and lets the Holy Spirit do the rest.

What do these distinctions mean to women in the Church? Women in the New Zealand Church are members of transformation communities, which may be readily identified by the causes they champion. They push the boundaries of the present social and political structures because they have a vision of the way things ought to be. They champion the rights of the poor and the disenfranchised, because they believe that the Earth and her resources belong to everyone. They push the boundaries on sexual ethics because they believe that God created human beings for intimacy, and strong, intimate relationships greatly enhance human being.

Women in the Church today are many things to many people: feminists, liberation theologians, ethicists, counsellors and spiritual directors, chaplains, teachers, mothers, sisters , friends. They are all bridge-builders toward new life in the new millennium. Indeed, they sometimes find that they themselves *are* that bridge: they make the vital connections for the rest of us. Their voices are many and various – as you will hear in this issue of *Tui Motu* – sometimes singing in harmony, sometimes not. But these are the living voices of transformation in our midst, and never again will they be stilled. ■

Happy Birthday – Tui Motu

With the September edition we begin our second year of publication. So, how does Tui Motu stand?

Currently the magazine is distributed fairly evenly throughout New Zealand, although there are a few places where our fame has yet to reach. Sixty percent of sales are in the North Island; overseas the magazine is read in 15 countries, mostly by expatriates. Our situation as an independent Catholic magazine is precarious but hopeful, with circulation steadily going up.

A Wellington reader writes: "Many wondered at the courage and vision which the launching of Tui Motu must have demanded. Yet in a short space of time it has become required reading for many in this country concerned to engage the world in the light of faith – filling a void rather than a niche". In the words of Paul: "we are treated as dying, yet behold we live... as poor, yet making many rich..." (2 Cor 6:9-10).

Each issue is the fruit of the hard labour of many people, of much creativity, as well as many hours of drudgery in front of the computer. As long as we can provide an informed, independent and prophetic voice within and beyond the New Zealand Church, that is what we are here to do – and we will be content. ■

letters

Why Married Deacons?

Historians and anthropologists say that we are living in a paradigm shift, a time of rapid and deep world change, that new values are emerging and that we need to find new responses for new challenges.

So it comes as a continued surprise to me that in some Catholic dioceses in this country we are going back to married deacons. Is this being true to "reading the signs of the times"? Why should we ordain these men to organise para-liturgies, funerals, baptisms, weddings, to attend the sick and do administration? These ministries are already being done – or could be done – by Religious and lay women and men.

The Church has already appointed parish assistants, parish teams, chaplains and spiritual directors to a multitude of such tasks: leading baptism and sacramental programmes, communion services and conducting retreats. Many already have theological, educational, catechetical or administrative qualifications for their specific ministries.

Why couldn't a parish assistant who has been taking couples through a baptism programme, minister the sacrament? If necessary they could be described as Extraordinary Ministers of the sacrament. Why ordain men specially to do this?

And it further confuses me profoundly that at a time when the majority of people in official ministry in the Church are ageing, we ordain men in their 50s or 60s to be deacons. I am sure these men can – and do – make a wonderful contribution to their parish without ordaining them.

I was delighted to read Bishop Pat Dunn's pastoral letter in May where he stated that *parish life must change dramatically* over the next few years.. and that he was increasingly convinced that *the Holy Spirit is at work in the confusion we find ourselves in*. The challenge is therefore for us to think more broadly and imaginatively.

Could we not invite and attract young women and men to work together and train for specific ministries? Some are already deeply interested in Christian spirituality, or in social issues, in teaching or pastoral care. Some have gained theological degrees. Are we prepared to experiment and invite, train and give responsible ministries to these young people?

If parish life is to change dramatically, we have to imagine and experiment with different ways of being Church rather than fall back on ordaining married deacons.

Katrina Brill RSJ, Province leader,
Sisters of St Joseph

An exclusive Church

A non-Catholic Christian asked a Catholic priest if he could confess his sins and receive absolution. I was present and I heard the priest say he could not grant absolution other than to Catholics, but could give him a blessing. The priest told me that Rome precluded non-Catholics from the sacrament of Reconciliation.

A Catholic friend in her 60s started attending an ecumenical bible study group and that led her to start going to the Apostolic Church. She still went to Mass. One Sunday the priest asked her publicly when they were having a cup of tea after Mass, if she had been going to the Apostolic Church.

She said: "Yes, Father, I have"; and the priest said: "In that case you can no longer receive Communion in the Catholic Church." My friend doesn't go to Mass any more and I can understand why.

I cannot see Jesus refusing forgiveness to a penitent or refusing His Body and Blood to my friend.

Lance Bardwell, Dunedin

30 pieces of silver

The positive reaction of Michael Nicholas (*Tui Motu* August) was good to see. However, he thought the final sentence of my review (*July issue*) cast doubt on the cogency of the author's argument and suggested a lack of balance in the review.

But Mr Nicholas did not quote my final sentence correctly. I said, "But the Serious Fraud Office and the head office of Inland Revenue looked at some dealings which the author condemns, *without finding the same cause for concern*." Mr Nicholas wrote: "...without finding fault with them."

I did not say that the fraud and Tax people gave these dealings a clean bill of health. No one was impressed from the ethical point of view, but the Fraud and Tax bodies found no breaches of the law. As regards imbalance the accusation comes from the selection of one sentence out of context. The sentence queried by Mr Nicholas is preceded by a reference to investors being paid out following court action for dishonest handling of their funds. That proves Dr Molloy's case on at least part of his allegations.

People might be impressed by Molloy's book in two different ways. Some might welcome it as identifying unethical and perhaps unlawful conduct by named people. To me, that is not its main attraction.

In the review I emphasised the principles rather than the alleged malpractice. I do not imply that Dr Molloy fails to nail down the allegations he has made: I am simply less concerned with that aspect. His statements of principle I support wholeheartedly.

This book is more likely to be read than texts or Law Society codes on legal ethics, so it serves a useful purpose in raising consciousness on these matters within the profession, and making clients aware of the standards they should expect.

Bill Mitchell,

'Worthiness' for Eucharist

Recently I have been involved in helping prepare children for Confirmation and First Holy Communion in our parish. I have often noticed that many people don't receive communion because they don't feel good enough: this mentality is easy to understand for those of us who grew up in the early 60s.

While it has bothered me that the very people who would benefit most from 'coming to the feast' feel this way, it occurs to me that the Catholic Church is subtly reinforcing the idea that one has to be well-prepared and 'in good standing' with God before receiving communion, in that First Communicants spend several weeks preparing for the big event. I am reminded that at the Last Supper Jesus shared the bread and wine among all his disciples, even those who were to deny and betray him. Surely it is more important that the Church emphasise community at our celebration of the Eucharist – and how much more so when we *all* share in the 'feast' of communion.

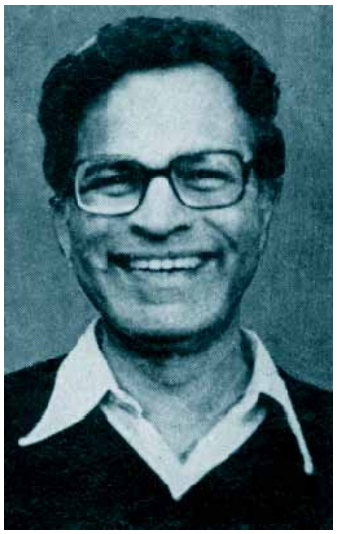
I look forward with hope to a time when there will be no younger age limit for communion for the same reasons. I well remember the pain of having to refuse my older children the 'includedness' of receiving communion when they had not yet reached the due age, especially when they were around three or four years old; then watching their eagerness to share in the celebration gradually dissipated as a result of frequent refusals. My two-year-old, who has had the great good fortune of having been baptised, confirmed and receiving communion at six weeks of age, certainly does not understand in a theological sense what she is doing when she receives communion on a Sunday, but the gospel story of the Last Supper suggests that the disciples didn't fully understand either.

Could we not continue to educate our children and grow in our own understanding of the sacraments without having the administration of the sacrament as its endpoint?

Karen Pronk, Nambour, Queensland

Rome condemns famous Indian writer

On 23 August the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* issued a *Notification* concerning the writings of the celebrated Indian Jesuit Spiritual writer, Anthony de Mello (1931-1987) along with a letter to Bishops' Conferences. The letter requested that Catholic Publishers be bidden not to print his works, nor reprint them; that his books be withdrawn from sale or at least the *Notification* with explanatory article be inserted in every copy up for sale.



De Mello's books have been religious best-sellers throughout the world, and before his untimely death he himself was in great demand as a Director of Retreats. In particular he popularised forms of centring prayer, especially through his book *Sadhana*. During his lifetime he was held in the highest repute and there was no public criticism of his orthodoxy.

The *Notification* states that his works (not all authorised by him for publication) "almost always take the form of brief stories (and) contain some valid elements of oriental wisdom. These can be helpful in achieving self-mastery, in breakings the bonds and feelings that keep us from being free, and in approaching with serenity the various vicissitudes of life. Especially in his early writings Father de Mello, while revealing the influence of Buddhist and Taoist spiritual currents, remained within the lines of Christian spirituality."

However, the document continues by noting "a progressive distancing from the essential contents of the Christian faith." Among the teachings attributed to de Mello which the document condemns are:

- in place of revelation in the person of Jesus Christ, he substitutes an intuition of God without form or image, to the point of speaking of God as pure void.
- a denial that the Bible contains valid statements about God. The words of Scripture are indications which serve only to lead a person to silence.
- Religions, including Christianity, are one of the major obstacles to the discovery of the truth.
- Jesus only differs from other men in being "awake and fully free, while others are not".
- Since evil is simply ignorance there are no objective rules of morality.
- The Church, by making the Word of God into an idol, has "banished God from the temple" and has consequently lost the authority to teach in the name of Christ.

The *Notification* concludes:"In order to protect the good of the Christian faithful, this Congregation declares that the above-mentioned positions are incompatible with the Catholic Faith and can cause grave harm. The Sovereign Pontiff John Paul II approved the present *Notification*.. and ordered its publication." ■

...three Wise Women

Last May Tui Motu profiled three wise men. This month we are balancing the picture with interviews of three women of the New Zealand Church. They illustrate three aspects of wisdom, different yet complementary.
Margaret Schrader is one who works to bring people together – the patient unifier. Sister Walburga is a tireless comforter of the afflicted – the woman of compassion. Anna Holmes is the prophetic challenger – 'valiant for truth'. All are women in love with the God whose Wisdom penetrates all things, all events and all moments

Margaret Schrader: A Journey into Oneness

spirituality Margaret sought a small community which would share her vision. She found it – unexpectedly – with two Catholic Sisters, Judith Ann O'Sullivan, a Dominican and Yvonne Munroe, a Josephite. The three work individually and as a team from the ground floor of Margaret's home. At the same time they have a larger network of people who come regularly for prayer and counselling, but who also provide support for the *Stillpoint* team.

"As regards my own personal ministry – I find many people right across the spectrum of Christian Churches are struggling with Church as institution. As they discover for themselves new ways of ministry or of worship, they may feel a 'wall of non-acceptance' from the institution. Often they are entering a more contemplative phase and perhaps they find the worship in their Churches too wordy, too noisy or possibly too masculine in language and imagery. At all events what they are seeking is a place where there is a community where they can worship freely and which will allow them to use their gifts. Some will leave their Church; others still feel they belong but they need something more. Part of the vision of *The Stillpoint* is to help provide people like this with a place of non-judgmental listening, where they can be honest with

Margaret Schrader – Celebrant and Spouse: With Warren at their granddaughter's baptism

Margaret Schrader is an ordained Minister; a few years ago she was Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa – New Zealand; co-founder of *The Stillpoint*, an ecumenical centre for spirituality in Palmerston North. She was born and brought up in Australia, coming to New Zealand at the age of 27 to marry Warren, a Presbyterian Minister – but also to take on a family of seven children, since Warren's first wife died when giving birth to twin boys.

Looking back on a rich and varied life Margaret sees it as a series of calls from God, often to move in an unexpected direction. One of these was the call to be ordained and serve alongside her husband in the ministry.

"God called me", Margaret says, "there was a definite impulse to change direction. It was a felt sense in my body, as well as seeming like a voice within me. It was the same when I was called to become Moderator. God was saying to me, 'I want you to become Moderator'".

"When I was ordained, Warren had already been Minister in the Wadestown parish for ten years. It was at the suggestion of the parish that we took up a joint ministry. Wadestown contained a strong, broad spectrum of belief. Warren and I were also quite different: he was an intellectual and I was at that time going through a more charismatic phase. We loved each other and respected each other's diverse viewpoints. So we were able to hold the parish together, since we modelled for them such a diversity of theology and ecclesiology."

After five years the couple moved to Palmerston North to work as consultants for the national Church. In 1989 Warren became seriously ill and died. This was a very painful time for Margaret and her family, and yet it was a blessed time since "as a family it made us become more honest with one another and share each other's pain; it brought us all much closer together". This experience of learning to work through pain with people has helped Margaret in her ministry, both at a personal level and during her time as Moderator.

Warren's death also occasioned another change in spiritual direction. "I felt moved away from an 'up front' ministry to a more contemplative life. It was quite gradual. It evolved – an organic process, growing slowly towards something quite new". The process was to lead to setting up *The Stillpoint*, a ministry of spiritual direction centred in her own home in Palmerston North. "At the same time I was on an inner journey of self-discovery, uncovering my own gifts and failings.

"While I was on study leave in the USA I remember being asked by the feminist theologian, Rosemary Reuther Radford, how I envisaged God. I had always felt God as a presence surrounding me, enriching me and loving me; so I said that I felt God as the *womb* in which I lived. Radford told me that this was a biblical image, and I discovered that the Hebrew words for 'womb' and 'compassion' come from the same root. The concept is like St Paul's when he says that in God 'I live and move and have my being'. Nowadays, for me God is just God – a presence I experience within me and recognise in all that surrounds me".

To help found this new ministry of

Margaret Schrader – The Stillpoint Community: Between Yvonne Munroe(l) and Judith Anne O'Sullivan(r)

Margaret Schrader – Moderator: with Korowai Tapu

themselves, with others and with God.

"Quite different from all this was the call to be Moderator of the New Zealand Church. I hated the prospect because I dislike conflict, and the Presbyterian Church was deeply divided at that time on the issue of homosexuality. At the same time I have always felt scared of very strong men. How would I cope with them? In the event I was nominated by presbyteries right across the theological spectrum, so it was a broad base of acceptance. In accepting the call I felt an amazing sense of God's presence, strengthening and protecting me. During the year I was Moderator I usually took either Judith Ann or Yvonne on visitation with me, from Northland to Southland visiting various presbyteries. Arriving in the company of a Catholic Sister sometimes caused quite a stir! It was a truly ecumenical statement!

I believe that any call comes out of one's own deepest longings and out of our own pain. When we minister in the community, in a sense our own longings are being met too; at the same time our own pain is revealed to us for healing. I have always had a deep longing that Christian people – *all* people, for that matter – can be enabled to talk to each other and indeed hear each other even across very radical divisions. My time as Moderator came when there was deep polarisation within our Church, and I was asked to set up a process to enable there to be dialogue. I had grown up in a family where there was little communication, so in getting people to express their deepest held beliefs and to listen to each other, I was attending to my own longings.

I believe it is possible to share and to talk to each other in spite of disagreements, so that we can still say together: 'we are one'. I sincerely believe we are all part of the Body of Christ, and need to learn to listen to each other with respect and dignity, searching for the new thing God might be wanting to say to us through those views we most dislike! That is at the heart of my ministry". ■

A Life of Compassion
...in the steps of Suzanne Aubert

At 80 years of age, after 60 years as a Sister of Compassion, Sister Mary Walburga is still busily working among the Maori people

Rose Marchand – before entering

In the Masterton parish, Sr Walburga faithfully follows the vocation Suzanne Aubert pioneered for her Sisters a century ago. *Always have a place in your hearts and homes for the Maori people*, she told them – and Walburga has spent much of her life living out that dictum.

But why 'Walburga'? The name too is a sort of link with Mother Aubert. The priest in Wellington who encouraged her to join the Sisters, Fr Creagh, had himself been a friend of Mother Aubert; indeed it was he who had persuaded her to give the nuns at Island Bay an early morning cup of tea to fortify them for their long hours of hard work. Fr Creagh had had a sister who took that name as a Benedictine, but who died young. So, at his suggestion the new novice was given it. "And I'm stuck with it," she says with smile, "I liked it from the beginning, since my mother was English". Walburga was a well-connected mediaeval English saint, the niece of St Boniface, the Apostle of Germany. "The old Sisters at Island Bay used to tease me because they thought it such a hilarious name: they'd call me 'Sister Wall-bugger!'", she added with a laugh.

Before she entered the convent she worked for a time in the school at Island Bay. She used to work as a volunteer on the van which went round Wellington collecting, and she soon began to appreciate the vivid memory which Suzanne Aubert had left behind. Sr Anne, one of Mother Aubert's very first recruits, was in the community and became a close friend. "Mother Aubert was a very understanding person. She took a personal interest in people. For instance, Sr Stanislaus told her that when she had been sick, Mother Aubert asked her what she would fancy, and she replied, 'A rosy apple'. They were out of season; nevertheless Mother combed the city until she found one to give her. Nothing was too much trouble".

Walburga was brought up with strong Maori connections: a great uncle and aunt had both married Maoris, and her father worked among the Maoris in Pahia and spoke the language. After her Novitiate in Wellington Sister Walburga was sent up to Jerusalem on the Wanganui River to teach in the Sisters' school there and also to be Procurator for the community.

"In Jerusalem I really became a Sister of Compassion. Jerusalem was everything that spelt Mother Aubert to me. The old Maori men all remembered her, and it was Mother Aubert who really established this sense of our 'belonging' to the Maori people. They became a part of you – and you became a part of their families. That was the way it felt then – and it still is". Throughout her life – in Porirua and now in Masterton – she finds connections with Maori families that she first became a part of in her early years in Jerusalem.

The life of a Sister of Compassion was hard work in those days, but Walburga loved it. "I've always been a 'doer'", she says. "You had to be able to ride a horse and a bicycle. The roads were either non-existent or very muddy. If anyone was sick we would go out and visit and sometimes spend the night out with a sick or dying person. My work wasn't confined to the classroom.

Rose Marchand – now Sr Walburga

"One afternoon I was listening with the children to an educational programme – and woke up to find it was past three o'clock. The children had kept quiet and let me sleep, because 'we knew you'd been up all night with a sick person and needed to sleep'. Another time Sister de Lourdes and I spent a whole night nursing a child with convulsions. The people went off to town to buy food for the tangi – they were convinced the child was going to die. When they came back and found the child had recovered they were amazed. We told them to use the food for a feast to celebrate the child's recovery!

"So it was by no means all teaching. Your life there was everybody's life; we were fully part of the community."

Sr Walburga had two spells teaching in Jerusalem, but she also taught the intellectually disabled children in Wellington and had a spell in Fiji. "I had a glorious time", she says. It never worried her to have a change of place or of work. "I had no regrets. I accepted that that was where God wanted me to be".

She has a great and abiding affection for the Maori people. "They are so kind and charitable. They do the sort of thing we would never think of. They are so spontaneous in helping their neighbours and sharing anything they are given. That sort of generosity is an everyday occurrence. You hear about the few who do terrible things. But the majority of the Maori people are not like that at all. I remember going into the house of a lady in Porirua and found her looking after a baby. The lady next door had had to go into hospital in town. She was not only caring for her baby, but was about to spend more than she could afford to go into town and visit the mother and take her some of their things. I was able to do that for her – but she never gave it a second thought, simply spent her money on someone else she hardly knew. And that's the way they are.

"The Maori people accept the Sisters of Compassion especially in the places where Mother Aubert worked. They expect us to be part of their lives. We *belong* to them. But they wouldn't think of becoming a Sister. They would sooner have grandchildren than see a daughter going into the convent!"

So where has God been in her long and eventful life? As a child Sister Walburga always felt close to God – although that didn't prevent her having lots of fun! Sometimes in her work she has felt lonely – but never far from God. "I talk to God especially in conflict situations, and God never lets me down. I soon feel at peace.

"And God continues to be close to me. I feel he's just *there*, especially in the beauties of the natural world. And in the people I work with. The Maori people have a very deep spirituality. They may not be great church-goers – but they are prayerful. Their prayer is quite informal. I asked one lady about a problem she was having. 'Have you prayed about it?', I asked. She replied: 'I've told God about it; he knows!'"

> the Maori people expect the Sisters to be part of their lives – we belong to them

Has she enjoyed her long years as a Sister of Compassion? "Like any other vocation it has its ups and downs. That's life. But for me it has been a happy life with many compensations for the hard work. Above all, the friendship of people. I have spent my life working among loving people. And it has been such a varied life – lots of different things to do. Teaching the children, caring for the sick, keeping the books – and coaching the swimming team! A very varied life."

And what of the future for the Sisters of Compassion? There are no vocations at the present time, but Walburga is hopeful.. "..because we are very close to the people. We have always been less restricted than other Orders. We were the first to ride horses – and the first to drive cars! We have always been in and out of people's homes – and their lives.

"Our work has changed. We do not look after babies the way we used to, because there is no longer the need. But the Sisters at Sussex Street, in the middle of Wellington, have developed a great apostolate among the migrants. It's a new phase for us. They go and visit them in their flats. The Centre is not just a soup kitchen. In the evenings there are gatherings for prayer. We have lots of volunteers, and they are also seeking to share our spirituality.

"No, we have a future. I am confident we have a future. After all, we are New Zealand's one home-grown congregation." ■

Tui Motu wishes to thank Sr Judith Anne O'Sullivan and Msgr Charles Cooper for their help with interviews respectively of Margaret Shrader and Sister Walburga

Valiant for Truth

Dr Anna Holmes claims a deep attachment to the Roman Catholic Church and its traditions. Which may come as a surprise to those who know Anna Holmes only as a trenchant critic of the institution and its leaders. Cate Honoré Brett explores the conundrum

Dr Anna Holmes (left),with friend and collaborator, Mary Woods

Heads turn when Anna Holmes walks into the bustling Christchurch cafe. At 56 she remains a strikingly handsome woman who carries herself with the rare self-assurance of a person comfortable in their own body. Olive skinned and fine featured, she dresses with the muted elegance typical of women in Italy and France.

Observers would be hard pressed to pick her as the harried doctor of a large sole-charge rural practice on Banks Peninsula: harder still to envisage her sweat-stained and exhausted in an isolated Bangladeshi medical centre where death is as routine as exhaling.

After 32 years in medicine, three children and four and three-quarter grandchildren, Anna Holmes continues to work punishingly long hours and to take her holidays in the most curious locations. Few middle-class women in their 50's would regard six weeks in an impoverished Asian village as a suitable antidote for the trials of modern life. But for Anna Holmes these locums offer a rare opportunity to re-connect with life's essentials.

Such perversity goes some way to explain why Anna Holmes has become such a formidable force for change within the Catholic Church in this country. Her cultured and at times overwhelmingly articulate tongue speaks with the authority of someone who not only understands her Church in an historical and intellectual sense, but one whose life is patently spirit-filled.

The daughter of an agnostic (nominally Anglican) British Naval Officer and a devout Catholic mother of Maltese/Scottish/French extraction, Anna recalls her first conscious experience of God as a five-year-old child living in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka: "It happened, believe it or not, in a Buddhist temple and I can quite vividly recall this overwhelming sense of the presence of God. From that moment I have never put my God in a box but have continued to have this sense of the presence of God among those labelled pagan or Muslim or whatever."

If Anna's spiritual initiation was unorthodox, so too was her early exposure to exegesis, theology and Church history: "I grew up in a family devoted to passionate debate and recall having my first theological debate with a Jesuit great-uncle at the age of 12 – it was about how you squared the creation story with evolution."

This "devotion to debate" combined with her own considerable intellect and commitment to the Church, has seen Anna Holmes play an active role in Church affairs – particularly in the critical area of medico-ethical policy. And it has also seen her form close and long-standing relationships with Catholic clergy.

as taught by the magisterium". Twelve months later on July 3 Anna Holmes once again dragged the Church's battles into the press announcing to the secular world that from hence forth dissent within the Catholic Church is forbidden by law. The press release went on to damn Pope John Paul II's June 30 letter, *In Defence of the Faith,* and the accompanying commentary prepared by the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. Anna Holmes ended with a metaphorical call to arms:
"The real defenders of the faith today are those who hear and keep the word which Jesus left with the Church – to live justly, to love God and our neighbour as yourself. This has nothing to do with legalism, power play and exclusion.

"Those who are least at risk from the oppressive response of the Church – lay people not employed by the Church have a moral responsibility to speak out. They need to keep asking the institutional Church why it continues to oppress and exclude people instead of spreading the Good News of God's encompassing love."

The depth of Anna Holmes' rage at the Vatican's attempt to keep the lid on dissent in the pews is palpable. Much harder to discern, though, is precisely why she continues to ally herself with an institution which she finds so disturbing: an institution she accuses of corruption and nepotism; of inhuman abuse of power; an institution she believes is nearing extinction.

In Bangladesh, at the Mission where Anne Holmes has done medical relief work

For Anna Holmes, as for thousands of Catholics of her generation, the answer goes back to Vatican II's revolutionary vision of a Church that belonged to the people: "The essential message of Vatican II was that the Church belongs to all of us and not to the Vatican and that message became totally imbedded in my psyche and will not be shaken.

"This latest Papal letter – and more especially the commentary by Ratzinger – is about the Vatican disowning those who dare to disagree. He speaks of dissenters 'no longer being in full communion with the Catholic Church' as if the true Church was owned by them and not by us. I don't believe that. I believe that it is a Church held in trust by all of us."

In saying this it should be made clear that Anna Holmes is not advocating that the Catholic Church should dissolve into an amorphous pluralism where each person's 'truth' is as valid as the next. She is not even advocating a fully democratic model where teachings are determined by a show of hands in the pews.

In fact it may come as a surprise to some of her critics to know that Anna Holmes lists among her core beliefs the infallibility of the Church and the sacramental traditions including the centrality of Eucharist.

"I believe the Eucharist is the essence of what Church is about because it's about feeding the body and the spirit; it's about hospitality and it's about recognising the love of God which belongs to us all, and those three things are absolutely central. But increasingly we are seeing the Eucharist undermined by the Vatican's culture of exclusion – it's determination to cast people out rather than enfold them."

One of her most compelling experiences of Catholic Eucharist took place on a hillside in Masai land in Tanzania where the people had travelled for miles around to attend a dawn celebration:
"The altar was a cow skin – the traditional cloth of the Masai – and most of the Mass was a dialogue between the catechist, who was a woman about seven months' pregnant, and the priest. They talked about the readings of the day and what that might mean for their people. The consecration was in the traditional form, but the Eucharist itself was shared by everyone from babies in arms to the very oldest members of the community because in the cultural context of that country to deny what is good to your children is inconceivable."

For Anna the two features which distinguish the Masai celebration from our own are the importance of dialogue between priest and people and the inclusive nature of the Eucharist:
"If you read the Gospels it's very clear that the spiritual growth both of the group around Jesus and indeed of Jesus himself was about dialogue with others. It was not about one man standing up lecturing a congregation."

She cites the example in Mark's gospel where Jesus is hounded by a Phoenician woman whose daughter needs healing but whom Jesus initially brushes aside because she is a foreigner and not one of the lost sheep of Israel. But the Phoenician woman insists that even the "dogs under the table eat the scraps",

But even the strongest of these bonds have been tested in recent years as Anna has become the highly vocal – and at times bellicose – spokesperson for *Catholic Women: Knowing Our Place*. Formed in direct response to the 1994 Papal letter on the ordination of women (*Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*) this loose knit group has become the vehicle for the international *We Are Church* movement with its Charter calling for renewal and structural reform based on the unfulfilled promises of the Second Vatican Council.

Careful and conciliatory in tone (almost to the point of obfuscation) the Charter is nonetheless a direct challenge to the Church's current position on a raft of critical issues ranging from human sexuality, the ordination of women and married priests and the exclusion of divorcees from sacramental life.

The Charter's public launch in July last year was interpreted by many clergy – including Christchurch Bishop John Cunneen – as a flagrant "rejection of the teaching of the Catholic Church

Anna and husband, Dr John Holmes, celebrating 30 years of marriage

and Jesus changes his mind and heals her daughter.

"This woman is the model for *Catholic Women: Knowing Our Place* because it shows the importance of dialogue in our spiritual growth and the fact that everyone – even those deemed to be outcasts – has a place at the table and something to offer."

Anna Holmes believes that in a desperate attempt to prop up an increasingly irrelevant and inappropriate power structure, the Vatican is turning its back on this liberating message of the Good News and is instead resorting to legalistic sophistry in an attempt to maintain control.

"I think what we have here is a very small group of men wanting to hold onto power at the expense of a much wider group of people."

Two things occur as a result: attempts like Ratzinger's to bully theologians, priests and lay people into mute submission over important questions of truth simply serve to further undermine the Vatican's credibility and further ostracise the faithful. Particularly when the matters which Ratzinger is attempting to close – like the ordination of women – are quite clearly *not* closed given that the Vatican's own Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1976 judged that "the Bible does not contain a ready answer to the question of the role of women in the Church or in society."

But the greater evil for Anna Holmes lies in the fact that by holding fast to its power the celibate male hierarchy is denying the overwhelming Eucharistic needs of the Church in developing nations:

"By refusing to allow married men and women to be ordained they are preventing these Eucharistic needs from being met and I believe that is not only inappropriate but wrongful."

And in Western countries like New Zealand the Church is reaping the seeds of its autocratic, hierarchical and exclusive culture in the form of shrinking and

Fourth birthday party of Catholic Women Knowing Our Place

ageing congregations and a withering priesthood.

"I actually think we are rapidly approaching the death of the Church as we know it. I have absolutely no doubt the Church will continue in a new form but I see no possibility of it thriving and regenerating within the current power structures.

"Although I have a deep sense of attachment to the Church and its traditions, including its sacramental traditions, I do not think you can escape the conclusion that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way the Church is functioning. The Church was founded to enable people to grow and develop as human beings, particularly as spiritual beings, and when it is not fulfilling those functions – when it is actually rejecting and limiting growth – then there is something very wrong."

Anna Holmes' advice to those who are "hanging in there" is: arm yourselves with a strong knowledge and understanding of Church history and structures so as to avoid becoming overwhelmed; find a place where you can be spiritually nurtured if this is not happening for you on Sundays; and never underestimate the untapped wisdom of the person in the pew beside you. ■

Cate Honoré Brett is North and South magazine's senior writer in the South Island

Land, Life and Human Rights more Precious than Gold

Michael Gormly

What can be done when powerful interests threaten poor isolated communities? Columban Michael Gormly reflects on a focused campaign to challenge a multi-national corporation

A protest rally in Midsalip, Philippines

rain, the rivers, the forests, the flora and fauna. Economic growth may promise improved living, but genuine development ultimately depends on people living in harmony with each other and their total environment.

After research, briefings and interviews in the Philippines, I am deeply convinced that the participation of local people in decisions touching their local domains is essential. In coming to terms with the global nature of market economies, local interests must never be trivialised. The poor already live with the mistakes and consequences of ill-considered incursions from outside. The campaign has raised awkward questions about the social and environment record of mining in Bougainville, Ok Tedi, West Papua and elsewhere. *Rio Tinto* is reminded that it has to live with the human and moral consequences of commercial decisions.

The network of non-government organisations (NGOs) with a sense of solidarity for the poor and a concern for the environment is a new source of encouragement. Citizens can play a crucial role in monitoring threatening situations and keeping corporations and governments aware of the likely abuse of collective power. They can evaluate companies not only by what they produce and their impact on the environment, but also how they contribute to sustainable community life, and how they protect or undermine the dignity of the human person. In partnership NGOs can create fresh initiatives for our common global future, sharing an agenda in pursuit of a just, sustainable and participatory human world. It means recovering the wisdom and spiritual values of respect, simplicity and harmony, and transforming institutions which do not serve the real needs of people and challenging those which serve limited interests.

During 1997 the response in Midsalip and Zamboanga intensified and broadened. A letter from Bishop Jimenez calling for corporate withdrawal was read out to shareholders at *Rio Tinto's* AGM in London. The deep felt opposition was conveyed to the company board by a coalition of NGOs from many organisations. More protest marches and rallies were held in Mindanao and across the Philippines. In February 1998 the prestigious Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issued a pastoral letter calling for the scrapping of the mining code and questioning the presence of the foreign mining corporations.

A doubt remains as to whether *Rio Tinto* will respect the local response and global advice. Profit for the shareholders is paramount. Fresh strategies may emerge when the price of gold improves. Meanwhile, the networks and coalitions maintain a watch on global corporate responsibility. I believe that if tensions and tragedies are to be avoided, moral values and ethical practices must inform transnational operations. The promotion and protection of standards related to a company's impact on the human community and on the environment seems a worthwhile missionary task. ■

From 1995 I began to hear a growing concern from colleagues in the Philippines: transnational companies (TNCs) were intent on developing mining concessions in ecologically sensitive areas – named in many cases as ancestral domains of tribal peoples. A sense of impending exploitation began to emerge from human rights, environment and missionary networks in the Asia Pacific region. The compelling concern was not for the investors or the market possibilities but the rights of the rural communities affected. A basic responsibility of a just economic global system is that nobody takes advantage of the powerless poor.

My concerns were heightened in mid 1996 when the parish team at Midsalip in Mindanao sought tactical advice. *Rio Tinto* (formerly the Anglo/Australian mining corporation CRA/RTZ) had won a mining concession on the Zamboangan Peninsula covering hundreds of thousands of hectares. Company officials were in town vigorously intent on winning community approval for activities over large tracts of indigenous land. Consultations were characterised by glossy presentations and technical assurances about world's best practices. Important human, social, cultural and spiritual factors were neglected in their scenario.

Mining companies work for their own short-term ends, with little regard for the traditions of local communities

Midsalip is a gateway to a hinterland of steep deforested hillsides that are lush in appearance but given to erosion. The poor condition of the land, plus uncertainty of tenure, means that rural people live at subsistence level, trying to rehabilitate small areas for farming as best they can. They barter a meagre surplus for extra income. A feature of local tribal existence is a deep spiritual relationship with the locality. The dominant peak, Mount Pinukus, symbolises sacred connectedness. The sky, mountains, trees, rivers and animal life are signs of a benign support system for the people. They speak of the surrounding hills as a giant protective spirit. The duty is to conserve the ancestral environment as best they can for generations to come.

Fr Michael Gormly, speaking on Human Rights

Reports from Midsalip emphasised threats to the cultural values of the indigenous Subanen people and their traditional territory. Elders repeatedly stated that large-scale mining development was incompatible with their needs and wishes. Outside interference by loggers had already caused economic uncertainty. The foreign quest for gold suggested nothing but ongoing tension. However, the community fears and anxieties received only a token hearing. Expatriate officials saw consultations as haphazard exercises in favour of the company. Given the approval of government in Manila, mining operations seemed inevitable.

The issues are complex and the players big. Development institutions, such as the World Bank, had spelled out a debt recovery strategy for the Philippines based on the country's mineral resources. The Ramos Administration sought to fast-track economic solutions by promoting a mining code aimed at attracting profit, tax breaks for the early years of operation, a halving of excise duties, long leaseholds and initial rights over unlimited areas. The matter was passed off as a business and investment coup by the Manila leadership.

Church personnel became key players in raising justice issues and placing ethics on the agenda. Missionaries were not just quoting Papal documents about life, social justice and human rights; they were willing to engage the issues. The six Catholic dioceses in Zamboanga joined the protest. Bishop Jimenez of Pagadian did not mince his words to President Ramos: *I am a witness to the calamities of indiscriminate logging. To allow foreign mining companies to take advantage of our natural resources for profit is highly questionable. The poor are in danger of becoming surface dwellers in their own country*.

Rural cultures and ecosystems in many parts of the globe face such threats from the expanding world economy. The pursuit of profit from remote resources is causing legitimate misgivings, especially when government regulation and protection is minimal. Globalisation is a reality rooted in technological development and free-market ideas. At the same time governments back off as regulators of powerful interests, and cease to be guarantors of the social compact. Mining companies wield economic resources matching the wealth of states, exacerbating the gap between rich and poor. The structures and operations are dauntingly complicated, with little identification with a country of origin or where headquarters are located. They work for their own short-term ends, with little regard for the traditions of local communities and future generations.

We all see merit in the creation of a cooperative and collaborative global community, but we need a world order grounded in wisdom and justice. When power and wealth seeks to control resources, unease is inevitable. From a perspective of faith, the context for all human activity is the totality of creation. The protection of values and rights is essential, so too a concern for the ter-

Unless the grape is crushed, new wine

a meditation..

The Christian life focuses sometimes on the 'now', some times on the 'yet to be'. Our energy may be taken up authenticating the hope of the reign of God in the here-and-now, while acknowledging that the *reign of God* is a gift beyond our control. We labour tirelessly to transform the world – and at the same time we wait with passion and with longing for true communion, which is more likely to be a painful self-emptying.

Praying with an icon like Rublev's representation of a Trinity of heavenly visitors is like good liturgy. Icons are sacred pictures which mediate mystery: they speak of the interiority of things and draw forth from us a contemplative stance. Likewise, good liturgy lures us into a sense of mystery – listening contemplatively to God.

Our religious imagination is being constantly prompted by biblical narratives. Rublev's icon represents the visit of the three strangers to Abraham and Sarah (*Gen.18:1–15*). They are angelic heralds of hope. Their haloes indicate they are divine messengers. This icon is often called the *Trinity* icon.

.. on sharing the eucharistic cup

In the *Genesis* text the meal that Abraham prepares for the visitors recalls many biblical meals in both Testaments (Elijah and the widow; Emmaus; the Last Supper etc). But in the picture there are surprising features. First there is a space at the table for a fourth person: the beholder – which is 'me' – is being summoned to become a participant at the meal. The three figures are in repose, waiting. It is a Eucharistic scene and it carries us forward in time to the heavenly banquet to which all are invited. Secondly, on the table there is no bread, only a cup. This is accentuated by the fact that the space between the three figures is also chalice shaped.

We are reminded of the scene where the sons of Zebedee ask for the best seats at the heavenly feast (*Mark 10:35-40*). Jesus replies: *Can you drink the cup that I shall drink, or be baptised with the baptism with which I shall be baptised?* Can you enter into the paschal mystery with me? Can you drink the cup of my Passion?

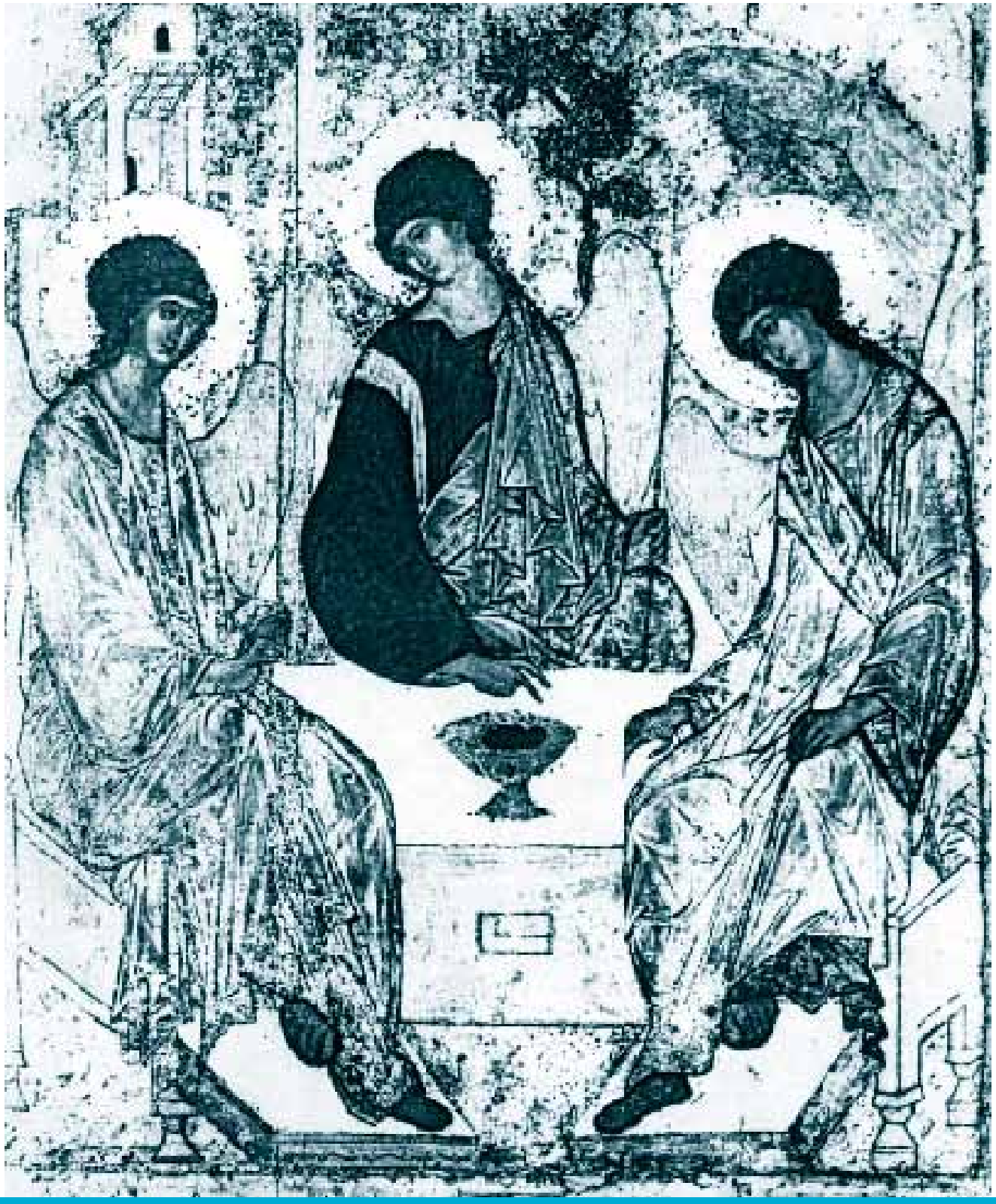
So, when we contemplate this icon we are being invited to set aside our human hopes and ambitions, to let go of our conditions, and to accept the reality which God is offering.

Sharing the Eucharistic cup was a common practice in the early Church. It went out during the Middle Ages when the focus at Mass turned more and more on the priest. Indeed the ordained ministers became separated from the faithful in churches by the construction of the rood screen. Communion became less frequent. For a thousand years the cup in the Catholic Church was denied to the laity. Pope Pius XII summed up this practice by saying that communion under both kinds by the laity was fine, but unnecessary (*Mediator Dei, 1947*). Vatican II pronounced that it was desirable everyone should participate fully in Eucharist. Nevertheless, since the Council cup-sharing still tends to be regarded as optional. The liturgical emphasis has tended to be distracted into carrying out the ritual tidily and safely. So how can such a profound spiritual challenge which Jesus uttered to James and John be made real in our rituals and in our Christian lives?

The Church should be an icon of hope to the world. Drinking deeply of the cup symbolises a determination to love life to the full – a response in the spirit of Jesus' own catchcry: *I have come that they may have life and have it to the full (John 10:10*). Peter attempted to deter Jesus from 'drinking his chalice' – and Jesus denounced him for his timidity. But the vocation of the Christian is to follow Christ passionately and in full communion. It is to drink and drain the paschal cup.

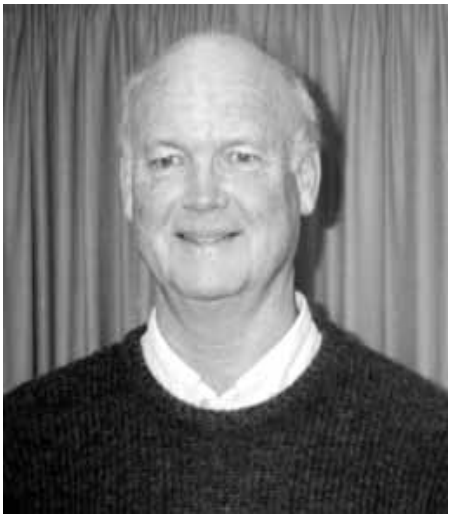
A last image to note is that the cup is in the shape of the womb. The crushed grape, like the seed in the earth, has to 'die' in order to bring forth new life. To drink from the cup is to partake in the mission of Christ to bring new life to a dying world. Contemplating the beautiful Rublev icon fills us with hope while reinforcing the radical nature of the Christian vocation. ■

e cannot come forth



The icon of the Trinity was painted by Andrei Rublev (1360-1430), most famous of all Russian icon painters

Are our Eucharist liturgies hopeful?



Neil Darragh, Principal of CIT Auckland, looks at an aspect of liturgy we don't reflect upon sufficiently: does liturgy help transform us into people of hope? This article is abstracted from a longer piece given at the Theology Symposium in Palmerston North last July and focuses on Eucharist. The second part of the paper – on Reconciliation – will appear in the October issue

Our experience tells us that liturgy can sometimes fail to be hopeful. It can express values which are unchristian, because they lead us towards idolatrous goals or dead ends. For example, the liturgy of Ordination is not hopeful when it suggests that the ordinand is now entering an exclusive or self-perpetuating club. Likewise liturgy is not hopeful if it is unable to change us. Baptism is not hopeful if the lifestyles of the baptised are in no discernible way different from the rest of society in which they live.

So what are our liturgies for – and how can we make them hopeful? A good deal of the liturgical reform over the last 40 years has been concerned with the *gathering* aspect, the assembly. Much less attention has been given to *sending people out* into the world again. The prayers we say are often clear that the respective liturgies are about being renewed, being granted salvation, eternal life, redemption, being more loving, etc. But these are general goals of Christian living anyway.

The point of having a variety of liturgies is that each kind can be specific in its goals and purposes. One very interesting thing about looking at the conjunction of *liturgy* and *hope* is that it forces us to focus on this *sending out* aspect – what are we sent out for, at the conclusion of our liturgies? What are we expected to be or to do?

In this article I shall focus not so much on the hopes of individuals, but on the hopes which are specific to the Christian community, as well as those which specify the Christian community's role in the wider society. In all that follows I shall be concerned with the application of these hopes to the specific case of Aotearoa New Zealand rather than to the world at large.

Some characteristics of liturgy

1. Liturgy is expressive of who we are as a Christian community.

2. Included is a statement of who we hope to become.

3. Successful liturgy is transormative: it not only expresses who we hope to become but it helps us to fulfil this hope.

4. Liturgy can be harmful if it encourages us to be hopeless or to follow false hopes.

These ideas are simply another way of expressing the traditional theological maxims that sacraments are acts of the Church; they cause what they signify and signify what they cause; and they can be invalid, illicit or unfruitful.

I want to focus our attention quite specifically on whether our Eucharist liturgies are *actually*, rather than just intentionally, hopeful. My basic presupposition here is that Eucharist as a Christian liturgy is intended to bring about a *transformation* in the Christian community – and in the larger society of which the Christian community is a part. I further presuppose that the transformation intended in the liturgy of Eucharist may be summarised in contemporary form as a transformation of:

1) our *economic relationships* (based mainly on *1 Cor*. 11:17-34, and the connections between the Last Supper and the feedings of the multitudes in the synoptic Gospels)

2) our *social relationships* (based mainly on Jesus' last discourse and prayer in *John*, esp. 13:31-17:26)

3) our *political relationships* (based mainly on the washing of the disciples' feet in *John* 13:1-20, and *Luke*'s presentation in 22:24-27 of servanthood at the Last Supper)

4) our *ecological relationships* (based mainly on the Last Supper accounts in *Mark* 14:22-25; *Matt*. 26:26-29; *Luke* 22:15-20; and *1 Cor* 11:17-34 that use bread and wine (ie. non-human bodies) to ritualise the union between the divine and the human).

• In the wider society, where there is significant emphasis on accumulation, self-interest and competition, the Christian mission is likely to consist in advocacy for state-managed redistribution of wealth and specific options for the poor. It will be concerned to establish national and international institutions that seek to change unjust structures and that seek a more equitable distribution of wealth.

• Be alert particularly here against trends that increase the disparity between rich and poor.

The Transformation of our Social Relationships

This will have occurred if we can embody the *values of unity and love* in our communities.

• This would involve us in a style of interrelationship and organisation based on cooperation and mutual respect. We would seek to establish Christian communities, networks, and institutions of cooperation and consensus that include agreed ways of both reconciling and holding to account.

• In the wider society it will engage the Christian community as witness to the possibility of love and unity among people in the world. The Christian community would seek to become a kind of living experiment of the interpersonal and inter-group strategies which make this possible.

• Be alert particularly here against discriminations towards people who differ from us in race, gender, or ability (hearing, sight, health etc).

The Transformation of our Political Relationships

This will have occurred *if power is always used as service* to the community.

• This would involve us not in the elimination of powerful social roles within the Christian community, but in establishing styles of leadership with accountability towards the eucharistic community as a whole. It would require the *elimination of dominance*. It would require a deliberate resistance to the intrusion of systems of dominance from the wider society, whether past or present, into the Christian Church.

• As a task in the wider society this requires Christians to work against the subjection of some sectors of society to others, to be alert to violence whether in physical or structural form, and to encourage consensus and negotiation especially concerning basic social values.

• Be alert particularly here against sexism, racism, classism, clericalism, and the lack of access to decision-making of the disadvantaged.

The Transformation of our Ecological Relationships

This will have occurred if human beings live within the regenerative capacities of Earth.

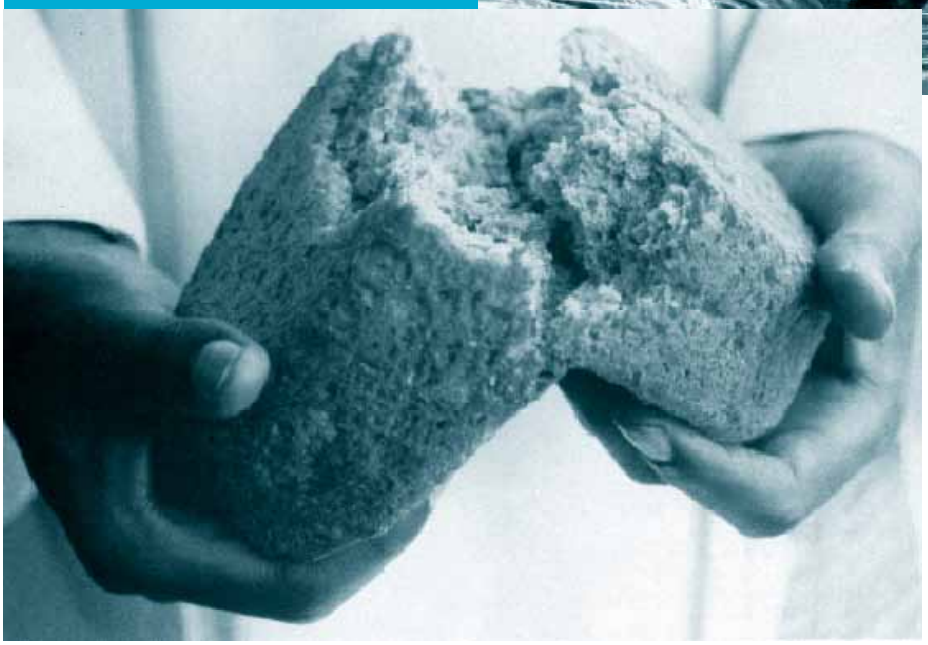
• This would involve us in articulating within the Christian community an appreciation of the value of all things created by God and of living sustainably within the Earth.

• As task in the wider society this dimension of Eucharist would engage the Christian community in alliances and advocacy with ecologically sensitive

groups. The contribution of the Christian community could well be a particular focus on eco-justice and the mobilising of public opinion in the long-term task of achieving a sustainable society and respect for the Earth.

• Be alert particularly here against environmental exploitation and the devaluing of other non-human beings and processes especially in the biosphere.

So what do our Eucharistic symbols say? Does the Christian community – do its Eucharistic liturgies – impact on society at large in such a way as to promote the sort of transformations indicated above?



Regarding economic transformation

It is widely recognised that wealth-sharing is part of the package, so to speak, of being a disciple of Christ. It does not go nearly so far as seeking actual equality, but includes the sharing of some surplus in the form of financial help to the obviously needy. It seldom takes the form of sharing between households in any direct way but here there are issues of dependency, patronage, and self-worth. There is some – though not extensive – sharing between local communities and through intermediaries such as Church-sponsored charitable and social service organisations.

In the specific case of the Catholic Church, economic disparities within the Church are greater than they used to be before the 1960s. A previously poor Church now more closely mirrors the disparities in society at large. The Church is not involved to any large extent in seeking structural change, but is becoming increasingly aware of the incompatibility between Christian hope and the free-market economic directions of government policy.

Our Eucharist symbolism generally avoids classism, but the avoidance of classism in Eucharist is not yet a deliberate attack on a developing classism in society. The symbolism of sharing or distributing bread and wine seems to establish a union between the individual and God rather than make a clear connection between sharing God's bread/wine and sharing all God's gifts. Overall our Eucharists do I think come out on the side of being hopeful, even if not vigorously so, in this dimension of economic transformation.

Regarding social transformation

The Church maintains a hierarchical organisation with frequent resistance to more cooperative and respectful procedures. There is no commitment to consensus in decision-making. Accountability is normally upward rather than downward. Overtly authoritarian styles of leadership still occur though with less frequency. There are many and frequent examples of unity and love among members. But the Catholic Church's official organisation remains committed to clericalism and sexism. As a whole the Church's witness to unity and love to the wider society tends to be drowned out by its practice of clericalism and sexism. The hierarchical, sexist, and clericalist form of social organisation is almost exactly mirrored in the Eucharistic symbolism which is in almost all cases dominated

by the priest presider. This stands in frequent contrast to the prayers and readings of the Eucharist which frequently proclaim the values of love and unity.

Regarding political transformation

Leadership roles in the Catholic Church have very little formal accountability to the Eucharistic community and are formally accountable mainly to a non-Eucharistic hierarchy. A system of *dominance* is taken for granted and legitimated by the appeal to apostolic tradition.

A strongly authoritarian model sometimes recurs especially at parish level, but on the whole the authoritarian system of governance has been replaced with a softer but effective line-management model of decision-making. The Church's service to the wider society mainly takes the form of care-giving to the needy and some advocacy on their behalf.

Eucharist symbolism establishes the dominance of the ordained priest both in access to the authentic word of God, in presiding over assembly, and in exclusive control of the divine presence in the consecrated bread and wine. This is mitigated by the number of non-ordained ministers in the Eucharist and by the symbolism of Communion itself since all are receivers of the consecrated bread and wine.

Regarding ecological transformation

Concerns of ecology seem to surface only at the international level such as in the World Council of Churches and at international conferences. They rarely occur at all at the level of local eucharistic communities.

The symbolism of divine presence in bread and wine powerfully speaks of God's care of and presence in elemental things, although there is little verbal reference to the ecological overtones of Eucharist. And the seasonal relationships of the liturgical calendar developed in the northern hemisphere receive massive contradiction in the southern hemisphere with only an occasional murmur of symbolic discontent.

How are our Eucharistic celebrations hopeful?

The exercise that I have undertaken above is a little like criticising your mother. Even mothers aren't perfect, but it would really make life a lot simpler if they were. I have focused on community and society transformations rather than individual transformations. If I had paid more attention to individual transformations the hopeful nature of our eucharistic liturgies might have been more pronounced. There are frequent and obvious transformations that occur in individuals as a result of participation in Eucharist.

The sketchy review that I have done above produces a feeling not of hopelessness but certainly some degree of depression. People familiar with the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand may want to disagree.

What I do want to defend though is the position that the symbolism of our Eucharists does count, because those liturgies are potentially transformative of Church and society as well as of individuals. They are grace-filled when they actually do both express and help us to embody Christian hopes and values. When they don't they can be harmful.

On the positive side there are Eucharists, for example, where the connections between participation in Eucharist and social justice are made quite immediately and explicitly in the interpretations of Scripture, in their style of giving and receiving Communion. There are Eucharists in which unity and diversity of culture, gender and age are appreciated and celebrated. There are Eucharists in which the contributions of many ministers and a sharing of leadership emphasise participation rather than consumerism. There are Eucharists whose symbolism deliberately combats the discrimination of sexism and ethnocentrism in society. There are Eucharists whose symbolism does pay attention to God's creative presence in the planet Earth. Would that these signs of hope happened more often. ■

Sexual Abuse – the Trauma

Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, Auxiliary of the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, takes an honest look at the greatest scandal facing the modern Church. Why is sexual abuse so damaging; what healing is possible?

There are certain fundamental questions that we are always asking ourselves, whether we are consciously aware of them or not: *Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going? What is the purpose and meaning of my existence?* We ask these big questions because they reflect one of the most profound drives within human beings, the search for meaning. When people become bored with their job or their marriage or their lot in life, they begin to feel that their life is going nowhere, that it lacks meaning. This can eat away at their sense of dignity and self-worth. All meaning in life comes from love. For example, one person loves gardening, and by putting that love into practice eventually becomes "a gardener". Seeing the garden burst into a profusion of colour and beauty each spring gives a sense of achievement and satisfaction. This then becomes at least a small part of the person's answer to the big questions of life, a feeling that part of the reason for the person's existence is to turn this small corner of the planet into a place of beauty and new life.

Any person, object, activity or idea that we love contributes to this process. Our sense of meaning in life then comes from the sum total of the loves of our life. The more love there is, the more meaning there is. Our sexuality is one of the most profound ways in which we both seek and express love at all times and in all circumstances, not just in sexual intercourse. It is, therefore, one of the most profound ways in which we seek meaning in life.

At the same time, love is the deepest longing of the human heart and comes from the very centre of our being. It is so deep that no person or thing can fully satisfy it. Every time we experience love for anything at all we feel some satisfaction and sense of meaning in our lives, but we also know that we long for a deeper and fuller love and meaning.

Ultimately we long for perfect love and perfect meaning, and this means reaching down to a place within ourselves that is so deep that feelings no longer have names and longings cannot be put into words.

Sexual abuse is a bulldozer gouging a road through this fragile ecosystem of sexuality, love and meaning that a person has been painfully constructing

Sexual Abuse and Meaning

No matter how self-confident we may be, our systems of meaning are always fragile because they are made up of the many tiny fragments of our lived experience – the many loves, small and great, of our lives. Sexual abuse is a bulldozer gouging a road through this fragile ecosystem of sexuality, love and meaning that a person has been painfully constructing. This is, I believe, the major spiritual harm caused by sexual abuse, the destruction of a delicate and elaborate system of meaning. What ought to be positive becomes negative, what ought to be love becomes a using of a person, what ought to be trustworthy can no longer be trusted. Many of the loves that had given meaning in the past become turned on their heads. The relationship is broken between sexuality and love, between trust and love, between meaning and love, so that love is no longer a unifying force. In sexual abuse there is always spiritual harm because, no matter what other particular things may be destroyed, the abuse always destroys the person's sense of wholeness and connectedness, and hence the person's sense of meaning.

Professional persons such as doctors, mental and social health workers, lawyers and ministers of religion should find their reason for existence in helping people. In any interview they are there for the sake of their patient or client, not the other way round. In a world in which the patient or client may be overwhelmed by fears and uncertainties, these professionals should be sources of strength and support. Each one represents not just him/herself but the entire profession and the entire community.

and the Healing

In sexual abuse these values are subverted. The patient or client is now there for the sake of the professional, who becomes a source of weakness, turmoil and the using of another. There is no sense of meaning when those who ought to be the most trustworthy become the least trustworthy. In such cases there is always spiritual harm.

Abuse and the Church Community

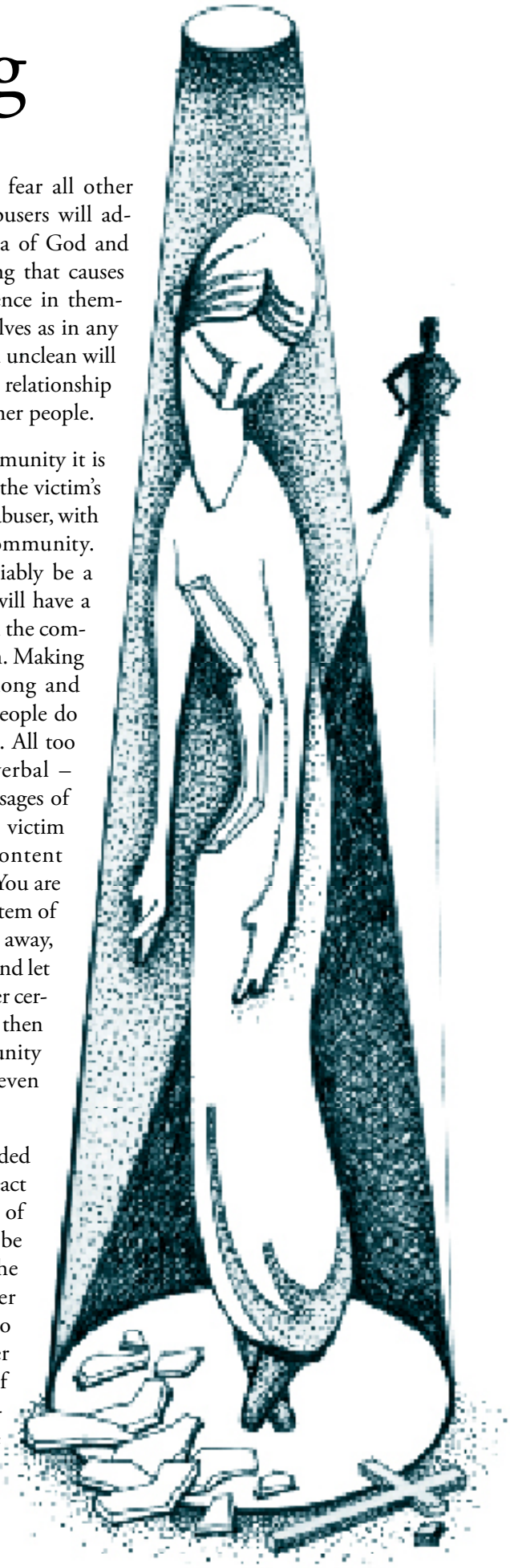
Because we long for perfect and infinite love, religious beliefs are an important part of the making of meaning in the lives of those who accept them. Sexual abuse by a direct representative of that religious belief – eg. a priest or minister – destroys the answers that the religious beliefs have given up to that point. The power that has been abused is a spiritual power that allows a person to enter deeply into the secret lives of others and to make judgements about the spiritual state of persons and even about their eternal fate. The link between the minister and God can be impossible to break, and it can easily seem as though God is the abuser. The abuse shatters the power of the symbols of that belief, eg. the picture of a priest holding a host aloft can become a mockery.

Furthermore, our relationships with God, with other people and with our own self are all intimately connected. Harm to any one of these relationships profoundly effects the others. For example, as we come to realise that we are accepted by others, we become more accepting of ourselves; as we become more accepting of ourselves, we have more energy to reach out to others.

This interdependence is true, however, of our relationship with God as well. Anything that causes people to stop trusting in a loving God and to start fearing a more angry God will greatly influence their relationships with others and their idea of themselves; anything that causes people to fear all other people as potential abusers will adversely affect their idea of God and of themselves; anything that causes people to lose confidence in themselves or to see themselves as in any way contaminated and unclean will profoundly affect their relationship with God and with other people.

Within a Church community it is impossible to separate the victim's relationships with the abuser, with God and with the community. The abuser will invariably be a person of power and will have a far stronger position in the community than the victim. Making meaning of life is a long and arduous process and people do not like to see it upset. All too frequently the non-verbal – and even verbal – messages of Church people to the victim will be, "We were content before you spoke out. You are a threat to our very system of meaning-making. Go away, leave this community and let us go back to our former certainties". The victim is then left without a community and feels ostracised, even excommunicated.

The harm is compounded if Church authorities react badly when informed of the abuse. There may be some realisation in the victim that the abuser is an individual who has acted in a manner contrary to every belief of the Church community, but when the Church authorities themselves appear to condone the offence



and reinforce its effects, it appears that the entire community is joining in the rejection. The magnitude of the effect on the victim's world of meaning reflects the gravity of the abuse itself.

Spiritual healing

In sexual abuse, spiritual harm is the first to occur and the last to be healed. Damage to any one part damages the whole and the whole cannot be fully restored until each part has been restored. Spiritual healing, therefore, means helping a person to be whole again and to find a new world of meaning. The path to healing will be different for each individual and no neat blueprint can be laid down. In all situations we must obviously respect the needs and rights of the victim, and assist rather than direct. The sense of meaning that they finally come to may be very different from the one they formerly had. To spell this out, I, as a Catholic bishop, may find myself in the situation of helping a victim to find a path in life that contains no trace of Catholic influence in it.

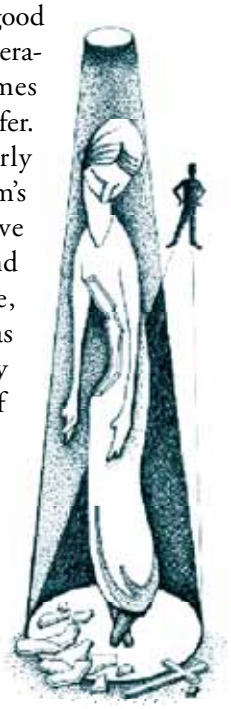
Love and Meaning

A new world of meaning, a new set of satisfying answers to the basic questions of life, means a new set of persons, objects, activities and ideas that can be loved. Sometimes, when we meet a victim, we will find some enduring loves from a past life before the abuse, sometimes we will see new loves that have arisen since that time. I believe it is important to actively look for, recognise and welcome any loves, great or small, that we find in a victim and to encourage their development.

Victims of sexual abuse are rightly

> the path to healing will be different for each individual

from and I, too, have had to help people break away from harmful religious ideas. Nevertheless the therapist would do well to be aware that healing can go beyond the psychological into fields where he or she may not have adequate competence. As a good professional the therapist may sometimes feel the need to refer. This is particularly true where a victim's ideas of God have been distorted and warped by abuse, but the victim has no desire to deny the existence of God or the importance of religious values in life. A Christian person who has been abused can sometimes find both love and meaning in the idea of Jesus Christ as a fellow sufferer also caught into a seemingly meaningless world on the cross. It is not enough to tell such a person, verbally or non-verbally, that religion is the problem, not the solution, and that life is better without any religion.



Forgiveness

For the victim the most important forgiveness is forgiveness of self – forgiveness for having been powerless, for having trusted someone who did not deserve trust, for not having done more to prevent or resist the abuse. Such forgiveness is essential to true healing. The effects of abuse can last throughout life and frequently the offender has expressed no remorse or sorrow. Forgiveness must be the free personal choice of the victim.

There is such a thing as forgiveness given too early and this forgiveness brings no satisfaction. People expect that a decision to forgive will take away their anger, and they can be disheartened when they are again overwhelmed by anger.

> no one is ever justified in telling victims that they have a religious obligation to forgive the offender

A common mistaken belief is that forgiveness is a *feeling*, that is, people have forgiven when they feel good towards the offender; they have not forgiven when they feel bad towards the offender. In fact, however, people have no direct control over their feelings. The only way a victim can choose not to *feel* angry is by choosing not to *think* about the abuse. At first this will be impossible, but with the passage of time it can become more and more possible. When memory of sexual abuse comes to mind, the anger that is spontaneously felt is positively good and contributes to a sense of meaning because it is in fact part of the loving of oneself. The anger is a defensive reaction, an affirmation of oneself and one's own dignity, an instinctive statement that what happened was wrong, that the victim is worth far more than that. Forgiveness can easily coexist with good anger, even when it feels overwhelming.

Thus much of the decision to forgive is really to be found in the decision whether to think about the abuse or not. The Greek word in the gospels translated as *to forgive* has the more basic meaning of *to leave behind, to let be.* In relation to sexual abuse, this does not mean to deny the abuse or the debt it created. It does not mean to forego attempts to have just debts paid. It does not mean to repress the memory or to prevent it rising to the conscious mind

whenever this happens naturally. It means to come to a point where one is prepared to begin to leave the matter behind, to let it be, to do nothing to deliberately raise the memories and the feelings they evoke.

The Greek word comes from pre-Christian origins. In a number of Western languages, on the other hand, the word *to forgive* reflects a Christian origin, being made up of two words meaning *to give for.* In his book *Further Along the Road Less Travelled,* M. Scott Peck writes: *"The process of forgiveness – indeed, the chief reason for forgiveness – is selfish. The reason to forgive others is not for their sake... The reason to forgive is for our own sake. For our own health. Because beyond that point needed for healing, if we hold on to our anger, we stop growing and our souls begin to shrivel."*

Thus we should never tell victims that they have a religious obligation to forgive but, if the timing is right, we may suggest that to move towards forgiveness could be good for themselves.

There is another forgiveness that is essential. Communities must forgive, in the literal sense of *give themselves for* victims who have disturbed their comfort and meaning-making. Within the Catholic Church I must accept that if no victims had come forward, nothing would have changed. We must learn to be positively grateful to victims for disturbing us.

Listening to victims of sexual abuse is the most profound spiritual gift I have received in the last several years. They have showed me how to find love in the most unexpected places and they have greatly widened my spiritual horizons. If a better Church one day emerges from this crisis, it is they who must take the credit for creating it. ■

From a paper given at a conference on Breaking the Boundaries, Melbourne, in July

Making words and music fit

Ray Stedman

Travelling around the country attending this parish worship one week and that the next, one is struck by the range of music being used and the diversity of accomplishment of music ministers. Some parishes appear to be well managed with good appropriate music; others struggle to keep their heads above 'liturgical waters'. Whatever the state of parish music there is one problem that is repeatedly observed irrespective of a parish's musical wellbeing.

Numbers of parishes make excellent efforts to include the responsorial psalm each week. And it is here that the problem occurs – the quality of the setting of the antiphon. Some of these are home grown, some from published settings of the three-year cycle, some good, others less so. The official documents and their commentators tell us that music serves the text. No one would question this as a principle. It makes excellent sense and is logical as a principle, but composers and music ministers often lose sight of it.

Recently I went to Mass in the city we were visiting. There was a good atmosphere in a church where much effort had been made to accommodate liturgical requirements. The music selections on the whole were good: they chose to use a cantor for the Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation, and she was competent and comfortable in her role. The setting of the antiphon, however, was not so good and is but one example of how the music sometimes fails the text. The setting (page 27) was from Word of Life International and was used with permission. At first sight a good setting: good range (perhaps a bit low for high sopranos), the rhythm is straightforward and easily comprehended, most people should be able to manage it in one hearing, published by a reputable house. The text says: ***Turn to the Lord in your need, and you shall live***

What is this text saying? To most of us it's very obvious; if you ask the Lord in whatever needy circumstance you find yourself you will live. The text progresses in two sweeps separated by a comma – the comma may not be necessary but it is there adding emphasis to the very obvious division in the text.

'What do I have to do?' ***Turn to the Lord in your need,***

'What will be the consequence of this?' ***and you shall live***

But what does the music line do to this text? In this setting there is natural musical unity of sense beginning with the first note and ending with the first 'D' over the word 'Lord'. Consequently the text is forced to read:

Turn to the Lord, and then – ***in your need, and you shall live***

cont'd page 27

Rugby – puncturing the myth

Susan Smith

Rugby is very important to many New Zealanders. Social commentators have always attributed positive functions to rugby. It is claimed as a factor in the healthy integration of all the different socio-economic and ethnic groups in the country: it has brought together men and women, rural and urban communities, middle and working classes, Catholics and Protestants, Maori and Pakeha.

But is that really true? I believe the integrating functions commonly attributed to rugby cannot stand up to close scrutiny, and instead belong more properly to the realm of myth. Women, for instance, were integrated, but only according to patriarchal expectations. They were essential to the well-being of rugby as servants of male-defined expectations: preparing copious quantities of food and washing festering heaps of dirty rugby gear afterwards. Rugby has, if anything, served to reinforce patriarchal relationships between women and men. I am as yet unsure whether the 'Gal Blacks' will strike a blow for feminism.

But what about the alleged integration of different social classes and religious denominations? Earlier commentators noted that rugby allowed New Zealand men to see their society as classless. One wrote that with rugby "all grades of opinion from the University professor to the navvy, the socialist, the free thinker, aye, any class of religious thought – Roman Catholic or Protestant – the black man, the brown man and the white man have all one common place on the rugby field. What they are doesn't matter: it's their abilities as players that counts (Daniel McKenzie, 1911: *Rugby Football in Wellington and the Wairarapa 1868-1910*). All of which seems to suggest that if your 'good, keen bloke' were a keen rugby player, he would be a good mate and a good citizen in a supposedly egalitarian society. But is it really true? We need only to think of the 1997 discussion over the meteoric rise to fame of a First XV from the 'wrong side of town' in Christchurch. We soon found out that 'proper schools' would not use financial incentives to get to the top of the rugby ladder.

It was on the rugby field that divisions of race were supposedly overcome. The myth of the racially harmonious society found its icon in the person of George Nepia during the 'Invincibles' tour of 1924. That very same year the New Zealand government moved to block Ratana's proposed audience with King George V seeking to redress Maori grievances under the Treaty of Waitangi. The 1981 Springbok tour laid to rest that particular myth of racial harmony and equality.

Today we are being asked to believe that the cosy but subservient relationship of rugby to capitalism is in the national interest. Both creeds are driven by competition; the competitive spirit so essential to the well-being of capitalism is honed and refined on today's rugby fields. Jenny Shipley, spokeswoman of the free-market, appears in the media with the All Blacks, and is seen attending rugby matches. Minister Maurice McCully, on a trip to South Africa promoting New Zealand as an ideal tourist destination,

is assisted in this by Sean Fitzpatrick, Taine Randell and five other All Blacks. Mr McCully believes that the All Blacks are this country's "most important marketing brand". Professionalism and the commercialisation of the game, it seems, go hand in hand.

The link between capitalism and rugby is most evident in the world of advertising. Initially the advertising agencies tapped into national mythology by using 'real Pakeha men' – oversize, emotionally restrained, reticent to the point of being inarticulate. Today a more articulate, recently retired All Black has successfully persuaded many Kiwis to buy shares in Auckland airport, while another – appropriately oversized – encourages us to indulge in the products of the world's biggest fast food company.

A curious aspect is the appropriation by the advertising agencies of symbols and motifs taken from the world of religion. Recently TV One used what was suspiciously like Gregorian chant for rugby backing. A magazine had emblazoned across its cover the title *The twilight of the god*. It was not a harking back to the death-of-God theology of the 60s but referring to the impending retirement of Michael Jones. And remember the recent controversy about a TV ad in which rugby players seemed to be taking part in a Last Supper look-alike scene to encourage us to visit the TAB and put our money where our hearts and mouths were.

Meantime we have suffered an almost unprecedented series of international defeats. The country is in mourning. Should coach John Hart be crucified? Which players should be axed? Can we resurrect Fitzy? The mood of the country is definitely all black!

Today our country has never been more divided – on ethnic grounds, on economic grounds, and on gender grounds. I am sceptical of rugby's real or imagined potential to resolve any of these. Increasingly, however, our national sport is being co-opted by market forces to persuade us to unite behind our 'boys in black'. I suspect that the pseudo-religious symbols and language now being employed are nothing more than bromides, distractions and escapes from the pain that many New Zealanders now feel. Is rugby becoming the new opium of the people?

Ironically it may well be Mr Rupert Murdoch, capitalist *par excellence*, who will reduce rugby exposure on NZTV. I hope that advertising using present and former players will be reduced, and in the lead up to the World Cup we may be spared an extravaganza of mightily muscled All Blacks on our screens.

It is all so unnecessary. It could be very good news for our youth if professional rugby players were, for a change, to model concern and compassion for others. I personally became a Jonah Lomu fan, not because of his sporting prowess, but when I read that he stopped to help after a motorway traffic accident.

I have to confess that I enjoy watching the All Blacks' matches being replayed on TV One. The changes in the game in recent years have made it a much more attractive spectacle to watch. Three years ago I was cajoled to go and watch the Auckland Warriors play; but I was bored by the routine repetitiveness of the League game – even though the home team won! Another welcome sign has been the real efforts by national and provincial unions to rid the game of violence – though there is still room for progress at the club level. Rugby has significant entertainment value for everyone, but I for one am glad that the All Blacks have lost their dominant position. A real factor in enjoyment is when no one is certain beforehand

(Susan Smith RNDM is a lecturer at CIT, Auckland)

cont'd from page 25

A composer often makes textual 'adjustments' for aesthetic reasons: these may involve repetition of words or phrases etc. On the whole, however, the liturgical texts may not be tampered with. What you see is what you get. This composer has adhered to that principle but without insight. The result of this is that the music moves against the text in a way that is objectionable to the sensitive and discerning ear – and there are many of those in the average congregation.

This may be seen as a small gripe – even nit picking. But what are the consequences of using settings such as this? For one thing, people tend to stop singing because the setting doesn't make good sense. The whole reason for doing the psalm this way has been negated. And this consequence can, so easily, flow through into the rest of the people's parts at Mass. At the Mass where this was used, this is exactly what happened.

There are other points about this setting that could be criticised but maybe such criticisms would cloud the issue. My plea is to those choosing music. Do it with some insight. A knowledgeable musician should always be involved. Don't use a setting simply because there is nothing else available or you may win the battle only to lose the war. ■

A truly human spirituality

Anam Cara: Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World
By John O'Donohue
Bantam Press
Price: $39.95
Review: Sandra Winton

The 14th century Dominican mystic, Meister Eckhart, challenged some long-standing 'spiritual' assumptions when he praised the whole, mature, active and creative woman, Martha, above her less mature, more 'spiritual' sister, Mary. Much Catholic spirituality has followed the track of Mary, as she was understood. Slightly removed from human activity, it has tended to value intellect, will and the soul above the body, senses and emotions. It has preferred the celibate religious to the busy housewife. The guides to a truly lay spirituality have been few.

Much of this has been harmful to psychological growth and is one reason for the long-standing antipathy towards religion in the psychological field. To meet people burdened by religious guilt, who have repressed sexuality and passion, who feel compelled more by external duty than by inner fire, is to have some sympathy for this. One still meets well-intentioned people who are trying to 'spiritualise' their grief, anger, sexuality or fear, and are shocked at the idea of living squarely and compassionately with such human realities.

In the face of this, John O'Donohue's book, *Anam Cara: Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World,* offers a spirituality that is both lay and healthful. He bases it on the concept of soul friendship – interpersonal friendship, friendship with our senses and body, with ourselves, our work, our aging and death itself. Rather than a spirituality that seeks to transcend, purify, rationalise or avoid, John O'Donohue writes of a wisdom that longs to embrace, integrate, show hospitality. He does not ask us to turn away from our humanness but to look at the depths of what it can reveal to us. He points us to an 'inner world' beyond the externals of our daily lives: *"If we become addicted to the external, our interiority will haunt us. We will become hungry with a hunger no image, person or deed can still. To be wholesome, we must remain truthful to our vulnerable complexity. In order to keep our balance, we need to hold the interior and exterior, visible and invisible, ancient and new, together. No-one else can undertake this task for you. You are the one and only threshold of an inner world. This wholesomeness is holiness. To be holy is to be natural; to befriend the world that comes to balance in you."*

This is a spirituality from the Celtic world, Christian and pre-Christian, but not of this alone. O'Donohue integrates many sources of spiritual wisdom, philosophy and spirituality. To read this book is to meet an original synthesis and squarely occupied wisdom. It speaks of things we do not often think of in our spiritual reflection – love as recognition, the face as the icon of creation, the body as the angel of the soul, styles of vision, contradictions as treasures, to name but a few.

Anam Cara does not so much speak about Celtic spirituality as embody it. Its form follows the Celtic form of "lyrical speculation", circular rather than linear. A book perhaps in the line of Thomas Moore's *Care of the Soul.* Read in small doses and savoured, the style is quite lovely. It is evocative and leads one into thoughtful reflection. In a longer reading, though, I found that the style tended to lull me into inattention.

If it has a defect it is this: in seeking to draw people back from addiction to externals, it tends to focus on the inner world and not model the complex balance we need to strive for between inner and outer. In these disjointed times, we need to balance the engaged spirituality of the Hebrew prophets with this kind of reflective spirituality. We need both those who can accept and integrate and those who will cry out in the streets.

But this is a fine book. I heartily recommend it. A book to linger over, to return to again and again. A book to pass on to friends of other churches, or no church. A well-printed book, a joy to hold in the hand. A truly human spirituality. I believe it will be of great value to many and for a long time. ■

A tale of Hope and Passion

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly
Jean-Dominique Bauby
Published by Fourth Estate
Price: $19.95
Review: Nic McCloy

From the outset, this promised to be one of the year's most extraordinary books. Jean-Dominique Bauby was Editor-in-Chief of the French edition of *Elle* magazine. He was a man heavily involved in a cynical and shallow industry. His was a life at the heart of that industry until the fateful day that he suffered a massive stroke in the prime of his life. The stroke left him with only the movement of one side of his face, a rare condition known as "Locked in Syndrome". *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* is his memoir transcribed from his dictation by the use of an intricate system, devised by a therapist, which involved blinking his one moving eyelid in order to indicate letters.

While this had the potential to be a very depressing tale of self pity, Bauby has managed to pen a tale of great hope and passion. His zest for life and his ability to seek out the positive in the situation is truly astonishing. The book contains

Clergy sexual abuse – a lesson for the churches

Garlands from Ashes – Healing from Clergy Abuse
By Sonja Grace
Published by The Grace-Watson Press
Price: $29.95
Review: Trish McBride

This book published in 1996 breaks new ground by documenting the stories of women and men who have been sexually abused within our own New Zealand communities by members of the clergy. The damage caused by sexual abuse by professionals – doctors, counsellors, clergy etc – has become increasingly obvious to those counsellors who have had to deal with its effects in clients. Such abuse by clergy is likely to be particularly toxic, involving as it does the victim's spirituality: concepts of God and Church.

The following damages have been reported in the (preliminary) results of a US study by Ellen Luepker of 107 women victims of abuse by clergy and counsellors:

Most needed over 50 counselling hours; most needed at least 3 years' counselling, some up to 10 years (not all weekly); almost all experienced selfblame, anger at themselves, felt responsible for the events; almost all met clinical criteria for post-traumatic stress, eg nightmares, hyper-vigilance, flashbacks; almost all suffered depressive illness; most had some degree of suicidality and had suicide plans; a small percentage of pregnancies resulted from relationship with offending professional; between one-third and one-half had psychiatric hospitalisations (of which most were first admissions), had disruptions of or broken relationships, changed denomination or religious affiliation. Nearly half had negative feelings around their sexual orientation; almost all had negative feelings about themselves as a sexual partner. Concerns about alcohol use more than doubled; almost all were reluctant to tell people close to them.

Sonja's own Christian faith is the framework for her analysis and recommendations. This stands in marked contrast to the eventual belief systems of many of the survivors. What was it like for them to have their stories presented within a strongly Christian framework? A significant flaw is her omission of statistics for reoffending which some experts put at 80-90 percent *(Holroyd & Brodsky 1977).*

The book is in two parts. Part One has the stories of 16 women and two men survivors, plus comments by the husbands of two of the women. The age at which the abuse by clergy took place ranges from early childhood to adulthood. They are horrific, moving and inspiring stories. The tellers have come to terms as best they can with the damage inflicted by the very men whose leadership role in their Christian communities inspired trust. One imagines that being able to tell the stories in a public way and the prospect of having them valued as part of the ongoing education of Churches and the wider community must in itself be healing for these survivors.

Part Two is written by Sonja Grace. It contains much information of use to victims/survivors, counsellors and others who are supporting them. It includes a statistical analysis by denomination of prevalence of sexual abuse by NZ clergy, a glossary and a resource list.

In this book victims/survivors will find hope and encouragement here, as well a diminishing of the isolation this experience undoubtedly produced hitherto when the responses by Churches to complaints was universally minimising or denial, and keeping it a secret was a top priority.

Most Churches in NZ are struggling to come to terms with their responsibilities in these matters – to victims, to their communities and to the perpetrators. I hope they will all take the stories and recommendations of *Garlands from Ashes* to heart, and acknowledge it as a valuable resource as they attend to the matter of sexual abuse by their ministers and employees. ■

his life in hospital and the dreams he has while he is there. This combination of narrative provides a highly uplifting and incredibly inspiring read. Perhaps the highlights of the book are the chapters in which Bauby's children visit him and quietly sit and play 'Hangman' with him and the chapter in which he describes his fascination with food despite being fed through a tube.

While I was a little squeamish about the subject matter, I was stunned at the quiet confidence and the optimism displayed by the author. And I think that there is almost another book worth of material from the perspective of the person who patiently transcribed Bauby's words. I can thoroughly recommend *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*: it is a book that will stop you in your tracks and make you realise just how charmed your own life really is. ■

National Radio 8 – TVNZ nil

Keith Harrison

The voters and viewers of New Zealand have been poorly served by television over the last weeks of political crisis. At a time when the people desperately needed a forum for the discussion, analysis and interpretation of current events, television has failed them miserably. There is a 'black hole' at the centre of the Fourth Estate which the print and the radio media have attempted to fill. Splendid, detailed and satisfying reporting from National Radio has demanded our attention at critical points during the day while the print media has elaborated and expanded those items which have come to us on the airwaves. Television, which has the technology to report political events in a highly effective manner, has not the management nor the staff to play an effective part in the network of news and communication.

Perhaps the most grotesque television moments of our recent political crisis occurred in the *Holmes* half hour filmed from inside Parliament in the wake of the New Zealand First walkout. Holmes saw himself in the central role. It was as if he was suddenly the kingmaker, and that it had become his role to sort out the leader, solve the political impasse and bump their collective heads together. The result was a disaster. His bumptious attitude, inability to search carefully for cause and effect, his desperate search for an immediate fix, all meant that the actual climax event – the walkout by the New Zealand First MPs – was not explored. The incident which led directly to Mr Peters' sacking was ignored. To have searched for the reasons and to have listened to the explanations would have taken time, and would have required expert investigative skills which appear to elude Mr Holmes. Although NZTV administrators have access to interviewers who have the authority and standing to deliver a credible forum in a political crisis, they have not been used. Ian Fraser is wasting his talent on *Showcase*, the egregious Saturday attempt at a variety show. Surely there is a case here for a certain amount of role reversal: Holmes could take over Fraser's role as an entertainment host, giving vent to his propensity for clowning, and our most able political inquisitor could be back in the sort of forum which turns up the heat on politicians.

For they have largely escaped unscathed – leaving their parties, changing allegiances, threatening certain courses of action if they don't get their own way, and clinging to power at all costs. It is the electors who have been demeaned, disadvantaged, and treated with contempt. The changing political climate in Wellington has everything to do with survival to rule, to holding on to power at all costs; and nothing to do with the wishes of the democratic state as expressed at the last election. And as the leaders and their immediate supporters have treated the voters with contempt, so have the executives of Television New Zealand. They have assiduously avoided setting up any forum which would seriously question our elected representatives and their motives. Are they afraid for their jobs, unwilling to question their bosses or allow discussion of anything which might question their well-insulated view of the world?

> it is the electors who have been treated with contempt

I believe we have an SOE in crisis. Caught between the insistence of Treasury for a return and a falling advertising revenue, the demands of the market place have brought State television to breaking point. In the end any improvement in the quality of our television programming depends on the political will of those in power. With the apparent demise of the Coalition Government it looks as if our one chance to save TV1 as a public, free-to-air, government owned service will be lost. If the *NZ On Air* funding was diverted into the operation of such a channel, then it could probably stand alone. It could manage, at best, without any advertising; or, at worst, with ads grouped at the beginning and end of programmes, but cut back from the current 15 or 16 minutes per hour.

On radio, we have *Morning Report* to challenge and question the politicians. And in spite of objections from the Business Roundtable about its leaning left and being anti-business, it continues to draw a huge, nation-wide audience. Perhaps it's just the freedom to question and search for answers which bothers some of the Roundtable members. Kim Hill brings her own Grand Inquisitorial style to the issues of the day in her three hours on air, while some of the most interesting items are repeated at night. Political comment from Al Morrison and Tom Frewen adds to the amazing range of opinion and analysis which National Radio offers in the course of one day.

I do not expect television to match this kind of coverage, but I believe a nightly comment lasting perhaps 15 minutes would be of some value, and a longer, forum type programme could be offered each week. But does anyone care? Does it matter if the Government's policies are essentially materialistic and philistine, concealed under the guise of community consultation, individual enterprise, freedom and self-fulfilment? Fr John F.X.Harriott once wrote on the media: *We are used to hearing that the Government is uncaring. But if a nation gets the government it deserves perhaps the disquieting reason is that we are now an uncaring society: a society that really lives for bread and circuses, has lost its brains and is in danger of losing its soul.* ■

Overseas News

Catholic-Jewish Relations

Pope John Paul has called upon the Catholic Church to purify itself in preparation for the third Millennium of Jesus' birth. One aspect of this purification concerns the relations between Christians and Jews. The Church's viewpoint on this was set out earlier this year in a document *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah.*

Shoah is the name given to the horrors perpetrated by the Nazis in their attempt to exterminate the Jewish race. In this century the Church frequently spoke out against the anti-Jewish philosophy of the Nazi regime. But, as the Vatican document says, "it may be asked whether the Nazi persecution of the Jews was not made easier by the anti-Jewish prejudices embedded in some Christian minds and hearts... were they less sensitive or even indifferent to the persecutions?"

The document concludes: "Finally we invite all men and women of good will to reflect deeply on the significance of the *Shoah.* The victims from their graves, and the survivors through the vivid testimony of what they have suffered, have become a loud voice calling the attention of all of humanity. To remember this terrible experience is to become fully conscious of the salutary warning it entails: the spoiled seeds of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism must never again be allowed to take root in any human heart."

At no stage in the document does the word 'apology' appear – an omission which has upset many.

Priority spending

Some revealing facts have been published in a report prepared by the Brookings Institute, a non-partisan establishment in the United States. This year the US has spent $35 billion maintaining and developing submarines with nuclear weapons and preparing defences against attacks by atomic missiles which do not – and probably never will – exist.

The report stated that, since 1945, 5.8 trillion dollars have been spent on the US nuclear programme. If this money had gone to the world's poorest nations the poverty and degradation in which over one billion people now live would have been completely eliminated.

Death of Scripture Scholar

Fr Raymond Brown, the best known Catholic Scripture scholar in the English speaking world, died suddenly on 8 August in California.

He was primarily a New Testament scholar, and he wrote the definitive commentary on the Gospel of John. A fellow scholar writes: "His exegesis was marked by both courage and authority. He was as insistent on what the Bible did not say as on what it did... He played an important part in the answer of the Pontifical Biblical Commission (on which he served for two terms) that the Bible yields no evidence for the controversy about women priests".

Child abuse

A new report from the British House of Commons Health committee reveals evidence of serious abuse of child immigrants, especially in Australia after World War 2. The strongest criticism concerns institutions run by the Christian Brothers: it states: "It is impossible to resist the conclusion that some of what was done was of quite exceptional depravity so that terms like 'sexual abuse' are too weak to convey it."

The Brothers' own historian told the committee of "at times savage physical abuse and fairly widespread sexual abuse." The Christian Brothers in Australia published an apology in July 1993 for what had occurred in their homes, but the British committee believes the whole story has not yet been fully told, and that "in some cases a criminal investigation may be called for." ■

A Symbol of Callousness

There is a new callousness abroad in the market place. As the dollar has moved in to take control of so many main stream structures, the politics of compassion have been obliterated. The criminal justice system has felt the chill of this wind more than most. Across the country the prison system has moved this year to cut back on inmates' rights, living conditions and freedom of movement. Most are now locked up for longer periods, with some remand inmates being locked up for 23 hours a day. That is not unlike the conditions of the super-max prisons of the United States.

No symbol better reflects this than the picture of Janine Albury-Thomson arriving at court for sentence handcuffed to a burly male prison officer twice her size.

Janine's story is well known. Weeks of media coverage, including extensive interviews on 60 Minutes, meant that her plight was public knowledge. The calamity that unfolded when she finally snapped and killed her autistic, hyperactive daughter was a human tragedy of the first order. Who could not see the stress and pain that led to this terrible action? It was a complex situation involving an extremely demanding, sick teenager manifesting extreme behavioural difficulties, a distraught mother who was often pushed beyond the limits of human endurance, the demands of other siblings, and the inadequate help provided by welfare and medical services. Practically all the helping services expressd their frustration at the complexity and difficulty of the situation.

Janine acknowledged she was guilty of the killing. Manslaughter was the verdict. Four years imprisonment was the sentence. The sentence provoked widespread outrage. The judge spoke of deterrence. Deterrence for whom? If people are driven to the edge of insanity, then deterrence is hardly a concept with meaning.

So, many questions remain. Was this a case where the law was simply not an adequate way of dealing with a complex tragedy? The police saw it initially as murder. Many believe it was temporary insanity. All saw it as pure desperation. How much notice was taken of the neglect and culpability of the state health system in not being able to provide a suitable place for the girl? If ever a case called for a suspended sentence it was the conviction of Janine Albury-Thomson.

The arguments will go on. But not surely the decision to publish a photo of Janine handcuffed enroute to Court. In my experience handcuffs are only used for those considered escape risks. Janine had given herself up to the police immediately after the death, and had been free in the community for nearly a year pending her trial. She was hardly an escape risk. So why the cuffs? Callousness? A gratuitous exercise of power? To have such a picture splashed across the front page of the morning paper was nothing short of obscene.

Jim Consedine