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**On the front cover:** At a farewell function for Dame Lyndsay Freer on April 30 were Emeritus Bishop of Auckland Bishop Patrick Dunn (left), Dame Lyndsay and Auckland diocese general manager James van Schie (Photo: Teresa McNamara)

**NZCatholic**

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# Late bishop's Holy Week homilies

by MICHAEL OTTO

The Holy Week homilies of the late Bishop Basil Meeking, seventh Bishop of Christchurch, for the last seven years of his life, have been published in a book.

The book, titled "Holy Week with Bishop Basil Meeking", was put together by Christchurch priest Fr Michael Pui, who was the executor of Bishop Meeking's will. The preface to the book explains that Bishop Meeking's homilies for the 2020 Triduum were never preached, because New Zealand had gone into a Covid-19 lockdown, and Bishop Meeking had also been hospitalised after a fall.

A few weeks later, Bishop Meeking died on June 11, 2020. During his time in hospital, Fr Pui kept in daily contact with him by phone.

"It was in one of those daily conversations that I had with him that the genesis of this book came into being," Fr Pui wrote in the preface.

"The idea of getting some of his 'work' or homilies published came out of the blue in one of those daily conversations. It was the first and last time he ever expressed that thought. It had never been part of our regular conversations when we met regularly to update his wishes, after he appointed me to be the executor of his will and [have] enduring power of attorney."

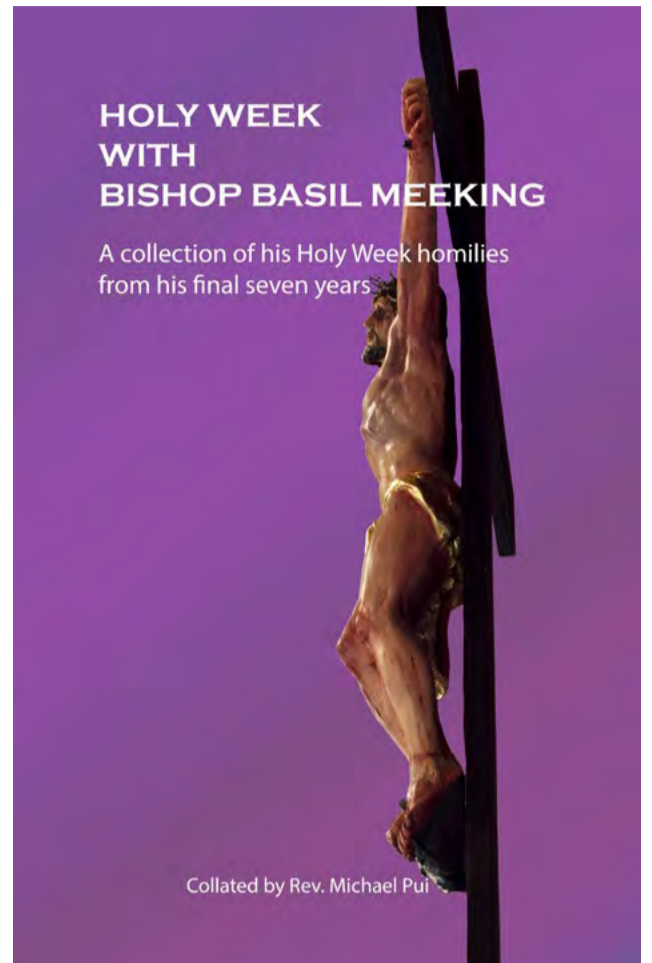
The conversation about "publishing his work" came at a time when Bishop Meeking's medical condition was such that he varied between periods of having a clear and lucid mind, as against periods of confusion, Fr Pui wrote.

"It meant [that] I could not really clarify what he wanted to explore. Mostly our daily conversations during the time of lucidity were to do with his immediate needs. After he died, it took me some soul-searching and praying to come to the decision on what to do. Time and providence provided clarity."

Most of the homilies, apart from those for Chrism Masses, were preached, or were scheduled to be preached, at a parish in Melbourne which Bishop Meeking would visit. Fr Pui wrote that the collation of the texts was made possible because Bishop Meeking kept hard copies of his homilies in his later years.

Fr Pui recalled many times seeing Bishop Meeking take the hard copy of his homily from his sleeve before commencing preaching from the pulpit. Fr Pui called this the bishop's "trick up his sleeve".

"Reading this book, you will find that Bishop Basil Meeking put a lot of thought into crafting his homilies. May his homilies for the Holy Weeks of his final seven years, and especially those of 2020 (that were never preached) help you capture the essence of Holy Week and the Holy Triduum. May they also give you a glimpse of him as a bishop, a priest, a theologian, a preacher and a Christian," Fr Pui wrote.



The book of Bishop Meeking's Holy Week homilies



Bishop Basil Meeking in 2017

## NZ Catholic back to full print circulation

On Sunday, August 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand was rededicated to Mary, the Mother of God.

NZ Catholic covered that event and went to press the following day with a full production run. The next day, August 17, the Prime Minister announced that the country would go into Covid-19 alert level 4. This meant that that edition of NZ Catholic could not be sold in churches. The var-

ious Covid-19-related restrictions that followed have meant that the paper has not been sold in churches since then.

NZ Catholic has responded by making digital editions of the paper available free of charge, to support church communities in this country during Covid-19 restrictions. All told, 17 editions of the paper have been made available to parishes in this format since August last year. During this time, NZ Catholic's staff have been working from their homes, apart from one week in January. This edition is likewise being made available free of charge in digital format. But, as with many church institutions, there has been a considerable impact on NZ Catholic's finances since August last year. Therefore, now that the nation is back at the orange Covid-19 protection framework setting, with no restrictions on numbers at Masses, the issue of NZ Catholic that will be published in mid-May will again be available for sale as a print version in many parishes. We expect the print version to be back in churches from May 21/22. We hope parishioners will support the paper after such a long absence from Church foyers, and we encourage parishes to remind people that the paper is for sale — and to remember to bring sufficient money to pay for it. We thank our loyal subscribers for their continued support for the paper, even while digital editions were being distributed free of charge. This support is very much appreciated.

— MICHAEL OTTO, Editor

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# NZ canonist backs more laity in Church governance

by MICHAEL OTTO

A New Zealand canon lawyer has written that the clerical sexual abuse scandal has shown the need for more allowance for laity in Church governance.

In a paper last year in *Studia Canonica*, Msgr Brendan Daly analysed the 21 recommendations made in 2017 about the Catholic Church by the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and the Holy See's responses to the recommendations forwarded to them by the Australian bishops. Msgr Daly also provided his own commentary. The Australian bishops accepted all but one of the recommendations, with the exception concerning the seal of the confessional.

The royal commission's final report commented on the "lack of responsibility, transparency, and accountability within the Catholic Church's practices and law", Msgr Daly wrote. The report also showed what Msgr Daly described as "the catastrophic failure of bishops and religious superiors to deal with the perpetrators, to protect victims and potential victims, and to prevent abuse".

One of the royal commission's recommendations was that the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference request that the Holy See establish a transparent process for appointing bishops, which includes the direct participation of lay people. A request was also made that the current criteria for appointing bishops be published. The Holy See's response noted the documents and canonical provisions that set these out, as well as the involvement of laity in the consultation process preceding the appointment of a bishop. The Holy See response also noted the need for discretion and the possibility of improvements, with child safety being given due consideration in the process for identifying candidates and naming bishops.

Msgr Daly wrote that the "massive failures in episcopal leader-

ship" throughout the world raises the question of whether a different selection process would be a preventative measure.

He quoted a published opinion of Rik Torfs that the job description of a bishop has changed, "and this needs to be reflected in the qualities required of episcopal candidates" . . . "Bishops need to be people with moral courage, who can make the right decisions in difficult situations. A respectable but lenient churchman, intent primarily on maintaining the reputation of the Church, could be a liability when dealing with a clerical abuser."

A governance review of the Catholic Church in Australia, to which Msgr Daly contributed, recommended wider consultation with laity during the episcopal appointment process, "as well as ensuring that candidates for the episcopacy have proven competence in dealing with sexual abuse cases".

The governance review, the report of which was titled *The Light from the Southern Cross*, also recommended "a national protocol on seminarian selection, training, and ongoing formation; that each diocesan bishop (or dioceses in combination if appropriate) establish a panel involving women and lay men for the selection process for entry of candidates into the seminary and discernment prior to ordination; that lay people take a critical role in the formation of seminarians and evaluations of suitability for ordination; and that there be a requirement for each diocesan bishop to consult the panel before accepting a foreign priest".

In conclusion, Msgr Daly's paper noted that the royal commission blamed "clericalism as a key cause of failures to deal with the sexual abuse of minors within the Catholic Church. This is part of the systemic failure that led to neglecting the input of laity".

A true separation of powers and more allowance for laity in Church governance are needed, Msgr Daly added.

"Pope Francis has promoted synodality, meaning the active participation of all members of the Church in its processes of discernment, consultation, and cooperation at every level," the New Zealand canon lawyer added.

"Pope Francis believes that this renewal of the Church cannot be deferred [as] 'the path of synodality is the path that God expects from the Church of the third millennium', Msgr Daly quoted Pope Francis saying at the fiftieth anniversary of the synod of bishops.

"Synodality will result in better decisions in all areas of the Church's life. The response of the Holy See to the recommendations of the royal commission reminds the Australian Church and all Church leaders that there needs to be a proper appreciation of the value of canon law in ecclesial practice. The sexual abuse cri-

sis was exacerbated by an arbitrary, antinomian approach to canonical procedures and penalties. If canon law had been implemented, the commission of many crimes could have been prevented and both victims and the Church at large could have been spared considerable pain."

Among the proposals in *The Light from the Southern Cross* was a National Catholic Synodal Leadership Council, to work with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. A body along these lines is reportedly in the working document leading up to the second assembly of Australia's Plenary Council, scheduled to be held in July. One of the themes of the working document is "Ecclesial Leadership and Governance - Growing as Disciples and Servants of the Gospel". Discussion on this document will help with preparing resolutions for the second assembly.

## New community connectors

by ROWENA OREJANA

The NZ-Filipino Sto Nino Devotees Trust, also known as Sinulog NZ, has recently been appointed as Community Connectors - Care in Community Welfare Providers working with the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and other Government agencies.

Sinulog NZ co-founder Sir Oscar Batucan said this means they can now help Filipino migrant workers as well as Filipino-Kiwis who are isolating due to Covid-19 access important Government services.

Sir Oscar and Dame Miriam Batucan had already been helping migrant workers on a lot of other issues like reduced wages during the previous lockdowns.

Sir Oscar noted Filipinos make up the third largest Asian ethnic community in New Zealand.

"With this appointment, we are encouraging our kabayans (country-

men) to help us reach out to anyone in need," Sir Oscar said.

He added as community connectors, they will be able to provide easier access to information, support and services across multiple government agencies and service providers.

This includes access to food and essential items, mental health services and even heating for the home.

"There are people affected by the lockdowns in many different ways. Counselling is available and is funded up to 4-5 sessions through the Ministry of Health," he said.

Dame Miriam added that they are forwarding information on job vacancies from the Ministry of Social Development to those who lost their jobs.

"Emergency help is available even to non-residents," she said.

Those who need help can email their queries to [santonino@xtra.co.nz](mailto:santonino@xtra.co.nz).

## St Anne's Manurewa limits Easter liturgies numbers

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

St Anne's Church in Manurewa observed red traffic light Covid-19 protection framework protocols at its Easter liturgies because the church is a "high Covid exposure" place, according to the Ministry of Health.

This meant that only 200 parishioners were allowed inside the church and 150 in the hall. Others were asked to stay outside.

In a newsletter dated April 17, St Anne's parish priest Fr Peter McAfee, SM, said that, every Mon-

day and Tuesday since the church re-opened, the MOH had been informing them of Covid cases at their previous Sunday Masses.

"They repeatedly ask us to be more vigilant and more compliant. We respond that we are following all the MOH rules in every detail," Fr McAfee said.

Fr McAfee said that the high Covid-19 case numbers is one of three reasons he decided to stick to the red traffic light protocols.

The other reasons, he said, are poor ventilation and a high number of vulnerable parishioners.

"The church has poor ventilation. The air con fans only circulate the used air. They do not bring in fresh air," he explained. "Plus, the ceiling is low."

He noted that a number of parishioners are elderly or have health issues. Some are not vaccinated "for good reasons".

"This makes them more vulnerable. We all want St Anne's to be a safe place," he said.

The church had since moved to the orange light setting, and requested that parishioners keep their masks on inside the church.

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# Dame Lyndsay calls it a day after 37 years

by MICHAEL OTTO

Perhaps the most widely-recognised Catholic voice in Aotearoa New Zealand will no longer be heard or seen in an official Church capacity.

Dame Lyndsay Freer has retired from her role as media and communications officer for Auckland diocese, bringing the curtain down on a 37-year career as the go-to “Church person” for media.

With Pope Francis accepting the resignation of Bishop Patrick Dunn as Bishop of Auckland late last year, Dame Lyndsay said she felt it was the right time for her to step down as well.

“With a new bishop coming on to the scene, this was time for him to make his own decisions on how to deal with the media. I felt my shelf-life had come to an end in terms of being employed by the diocese, so I thought it was the right time,” she told *NZ Catholic*.

Reflecting upon her career in journalism and Church communications, she said that her interest was likely sparked when, as a young Lyndsay Kearns, living then in Christchurch, she won a *Zealandia* short story competition, and her prize was a biography of Pope Pius XII.

Reading the book kindled a greater interest in matters to do with the Church. She would read articles about the Church and wrote book reviews, many of them to do with faith and ecclesiastical life, for a Catholic library in the city. She also graduated from a walk-by-faith course when she was young.

As she looked back on her career, she noted the connection between reading that papal biography so many years ago, and the “high points” of her work for the Church — attending two conclaves, in 2005 and 2013, and a papal funeral, as well as helping organise the visit of St John Paul II to New Zealand in 1986.

In Auckland, she received singing training from Dame Sister Mary Leo at St Mary’s College. According to a 2003 article in *The New Zealand Herald’s Canvas* magazine, she had been a regular guest artist on Concert FM, sang at weddings and funerals, and might also have had an international career in this arena.

But that was not to be her path. After leaving school, she worked for an advertising agency, for *The Waikato Times*, *The Dominion* and *The Sunday News*, writing an “agony column” under the pen-name “Gaby Fulton”. Her time as a journalist also saw her meet and marry Ken Freer, a widower with



Dame Lyndsay Freer

four children, who was in media management. He was the brother of former Labour cabinet minister Warren Freer. The couple married and had a son of their own. Ken Freer died in 1995.

In 1985, Bishop Denis Browne was looking for an Auckland diocese media spokesperson, to follow on from Fr John McAlpine. Dame Lyndsay’s then-parish priest in Remuera, Msgr Philip Purcell, suggested that she apply for the position.

Although shortlisted for the role, as were two male candidates, she didn’t like her chances. “I didn’t think for a minute I would get the job, because I also said I could only work from 9 until 3, because I had a son at school, and would need to have school holidays off.”

But Bishop Browne decided she was the best candidate and offered her the role, with hours designed to fit her requirements.

## ■ Woman

Dame Lyndsay believes she was the first woman in such a position in the Church in New Zealand, and that this made a difference.

“I think it softened the image of the Church,” she said.

“I don’t say this disrespectfully, but I think, rather than have what might have been seen to be a rigid clerical response to everything, here was a woman who was a wife and a mother. . . .”

Her work was recognised with her being made a papal dame in 1995, the first such award in Auckland diocese. Nationally, Dame Betty O’Dowd from Christchurch preceded her, she said with a smile.

In the late 1990s, the then-national communications director for the Catholic Church, Fr James Lyons, went back to pastoral work, and the bishops invited Dame Lyndsay to apply for the role.

“And I, at first, was hesitant, because I said I was not prepared to move out of Auckland, where my family was.” She said that one of the conditions of her taking on the role was that the national communications office had to be in Auckland, which was, and is, she believes, the media centre of the country.

Highlights of her time as national communications director included the events of 2005, when she was able to be in Rome for the funeral of St John Paul II and the election of Pope Benedict XVI (and later, in 2013, to cover the conclave that elected Pope Francis). She also travelled throughout the country with the relics of St Therese of Lisieux in 2005, which saw crowds gather in churches throughout the nation in veneration, and was a “wonderful demonstration of our Catholic faith”.

But in 2008, the national office of communications was disestablished, a decision which disappointed Dame Lyndsay.

“I had the view that if a thing is not broken, don’t fix it,” she said.

“We were fortunate that the media came to us — to our office — for any enquiries to do with Christianity, and often concerning ethical or moral issues. We had a lot of clout with the media, and I feared that, if it was going to be restructured in a totally different way, that was going to be lost.”

Although her national role was no more, Dame

Lyndsay continued her Auckland diocese communications position. She also worked for the Society of Mary. In recent times, she has assisted Bishop Dunn in the new field of social media.

This is one aspect of the media landscape that has changed over the years, and it isn’t the only one.

Many people in media used to see the Church as an anachronism, and as irrelevant, Dame Lyndsay said, but that changed with a properly-functioning national communications office. However, she fears that many in the media have reverted to their former outlook.

“Media sees Church law in direct conflict with society’s prevailing values of individual freedoms and basic human rights. They believe their role is to challenge such teachings. There is deep resentment that institutions have the right to tell people how they should behave and live their personal lives.”

## ■ Counter-cultural

With so many in the media having values at odds with those of the Church, Dame Lyndsay saw her work as distinctly “counter-cultural”. Religion in many ways challenges “consumer culture”, while media, in many ways, seek to legitimise it.

That said, she also believes that the Church has benefitted from media, when it has discharged its rightful function reporting on scandals and uncovering abuse and corruption. But that shouldn’t slide into gratuitous insult, she added.

Dame Lyndsay has for years been the contact point for media reporting stories of clerical abuse. *NZ Catholic* asked her what toll this had taken on her

“I’m fortunate that I have many interests in my life, outside my work for the Church. Having been a more-or-less professional singer for many years, doing roles in opera and oratorio and broadcasting and lots of singing engagements — having a child and a large extended family gave me other perspectives. My late husband was not a Catholic, and he helped me keep my feet on the ground and I tended not to bring my work home. But I have always been deeply distressed by the disclosures of abuse within the Church community and the sense of betrayal that goes with it.

“One of the things that did upset me was . . . the fact that I met quite a lot of resentment within the Church community for the work I was doing. Criticism was not just confined to those outside the Church!”

Dame Lyndsay played a key role in helping with the establishment of the National Office for Professional Standards. She recalls calling for such a body to be established, and addressing a meeting of the Mixed Commission, made up of bishops and heads of religious orders.

“I actually decided to speak frankly, and say that I was very disappointed that, while all of the dioceses and the orders had signed up to the document which had not long been established — “A Path to Healing” — yet I was being questioned frequently by the media about dioceses and religious orders which did not follow the protocols that they had actually signed up to.”

She told the Mixed Commission of “my frustration and, in fact, my anger that there was dishonesty in the Church and that there was a serious need of reform. If we were going to say that we were transparent, and were going to follow a particular protocol and process, why were we not doing it, right across the board? Some were, and some most certainly were not”.

The Church’s National Office for Professional Standards (NOPS) was established soon thereafter, and Dame Lyndsay was on the committee that interviewed some of the applicants to head the office. Former Police Commissioner, John Jameson, a Baptist, was appointed.

Dame Lyndsay had plenty more to say about the Church needing to commit more resources to missionary outreach, when it is currently, in her opinion, spending too much money, time, and resources “talking to ourselves”.

But future Church ventures will not have Dame Lyndsay working in any official capacity. Asked by *NZ Catholic*, what now for Lyndsay Freer? she replied: “I’m doing voluntary work, within the Church community, largely. But I will possibly see if I can do some work within the hospice movement as well. I have family, and am still involved in singing and music, so there are still lots of things to do.”



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# Cardinal Dew quizzed on Church in radio show

by MICHAEL OTTO

If Cardinal John Dew was elected as Pope, what would he like to see different about the Church at the end of his pontificate?

That was a question put to Cardinal Dew in an interview by John Cowan on *Real Life* on NewstalkZB on Easter Sunday. Cardinal Dew started his answer by stating "I would be saying, that [being elected Pope] would never happen to me".

The cardinal quickly referred the interviewer to the synod process underway, and its emphasis on listening to many voices from many different quarters.

"I think whoever is the Pope, certainly needs to continue to look for ways to involve all of the People of God in the Church, so that it is not just seen as an hierarchical structure, where priests and bishops and cardinals do everything, and make all the decisions," Cardinal Dew said.

"That is the whole point behind this listening process that Pope Francis has asked the Church to engage in," he said.

In this, "Pope Francis is doing something remarkable", asking people their views as to "where the Church should be today, what the Church should be doing".

Cardinal Dew said that it is not just the end product of the synod

process that is being sought, it is the process itself of getting people to come together and reflect and discern together that is of importance. The cardinal also pointed to recent changes made by Pope Francis to allow lay people to be appointed to head Roman curial offices.

Mr Cowan quizzed Cardinal Dew about priestly celibacy. "You represent a faith that talks so much about connection and community, but it calls upon its priests and nuns to forgo what, for most of us, provides us with love and intimacy. Is that too hard?" he asked the cardinal.

Cardinal Dew responded that priestly celibacy should not be seen as a negative thing.

However, there is a practical side to it, he said.

"I know that, if I was married and I had a partner, I would want to be spending time with wife and family. But I don't have that, and that allows me to give a lot more time, say when I was in a parish, to people in a parish. I am sometimes asked by young people about celibacy and I say, we can live without sex, but we can't live without love. We are called to be people who share our lives and respond, not to a greater call to love, but a different call."

Asked if he felt "short-changed", Cardinal Dew responded, "No, my life has been and still is, very, very



Cardinal Dew

rich." than it is believing. People think that if we believe a certain . . . and it's true, we do believe a creed and, you know, facts of faith . . . but it is not just by believing that people are connected with one another. It is by giving one another a sense of belonging and community, and that we are related and connected to each other because of the fact that we share a common faith."

Asked if his understanding of what the Christian message means had changed over the years that he had been a Christian, Cardinal Dew said that there had certainly been changes in emphasis.

"I think, as a schoolboy, we were brought up thinking it was all about keeping rules, and that God was watching over us to see us make mistakes or do something that is wrong. I don't think that at all about God now.

"My whole sense of God is this being who invites us into life, and who wants to share the fullness of life with us. And in some ways, I think it is probably a lot simpler, and that religion itself can be very, very, simple. And we learn so much from one another. Once it used to be that the Church was seen as a perfect society, now it is recognised as the People of God, travelling together . . ."

The cardinal also spoke about prayer, the Easter message, the challenges facing the Church as pandemic regulations ease, and about gratitude.

## Asylum-seeker decision welcome but more help needed

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Australia's Catholic bishops have welcomed their government's decision to see up to 450 asylum-seekers resettled in New Zealand, but say hundreds more need to be offered a pathway out of detention.

Australian Home Affairs Minister Karen Andrews announced in March that 150 asylum-seekers in Australia will be able to relocate to New Zealand each year for the next three years.

"The decision is well overdue given the New Zealand Government made the offer nine years ago," said Bishop Vincent Long, OFM Conv,



Bishop Vincent Long, OFM

chair of the Australian Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service.

"The Catholic community continues to support and pray for all refugees and asylum-seekers in Australia and in offshore detention.

"We ask for an end to indefinite detention, and for pathways to permanent visas for all those who are determined to be refugees or who meet humanitarian criteria."

In a media statement from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Bishop Long said that the Church, which plays a significant role in welcoming and assisting refugees and asylum-seekers in Australia, continues to call for a larger humanitarian intake "so that an appropriate response can be made to those who are fleeing conflict and violence in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Syria, Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Yemen and Venezuela".

The Australian representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has estimated that there are more than 1200 refugees and asylum-seekers in Australia or on Nauru.

That means that not all will be able to resettle in New Zealand.

Bishop Long said a solution is needed to the several hundred who won't be captured by the recent announcement.

"Australia has a moral obligation to resolve the asylum-seeker crisis, so that people who are fleeing from violence or poverty are treated justly and humanely," he said.

"This means ensuring their claims are assessed quickly, and that people found to be refugees are resettled in Australia or in an equivalent country without delay."



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# Heigh-ho, it's time for the election show

When the Annual Show was the biggest show in town, and the animals, their owners, the axemen, scone-makers, boxers and sideshow people, the merry-go-rounds and the modest showbags spruikers all came to town, the air lightened, and in school playgrounds the toys of the year — yo yos, water pistols or kites — sprung up everywhere. It was show time.

That is also true, though in more ponderous ways, of election time. . . .

For some weeks the first stirrings of election time in Australia have been evident in the rustle of government announcements. Attention is suddenly

## Andrew Hamilton

given to areas desolated by fire or flood. Women are treated with old fashioned courtesy. Attack dogs are locked behind the shed until needed during the campaign. Offensively cruel policies are softened by freeing a few people from detention. Polls and pollsters, a little motheaten for most of the year, now stride boldly in Persil White togas up to the Capitoline Hill, wreathed in auguries and in hidden knowledge. Everywhere to be seen are signs of inventories being taken, new merchandise being tried out, appearances changed, and the tents on social media and television erected for the big show.

Recently, we saw a trial run — a small election in South Australia, carefully gutted for auguries for the Federal Election. Now the Federal Budget has been brought down. This is a necessary step before the calling of an election in order to provide funds for government. It also allows the Governing party to appear at its wisest and most generous in

meeting the needs of the people. It will have helped to define the issues on which the Election will be fought. The Budget delivered, all is ready for the Election, which we now know will be on May 21.

For many people, the question posed by the election campaign will be how to survive it. It is tempting to dismiss a campaign that sets a Government that has done very little for the last six years against an Opposition that has promised little. If our ideal form of democracy and of the place of elections within it is based on an idealised vision of Athens, in which policies and positions are decided by speeches based in rational argument, then it would be reasonable to ignore the election. The fortunes of government will not be decided by public debate between different visions of the national future. The media tent in which the election campaign is played out will be dominated by commentators who are concerned primarily to embarrass politicians and discover gaffes, to further the fortunes of their own side, and to pick winners and losers. This leaves little space for hearing and weighing argument.

That said, election campaigns are worth attending to. Instead of looking at the earnest faces of those licensed to speak in the tent, however, we should turn away from politics as politics, away from those for whom this is their preferred language, away from those who prey on gaffes and snafus, and away from chest bumpings. We should turn instead to the edges of the tent and those who can be glimpsed there.

The coverage of the election does incidentally give space to voices and faces of bystanders throughout Australia. Behind and around the men of action in their fluorescent jackets, hard helmets, akubras, baseball caps or other props that identify them as ordinary Australians, are people going about their daily business, some intrigued

by what they see, others impatient, but all representing people and places in Australia for whose sake the election matters. By attending to the faces of people who are seen as props to the election campaign, and developing an interest in the often well-researched background of social change in different parts of Australia, and its effect on the predicaments and priorities of the people who live there, we gain a deeper understanding of Australia and its needs. At one level, election campaigns are all showbiz and make believe, but at another, the humanity that they can never quite stifle also punctures the images that the contesting partners project of Australia.

Election campaigns also highlight the gifts and work brought to what is sometimes contemptuously referred to as retail politics — the business that those not gifted for the real business of politics get into. We see political candidates who sought election to serve and not to rule, who will never be government ministers, who are aware of, and focus on, the needs of their constituents, are active in the communities they represent, and contribute to the groups that deal with serious matters of Australian life.

All in all, once we stop looking at what political parties would like us to focus on, election campaigns contain much that is interesting, admirable and thought-provoking. They offer sketches of Australians who have deep needs, and deserve a Government that will take them seriously. They also represent an Australia facing enormous challenges from climate change, inequality and political uncertainty, and deserving a government that will address these challenges seriously.

Andrew Hamilton, SJ, is consulting editor of Eureka Street, and writer at Jesuit Social Services. This article was originally published at [www.eurekastreet.com.au](http://www.eurekastreet.com.au). It is republished here with permission.

## Ronald Rolheiser

# Then God created light again

It doesn't matter whether you picture the origin of time the way science does, as beginning with the Big Bang, or whether you take the biblical account of the origins of the world literally. Either way there was a time before there was light. The universe was dark before God created light. However, eventually the world grew dark again. When?

We are told in the Gospels that, as Jesus was dying on the cross, between the sixth and ninth hour, it grew dark and Jesus cried out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!" What really happened here?

Are the Gospels saying that it actually grew dark in the early afternoon, an eclipse of the sun, or are they referring to another kind of darkness, of a spiritual kind? Was there an eclipse of the sun as Jesus was dying? Perhaps. We don't know, but that is of secondary importance anyway. What the Gospels are referring to is a kind of darkness that envelops us whenever what's precious to us is humiliated, exposed as powerless, ridiculed, terminally defeated, and crucified by our world. There's a darkness that besets us whenever the forces of love seem overpowered by the forces of hatred. The light extinguished then is the light of hope, but there is deeper darkness and this is the kind of darkness that the Gospels say formed a cloud over the world as Jesus hung dying.

What's being insinuated here is that, at Jesus' crucifixion, creation went back to its original chaos, as it was before there was light. But, what's also being insinuated is that God created light a second time, this time by raising Jesus from the dead, and that this new light is the most staggering light of all. Moreover, unlike the original light, which was only physical, this light is a light both for the eyes and for the soul.

For the eyes, the light of the Resurrection is also a radically new physical phenomenon. At the Resurrection of Jesus, the atoms of the planet were shaken up from their normal physical workings. A dead body rose from the grave to a life from which it would never again die. That had never happened before. Moreover, the Resurrec-



Photo: Nathan Watson, Unsplash

tion of Jesus was also a radically new light for the soul, the light of hope. What is this latter light?

There's a famous song written by Robbie Robertson made popular in the early 1970s by Joan Baez, *The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down*. Narrated in the first person by a man called Virgil Caine, the song is a sad lament about the distress experienced by a poor white Southern family during the American Civil War. All that could go wrong for them, seemingly had gone wrong, including the death of their young son, killed in the war. Their situation is dark, lacking any hope. At a point in the song, the narrator offers this lament about his brother's death:

*He was just eighteen, proud and brave  
But a Yankee laid him in his grave  
I swear by the blood below my feet  
You can't raise the Cain back up when it's in*

defeat

Can life be raised back up when it's in defeat? Can a dead body come out of its grave? Can a violated body again become whole? Can lost innocence ever be restored? Can a broken heart ever be mended? Can a crushed hope ever again lift up a soul? Doesn't darkness extinguish all light? What hope was there for Jesus' followers as they witnessed his humiliation and death on Good Friday? When goodness itself gets crucified, what's the basis for any hope?

In two words, the Resurrection. When darkness enveloped the earth a second time, God made light a second time, and that light, unlike the physical light created at the dawn of time, can never be extinguished. That's the difference between the resuscitation of Lazarus and the Resurrection of Jesus, between physical light and the light of the Resurrection. Lazarus was restored to his self-same body from which he had to die again. Jesus was given a radically new body which would never die again.

The renowned biblical scholar Raymond E. Brown tells us that the darkness that beset the world as Jesus hung dying, would last until we believe in the Resurrection. Until we believe that God has a life-giving response for all death, and until we believe God will roll back the stone from any grave, no matter how deeply goodness is buried under hatred and violence, the darkness of Good Friday will continue to darken our planet.

Mohandas K. Gandhi once observed that we can see the truth of God always creating new light, simply by looking at history: "When I despair, I remember that, all through history, the way of truth and love has always won. There have been murderers and tyrants, and for a time they can seem invincible. But in the end, they always fall. Think of it, always."

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# Catholic social teaching vs woke

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less."

This statement, from Lewis Carroll's 19th century "Through the Looking Glass", echoes down to our time and to our place. We now have a law in New Zealand that allows for the prescription of "safe areas" near abortion facilities on a case-by-case basis. It is hard to image a greater misnomer. As Maria Steen wrote recently in *The Irish Times*, that "the very idea that a hospital carrying out a procedure to end an innocent life has to be surrounded by a 'safe zone' is an affront, not only to morality, but also to language".

She went on to write about society's "unquestioning acceptance of the euphemisms that have come to dominate all discourse on abortion". Full marks to *The Irish Times* for allowing Steen's view to be published, rather than "cancelled", but her voice is a rarity in today's media. One of the primary ways in which the prevailing discourse on topics like abortion is spread is through media. And media is not what it used to be. The make-up of newsrooms has changed much over recent decades. Veteran New Zealand journalist Karl du Fresne noted on his blog that today's newsrooms are dominated by "youngish, university-educated" people who are predominantly middle-class, as against the newsrooms of the yesteryear where the trade of journalism was learned on the job, and its practitioners were mainly working class.

He cited US journalist Batya Ungar-Sargon, who has written of the "woke" takeover of journalism. This "permeates almost every aspect of news coverage and commentary,

## Editorial

from what the media choose to cover (and just as crucially, what they decide to ignore) through to the way the news is presented and the editorial tone in which it's reported, all of which tends to reinforce prevailing ideological orthodoxy".

Earlier this year, speaking to diplomats, Pope Francis criticised what he called "a mindset that rejects the natural foundations of humanity and the cultural roots that constitute the identity of many peoples". He also deplored "ideological colonisation" that "leaves no room for freedom of expression".

"A kind of 'one-track thinking' is taking shape," he continued, "one constrained to deny history or, worse yet, to rewrite it in terms of present-day categories, whereas any historical situation must be interpreted in accordance with a hermeneutics of that particular time."

So who gets to decide the "one-track thinking" that so pervades newsrooms?

Speaking to *Angelus News* last year, Bishop Robert Barron stated that "the advocates of the so-called 'woke' ideology today have not been shy about articulating the philosophical underpinnings of their perspective. They do indeed find inspiration in Marx, Nietzsche, Sartre, Derrida, and Foucault, among others".

Bishop Barron wrote that 'woke' ideology derives several principles from writers like these, such as the world being divided sharply into the oppressors and the oppressed, an emphasis on categories and classifications with collective guilt, and the employment of "divisive and aggressive strategies of accusation that are contrary to the Gospel demand to love our enemies".

"Suffice it to say that Catholic Social Teaching stands athwart all of this," Bishop Barron continued. "It wants social justice, of course, but not on 'woke' terms. Its heroes are not Marx, Nietzsche, and Foucault, but rather Isaiah, Amos, Jeremiah, Jesus the Lord, Ambrose, Aquinas, and Teresa of Calcutta". "I fear that a lot of Catholics, legitimately concerned about societal injustice and eager to do something about it, will turn, not to our biblically-based and deeply wise social teaching tradition, but rather to the philosophy that's currently in the air."

Bishop Barron lamented the fact that "the Church's social doctrine, like the documents of Vatican II, is still largely unknown to huge numbers of Catholics". Maybe this could be a topic for a future synod?

## The Habit



## Letters

### Blasphemy

In the article about the softening attitude to blasphemy (*NZ Catholic*, May 7) Fr Duffy said that the Catholic Church should and does encourage respect for the name of God by teaching the Ten Commandments.

I know I learnt the Ten Commandments at school (a long time ago), but how often do we have a reminder in a Sunday homily of any of the Ten Commandments and their implications in our lives, or reminders of our reverence for the name of Jesus Christ? Not very often.

I know the homilies are supposed to be based around the Mass readings, but I think reminders of other matters of faith should not be overlooked.

More importantly, I would like to hear reminders of the miracle that occurs at every Mass: the Consecration, and how reverently we should receive the Blessed Sacrament.

Kathleen Kenrick, Dunedin.

### Culture

A question we Catholics must surely be asking ourselves is, "What are the root causes of the issues resulting in suicides so evident in our young people?"

What situations prevail to cause our young people to consider ending such mentally-troubled lives? What kind of society

produces the epidemic we observe in our young people's lives, resulting in attempted and successful suicides?

I guess it's not trendy or acceptable any more to simplify such important and complex issues. It's too easy and naïve to even suggest that we live in a culture that scorns pro-life decisions based on Christians commands such as "Thou shalt not kill". Simply put, "love God, love your neighbour" is much too restricting. Let's bring in catchphrases like "freedom of choice", "my body, my decision", and other such fallacies and selfish statements. Align this with large amounts of narcissism and blatant consumerism, and you then have the recipe for the anti-life epidemic that we have in this country today.

What value does a young person see in his or her life when we abort 600,000 "problems", or allow old people to choose to take their lives legally, by injection? Surely, the resultant and proven mental trauma allied to abortion and euthanasia are reason enough to take a long, hard look at the society we have produced.

Alarming, we Catholics do not reflect statistically any contrary opposition to this prevailing situation.

John Farrell, Pukekohe.

### Evolution

Communism denies the existence and omnipotence of God, along with

Him being the Architect of all creation.

Our Lady of Fatima issued many warnings about communism after the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Thanks be to God that Pope Francis consecrated both Russia and Ukraine to her Immaculate Heart just recently.

When it comes to errors in the field of science, the theory of evolution is unfortunately one misguided hypothesis because it is not grounded in factual truth.

Genetic science tells us that typically males have one X and Y chromosome (XY) while females have two X chromosomes (XX). Even an ultrasound scan can detect this biological reality in utero.

The naturalist Charles Darwin had scant or little knowledge of genetic or hereditary science. Likewise, he was unable to explain endemic species being specific to certain countries.

The accredited botanist and monk, Gregor Mendel, correctly posited that traits are produced by genes, alleles. These make up the DNA of all life forms, such as eye colour.

Reportedly Darwin never intended his theory of evolution to end up as fake science or even a fake religion.

Indeed, God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform: He plants his footsteps in the sea, And rides upon the storm.

E. Smith, Waitakere City

### Euthanasia

The Ministry of Health's Registrar [assisted dying] Dr Kristin Good, has provided her first quarterly report on the assisted dying service.

Sixty-six vulnerable patients were killed by the state in the period between the End of Life Choice Act coming into force on November 7, 2021 and March 31, 2022. These patients were killed by a doctor with a lethal injection or assisted in their suicide.

The government of Jacinda Arden pays doctors up to \$3000 for each patient they kill and remove from the health system.

In November, the Minister of Health stated that New Zealand was now ready for assisted death. This quarterly report should fill our souls with terror and apprehension, as we consider living in a state where the government is prepared to decide who should live and who shall be killed, all under the guise of a health service.

When the state assumes the right to decide whose lives are of value and who may be killed, we are living in a tyrannical state. Would you entrust your family into the hands of a doctor who was prepared to kill you as a treatment option?

Right To Life is committed to the repeal of the End of Life Choice Act 2019.

Ken Orr, Christchurch.

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# Come, dream with me a dream that is coming true

Dear young people — it is especially you I am thinking of as I allow these thoughts to unravel. You will be architects of the future. Amazing science and technology will open doors we haven't even come to yet. Hopefully, you will always be guided by what it means to be authentically human, which involves more than what science and technology can tell us. In fact, it also helps us to safeguard against the abuse of science and technology.

You might glean from these ponderings that I am a fan of Professor Brian Cox. As a former musician with the British bands D:Ream and Dare, and associate of Monty Python's comedy troupe, Cox presumably believes life is to be enjoyed. He is right. As

## Peter Cullinane

professor of particle physics in the School of Physics and Astronomy, University of Manchester, and BBC documentary presenter, he clearly finds the universe cause for great wonder.

It's interesting that science and faith both evoke a sense of wonder and awe. Science is in wonder at what exists, from its smallest details to its greatest dimensions. No matter how far back scientists look for the universe's origins, science can only wonder at what exists. Faith is in wonder that anything exists at all, because God didn't need to create. We need to find ourselves in wonder at what it means to be part of something that might not have existed. *"The world will never starve from want of wonders; it will starve from want of wonder."* (G.K. Chesterton.)

I find myself both enchanted and challenged by the history of the universe — 13.8 billion years to the first stars; now billions of stars within each galaxy, and trillions of galaxies, and planets formed by the stars; our planet formed from colliding debris over 4.5 billion years, at just the right distance from the sun for life to develop; distances measured in billions of light years; gravitational forces that could kick planets into different trajectories; the combination of variables that gave us the world that is, instead of all the others that could have been but never will be. . . ! And planet earth is microscopic within our solar system, let alone within the wider universe of other galaxies.

### ■ Special

But it is also special. The massive transformations that were part of its geo-history led to further transformations in the development of life in its marvellous and complex forms (bio-history). Last of all, and very late, human life emerged, and what emerges from human freedom — human history. Each of those histories, reason for unending awe.

Eventually, out of what had been a vast wasteland of rock, volcanos, lava, gases and acidic seas, someone called Beethoven surfaced, who could pull together the sounds that make a symphony. At the right time, unlikely raw materials had been transformed into a variety of instruments and delicate sounds that would beautifully blend and move together — moving us and drawing us together. That's a

long way from when the first boulders bashed against each other to form a planet capable of this — and every other wonder like it.

But if the past is mind-boggling, it's the future that really challenges me. Our planet, scientists say, is destined to end up like the other planets — burned out and dead! Some scientists surmise that, by the time planet earth dies, we will have established ourselves on some other planet(s). Who knows? What we do know is that any planet that might have lit up to become our new home had better not count on getting its heat from the sun; it will have been the sun's demise that ensures earth's demise. Cruising around from one dying planet to another seems a lot of trouble to go to for unpromising returns.

Brian Cox relishes life; he says life is what gives the universe its meaning. With sincerity and courage, he asks all the hard questions. Following the evidence of the sciences, he tells us that, in some trillions of years, all the other suns will have burned out like our own, and "all life and all meaning" will vanish with them. Where there was void before our universe came into existence, there will be void again. I suggest the question of meaning cannot so easily be put aside. Even if, as some surmise, our universe originated from some previous universe that also came and went, and so on over and over, the question always remains: why is there not just nothing at all?

Of course, time is on humanity's side: the sun is good for another five billion years. But however long or short the time-frame, it matters now because it is our present lives that are either pointless already if they are pointless in the end; or wonderful already if they are on their way to a wonderful future.

The overall direction of evolution has been towards life, with its potential for more wonderful and complex transformations. Can evolution deliver what it seems to promise? Or is it just part of the planet's life and destined to share its fate?

### ■ Transformation

There was one transformation within the life of the planet that was qualitatively different from all others. It reached right into the life of the planet, but took that life beyond anything evolution could do. The Incarnation is about God's personal participation in the life of the planet and in human history — surpassing all other reasons for wonder, joy and thanksgiving! A creation in which God has a stake is a creation with a future! Jesus' life — bringing healing, hope, peace, forgiveness and compassion into people's lives — ratified human nature's deep hunch that this is what we were made for. And his Resurrection confirmed that death does not have the last word.

Those who were witnesses to these things summed them up in their message that all creation is being "made new" — with a newness that creation cannot bring about for itself. There is much at stake on this claim, because it means our lives will matter forever. The whole of life is different — already — when we know that: all the good fruits of human nature, and all the good fruits of human enterprise, we shall find

“The world will never starve from want of wonders; it will starve from want of wonder.”  
— G.K. Chesterton.

Photo: Jeremy Thomas, Unsplash

again, cleansed and transfigured. (Second Vatican Council, Church in the World, 39)

People we love, times that were special, good things we have done, all somehow belong with us in our future. What is truly precious to us now is never really lost. The sacrifices we make for what is good and right and just, do count. The planet Brian Cox has good reason to love, we have even greater reason to love.

So, how does this picture of our future sit with science's claim that our planet will die? Some believe our spirits go off to heaven, leaving material creation behind. That view originates from ancient pagan belief that material things are somehow bad and ultimately don't belong. Christian belief is different, based on the ancient Hebrew belief that God made the whole of creation "good", and human life "very good". Our bodies are part of what it means to be human. It is our human nature, and the whole of creation, that is being "made new".

The early Christians spoke of the risen Christ as the "first fruits" of this new creation. They emphasised that his Resurrection involved his whole human nature. It was bodily, but was not a return to this life. It belongs to creation "made new". In this new form they experienced his real presence among them. Reflecting on their experience, they now realised it was to be expected: "In a little while the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live on, and you too will live" (John 14:19).

### ■ God's Plan

God's plan for our future does not discard material creation. It is the present form of material creation that will pass. It will be transformed in the way that Jesus was transformed through his death and Resurrection. We don't have language for that, because language is based on our experience of the world in its present form.

It hardly matters that the planet in its present form will die. What matters is that the Incarnation brought about a transformation that continues. What that leads to is what we call heaven. There is more to the Incarnation than Santa Claus at Christmas and chocolate bunnies at Easter.

I indicated at the outset that our participation in the life of the planet and human history needs to be guided by what it means to be authentically human. Much hangs on this, including how we use the sciences and technology. So, what does "authentic" mean in this context?

In the second century, St Irenaeus said that we are never more fully alive

and true to our own nature than when we "see God". Pausing to know we are in God's presence sharpens our realisation that God never owed us our existence, or needed to create; we are part of what might never have been. That's marvellous: it means that God, who didn't need us, wanted us! When we know that, we become more alive.

That also means our existence is pure gift; so, we are true to ourselves most of all when we are being given, i.e. being there for others — in all the ways required by right relationships, with each other and with all creation. That is being true to our human nature — "authentic".

It involves loving others the way God loves us: love that isn't owed or measured or needing to be deserved is a circuit breaker — the kind of love that changes everything, and the only kind that can! Many religious orders, and lay movements based on the Gospel, were founded to put that kind of loving into action. Outside the Catholic tradition, it is exemplified in those religious movements which were based on the twin focus of social activism and a spiritual basis — e.g. Methodism, Quakerism, and many others. Catholic social teachings about the dignity of every person and the sacredness of every life; the common good, including our common home; solidarity and option for the poor, are all premised on it. It's hardly surprising St John Paul II insisted that "humanity is the route the Church must take".

Being true to our nature — "authentic" — is compromised wherever a narrow focus on our own rights blinds us to our responsibility to be there "for others"; wherever deeper moments for noticing God's presence are crowded out by noise, hurry, and the pressures of modern living; where the fast flow of information displaces understanding and wisdom; wherever superficiality replaces depth — (e.g. where even news programmes are presented through the prism of entertainment, sometimes even called "shows").

Authenticity involves being counter-cultural. Knowing this, St John Paul II told the New Zealand bishops to "make a systematic effort in your dioceses and parishes to open new doors to the experience of Christian prayer and contemplation" (*Ad Limina* visit, 1998). Contemplation means "seeing God", noticing God's presence, in the midst of life. This changes how we think and act. That is what the Gospel means by "repentance" and conversion. It's about how we participate in creation's newness, and its future.

Bishop Peter Cullinane is Bishop Emeritus of Palmerston North diocese.



# Deacon takes on new role with religious order

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference adviser Deacon Danny Karatea-Goddard has been appointed co-chief executive Māori-Tumu Whakarae of the Sisters of Compassion Group, the religious order founded by Meri Hōhepa Mother Suzanne Aubert.

He joins Dr Chris Gallavin (appointed in March 2021) as co-chief executive-Tumu Whakarae of the group.

Deacon Karatea-Goddard comes to the Sisters of Compassion from roles including Māori adviser with the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference and Vicar for Māori with the Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington.

Sister Margaret Anne Mills of the Sisters of Compassion said that the appointment builds on Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert's bicultural work with Māori, especially at Jerusalem

of Compassion in Island Bay on May 23 at 10am, followed later by a pōwhiri in Hiruhārama Jerusalem, where Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert is recognised for her work with Māori communities.

of the Whanganui River in the 1880s: "Our multicultural reality is only made real, and will only be successful, if we understand our bicultural foundation. We hold that the work of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert is of pivotal importance in our journey toward true partnership in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is an expression of our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi."

Deacon Karatea-Goddard said that his appointment is particularly personal: "A number of my aunts, my children and I have been recipients of the mission of Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. To be able to serve the Sisters of Compassion whānau is a privilege, and I am excited to join them, as we explore deepening our commitment to biculturalism as we move into a new future in these uncertain times."

A pōwhiri for Deacon Karatea-Goddard will be held at Our Lady's Home

of Compassion in Island Bay on May 23 at 10am, followed later by a pōwhiri in Hiruhārama Jerusalem, where Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert is recognised for her work with Māori communities.

The Venerable Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert (1835-1926) founded the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion (the Sisters of Compassion) in 1892. She was a friend and advocate for Māori, children, the poor and the sick/disabled, with the sisters continuing her work to this day. Among her many achievements, she founded the Compassion Soup Kitchen in Wellington, which is still run by the sisters. The sisters are at present considering their next step in Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert's path to sainthood, which has been delayed by a Vatican committee ruling that a possible miracle attributed to her could be explained by medical science.



Deacon Danny Karatea-Goddard

# Museum, research and archive centre opened in Far North

by ALICIA JACOBS and WIGA AUTET

Saturday, April 23, in Motuti, Hokianga, saw the opening at a dawn ceremony of the Raiātea Resource and Archive Centre, located by the Tamatea Marae.

After eight years of hard work, commitment, aroha, and the generosity of many, and after overcoming many hurdles and stumbling blocks (Covid-19, just to mention the most obvious), this has become a reality. It is the first and only hapū-owned and operated museum, research and learning centre in this country. A team appointed by the late Pā Henare Tate reportedly brought the project to fruition.

Raiātea houses over 10,000 items showcasing the history of the Hokianga and of the Te Tai Tokerau/ Northland. It also documents the beginnings of the Catholic faith in Aotearoa/ New Zealand, displaying a fine and rare collection of Māori and Catholic artefacts, manuscripts, sacred items, chalices, vestments, sculptures, photos, and ornaments — some of which date to Bishop Pompallier's arrival to Hokianga in 1838. The aim of the centre is to make these treasures widely accessible to local whānau and the wider community, and to facilitate studying and learning about local whānau and/or an individual's history and whakapapa.

Raiātea is a physical space where the treasures, memories and connections originated from meet-



Two sisters of the late Pa Henare Tate, for whom this museum was a long-term dream, unveil the name "Raiātea"

ings, relationships, conversations, work, events of life — are held and strengthened by the tāonga. Once gathered, they can be then further studied, documented, and cherished.

The Te Ao Maori News website reported that, in 2019, then Associate Arts, Culture and Heritage Minister Grant Robertson agreed to grant \$300,000 to Motuti Marae Trust for the Raiātea Whare Taonga Resource and Archive Centre project.

Later in the morning on April 23, the Tamatea Marae was jam-packed with the whānau and manuhiri for the Miha hura kōhatu whakamaumahara/the

Mass for the unveiling of Pā Henare Arekātera Tate.

It was noted that Bishop Pompallier had wished to learn about the Māori experience of God, and how he wanted to bridge that to the Catholic faith.

"Faith is calling us to be the best as who we are — Māori, Pākeha, Filipino, Tongan, and others. Our culture shines through us as we are being called to the wholeness and holiness," said Bishop Stephen Lowe. The last part of the unveiling / hura kōhatu took place at the urupa/cemetery by Hāta Maria church.

(Alicia Jacobs ngā Kaihoe o Raiātea, Motuti, and Wiga Autet, Faith Formation Coordinator for Northland, Diocese of Auckland)



An early portrait of Bishop Pompallier



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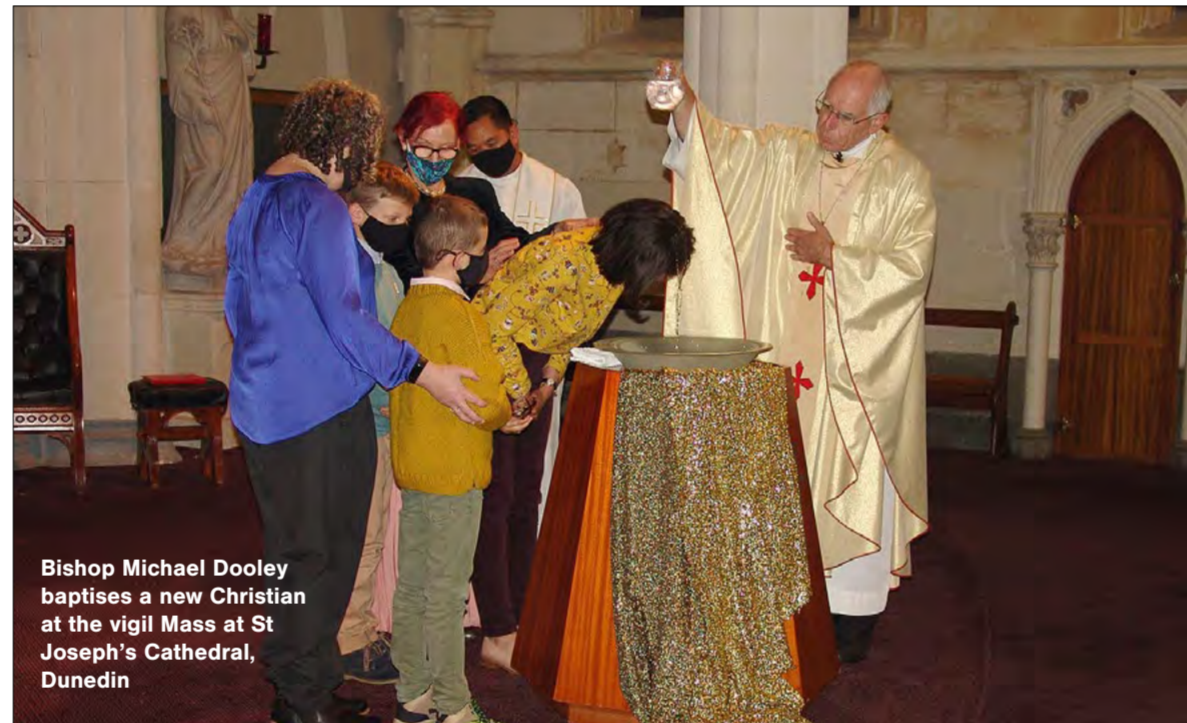
# Easter Triduum and Holy Week in New Zealand



Father Mark Field, with Deacon Nick Bruce and parish pastoral assistant John Marneth-Rust washes feet on Holy Thursday at St Joseph's church, Te Aroha.



Bishop Michael Dooley with the cross at the Good Friday service at St Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin.



Bishop Michael Dooley baptises a new Christian at the vigil Mass at St Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin



People venerate the cross on Good Friday outside St Patrick's Cathedral after a Stations of the Cross walk from Albert Park.



Stations of the Cross during a walk from St Anne's Anglican church, Northland, Wellington, to St Thomas More church, Wilton, Wellington.

He is Risen.  
Alleluia, Alleluia



Bell ringers Tookoua and Lucy Holy ringing the bell 30 times before the Good Friday service at St Mary's church, Whanganui.



Fr Chris Friel with the Easter candle at the vigil at Timaru.



Summer Williams is baptised (Sponsor: Georgina Warren) by Fr Mark Field at Te Aroha.

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Pope Francis washes the feet of an inmate during the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper at a prison in Civitavecchia, Italy, on April 14.



Pope Francis kisses the foot of an inmate after washing it

### Scenes from Holy Thursday and Good Friday celebrations involving Pope Francis



Pope Francis breathes on chrim oil, a gesture symbolising the infusion of the Holy Spirit, as he celebrates Holy Thursday chrim Mass in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on April 14.



Pope Francis kisses the crucifix during the Good Friday Liturgy of the Lord's Passion in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on April 15.



People participate in the Way of the Cross presided at by Pope Francis outside the Colosseum in Rome April 15 (CNS Photos)



Pope Francis greets the crowd during his Easter message and blessing 'urbi et orbi' (to the city and the world) delivered from the central balcony of St Peter's Basilica on April 17 (CNS Photos)

## Christ's Resurrection brings hope amid 'Easter of war' says Pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The joy of Christ's Resurrection is needed now more than ever in a time when war in Ukraine and other parts of the world make the hope for peace seem like an illusion, Pope Francis said before giving his Easter blessing.

Like the disciples who were at first doubtful of Jesus rising from the dead, "our eyes, too, are incredulous on this Easter of war", the Pope said as he prepared on April 17 to give his Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" ("to the city and the world").

"We have seen all too much blood, all too much violence. Our hearts, too, have been filled with fear and anguish, as so many of our brothers and sisters have had to lock themselves away in order to be safe from bombing," he said.

Nevertheless, Christ's victory over death "is not an illusion" and the world needs "the crucified and risen Lord so that we can believe in the victory of love, and hope for reconciliation".

Earlier in the day, the Vatican said that an estimated 55,000 pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square in the first outdoor Easter Mass since the Covid-19 pandemic began in 2020. A vast floral arrangement adorned the steps leading to the basilica, highlighting the festive atmosphere.

According to Vatican News, the display of flowers, imported from the Netherlands, featured more than 40,000 individual flowers, plants and trees, including tulips, daffodils, and birch trees, that accented the joyful celebration of Christ's Resurrection.

Pope Francis did not deliver a homily during the Mass; instead, a hushed silence filled the packed square for several minutes of quiet, prayerful reflection.

As Mass progressed, tens of thousands more began lining the streets outside the square. The Vatican said that police estimated 100,000 people had gathered for the post-Mass blessing.

Before the blessing, the Pope, standing on the central balcony of St Peter's Basilica, addressed the crowd. However, due to knee problems that have caused him difficulty walking and standing for long periods of time, the Pope sat and spoke for part of his address.

### ■ Endless Lent

In his address, the Pope said that the joyous announcement of Jesus' Resurrection is sorely needed "at the end of a Lent that has seemed endless".

"We emerged from two years of pandemic, which took a heavy toll," the Pope said. "It was time to come out of the tunnel together, hand in hand, pooling our strengths and resources."

However, the Pope said that, instead of unity, the world has shown that "we still have within us the spirit of Cain, who saw Abel not as a brother, but as a rival, and thought about how to eliminate him".

Only Christ, he added, who bears the wounds inflicted "upon him by our sins, by our hardness of heart, by our fratricidal hatred" has the right "to speak to us of peace".

"The wounds on the body of the risen Jesus are the sign of the battle he fought and won for us, won with the weapons of love, so that we might have peace and remain in peace," the Pope said.

Continuing his address, Pope Francis prayed for peace in Ukraine, and for its people who have been "sorely tried" by the "cruel and senseless war into which it was dragged", and he urged world leaders to listen to the "people's plea for peace".

"May there be an end to the flexing of muscles while people are suffering," the Pope said. "Please, let us not get used to war! Let us all commit ourselves to imploring peace, from our balconies and in our streets!"

The Pope also prayed for the countless Ukrainian refugees forced to flee the horrors of war, especially children who were left orphaned.

"As we look at them, we cannot help but hear their cry of pain, along with that of all those other children who suffer throughout our world: those dying of hunger or lack of medical care, those who are victims of abuse and violence, and those denied the right to be born," he prayed.

Pope Francis also prayed that the war in Ukraine may make the world more aware of the suffering caused by war in other parts of the world, especially in the Middle East, which has been "racked by years of conflict and division."

### ■ Peace

The Pope prayed for peace in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, as well as the Holy Land.

"May Israelis, Palestinians and all who dwell in the holy city, together with the pilgrims, experience the beauty of peace, dwell in fraternity, and enjoy free access to the holy places in mutual respect for the rights of each," he said.

He also called for peace in Myanmar, Afghanistan, Libya and Yemen, a country he said "suffers from a conflict forgotten by all, with continuous victims".

The Pope prayed that Jesus would bring peace to the African continent "so that the exploitation it suffers and the haemorrhaging caused by terrorist attacks — particularly in the Sahel region — may cease, and that it may find concrete support in the fraternity of the peoples".

He also prayed that Ethiopia may continue on the path of reconciliation and dialogue, and for an end to violence in the Congo. The Pope also expressed solidarity for the people of South Africa who have suffered due to devastating floods in the eastern part of the country.

Turning his attention toward Latin America, Pope Francis prayed for its people "who have seen their social conditions worsen in these difficult times of pandemic, exacerbated as well by instances of crime, violence, corruption and drug trafficking".

He also prayed for the Indigenous people of Canada, whom he met earlier in the month to apologise for the Church's role in running residential schools, where many children suffered abuse.

"Let us ask the risen Lord to accompany the journey of reconciliation that the Catholic Church in Canada is making with the Indigenous peoples. May the spirit of the risen Christ heal the wounds of the past, and dispose hearts to seek truth and fraternity," he said.

Standing up from his seat before delivering his blessing, Pope Francis said that, while the world suffers the consequences of war, the resurrected Christ who conquered death "exhorts us not to surrender to evil and violence".

"May we be won over by the peace of Christ! Peace is possible; peace is a duty; peace is everyone's primary responsibility!" the Pope said.

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# Author of priest novel suffers devastating fire

by MINA AMSO

A Kiwi Catholic author has lost half of his land in the Far North in a large bush fire, just a month after publishing a novel about two Catholic priests, one of whom is an exorcist.

It took five helicopters and 25 men several hours to extinguish the fire. The blaze caught on to Mark Chamberlain's grass and eventually burned through his land, leaving most of his orchard and irrigation system destroyed, costing him "a lot to fix and get back".

"My major source of income was being cut in half," he said. His house was spared, and luckily no one was hurt.

"It strikes me as ironic that nothing like that has ever happened before. I might be reading something into it, but yeah."

The Northland-based author said he was proud of his latest work. "I thought it was bloomin' good, I am happy with it," he laughed, despite the trials and tribulations he's encountered since it has been published.

*Only a Priest*, a novel published in February this year, and inspired by true events, is about a young parish priest who calls for help in dealing with a problem beyond his experience and capability. A veteran priest comes out of unwanted retirement to answer the call. The story is centered around friendship, priesthood, the devil and exorcism.

Mr Chamberlain knew that, in writing this novel, he was opening himself up to the enemy, he said. "The devil is always trying to destroy and defame all the things, he's always on our case. I just thought I'd be sweet, my faith was strong and I've got a good strong prayer life, but I wasn't anticipating what's happened".

"You start upsetting the enemy. He will come at you. It will come at a price," Mr Chamberlain said. In ret-

spect, he said that's "the price you pay when you take [the devil] on".

"[Writing the book was] just affecting my marriage too. Beginning to think that I wasn't worthy of my wife. She would be better off without me, all of that sort of nonsense. Which I kind of recognised it was a thinking that comes when you're under attack but still very real, very hard to deal with."

He said that, during the entire 20th century, it is hard to find any books written about the devil, and "of course that's his great victory. To make us believe he doesn't exist. To make people think that, if they talk about it, they are going to be regarded as on the fringe, nutters".

Mr Chamberlain said it is good to talk about love and positive things, but if you have an enemy and you ignore the fact that you do, and you never talk about it, that's dangerous too.

The author had moments when he felt the devil would tempt him to want to lose interest in this book, not go on a book tour, not speak to anyone about it and lose his faith. "I didn't think it was going to be this tough. But I am getting through it. The fire was the worst."

## Reasons

The 68-year-old author, originally from Taranaki, said the [mainstream] media were doing a "real job on the Catholic priesthood".

"They leave every other church alone, but they really attack us, and they attack us through our priests, and it's so difficult to be a priest these days. I have friends who are priests, and I see the things they go through and I understand why there's so few vocations. We have to rely on Filipinos and Indians and people from overseas who now regard New Zealand as a missionary country.

"Priesthood is a real sacrificial life of heroism these days. There's no



Author Martin Chamberlain

kudos in it. People look down on the priest almost, outside the Church. So, I wanted to write a book that celebrated priesthood; that showed it for what it is, a very, very difficult vocation in this age."

Mr Chamberlain was inspired by the life of a priest friend of his who was a missionary, broken by Pakistan [while serving as a soldier], lost his vocation, became an alcoholic, and came back to New Zealand. He became a down and outer, actually slept under Grafton Bridge sometimes, but got his vocation back, and found his way back to the diocesan priesthood.

"I wanted to take the narrative of when he [the priest] came back to the priesthood and like the whiskey priest (the unnamed main protagonist in Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory*) — a failed human being who just overcomes this terrible sense of unworthiness and disbe-

lieves in God's mercy, and becomes a priest again. He's also appointed as the diocesan exorcist and he goes north to deal with a case to help a young priest who's in his parish.

Mr Chamberlain has 16 books under his belt, including his most popular *Lawrence — The Prince of Arabia — Desert Wolf*, and *With a Father Like Mine*. He said the response to his latest addition has been "heartening".

A book tour was meant to take place in 2021, but the pandemic threw a spanner in the works, so he is hoping to make another book tour this year and share with New Zealand what *Only a Priest* is about.

Mr Chamberlain attends St Joseph's parish in Kaitiaki. He resides in Kaingaroa, in the Far North.

*Only a Priest* is available on Amazon. Mr Chamberlain's blog here: <https://mochamberlain.wordpress.com>

## Family Matters

Helen Luxford



## Eastertide

Just before Easter, we went back to the orange "traffic light" setting. Finally. I wasn't entirely sure what that meant and what difference it would make for me. The biggest relief seemed to be that access to church just got much easier! The limits on gatherings dropped, as did the requirement to wear face masks, although this was still encouraged. This was great news for the Catholic and Christian communities, and all the other faiths that want to gather indoors in community. We celebrated by getting to church. Sitting there for the Easter services, I realised that it felt a bit foreign now, sitting in community, with quite a few not wearing masks. Hopefully, we are moving back towards normality. I'm back on the train for my commute, however Covid is still around — we have had friends in isolation for Easter and the following week due to a child getting Covid from kindy.

Easter is the weekend before Anzac, so we get two long weekends and three short weeks in a row. I feel that this is a much-

needed break for many of us. Both of these long weekends are in the school holidays. Easter often sneaks up on us. We've spent two weeks of Lent with Covid and in isolation. I am glad to have Covid behind us, in terms of my family, though you can, of course, get it more than once, so it may only be our first experience of this. I am hoping that being back to something closer to normality means easier access to confession. We will have our third child going through the sacramental programme face-to-face, as it were, which is a relief. The world is moving on and learning to live with Covid. Viruses will always be a threat to humans. This won't be the last pandemic we face, though thankfully the mortality rate has been at the lower end of the range.

Eastertide is the period of 50 days, spanning from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. Each Sunday of the season is treated as a Sunday of Easter. Pentecost is June 5 this year. So, we have plenty of time to enjoy church and embrace this Easter season.

Pentecost means the fiftieth day, and is also known as Whit Sunday or Whitsunday, and is observed 10 days after the Ascension. This holy day commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit in the form of flames to the Apostles and other followers of Jesus Christ, as recorded in Acts 2:1-31. This helps inform the Catholic understanding of the Holy Trinity, and is a pivotal piece of our Catholic faith, one of the great mysteries of the Church.

There is so much focus on the Easter bunny and hot cross buns and chocolate Easter eggs at present, so it doesn't seem like there is much awareness of the true meaning of Easter.

On the last day of school (Holy Thursday), when walking the kids home, our youngest asked us about Jesus dying on the cross. She said that one of the girls at school told her that this couldn't be the case because it's called Good Friday. She said, well, I told her it was true that Jesus died on the cross, but she has a good point Mummy, why do we call it Good

Friday? I was quite heartened and intrigued to hear of this conversation on the playground at a state primary school! There seem to be a few explanations of why it's called Good Friday — the use of the word "Good" in terms of being Pious or Holy, a corruption of "God Friday", and the retrospective knowledge that Jesus dying on the cross was good for humankind, as he took our sins away.

I hope that, for all of us, this Eastertide can be a source of hope and renewal of our faith, as we are welcomed back to a full life in the Church in our communities, as we embrace living with Covid in New Zealand.

Acts 2:4; "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Helen Luxford is a physician, working part-time. She is a parishioner of St Michael's, Remuera. Together with her husband Michael, they are raising their children in the Catholic Faith and reflecting on the challenges and joys that brings.

# The man who never was

by NEVIL GIBSON

War movies come in two broad categories: those showing courage, self-sacrifice and heroism in a good cause; and those revealing the futility of conflict, human losses and the cynical decisions that led to them.

The wars themselves also come in both categories, though it often takes historical hindsight to provide the correct pigeonhole. Historian Rowan Light, in his new book *Anzac Nations*, tracks the changing attitudes toward war commemoration, which range from respectful honour through indifference to hostility.

In the decade or so after 1945, the British movie industry turned out a dozen or more titles that mostly celebrated heroic successes and who did them. They included battles at sea (*The Cruel Sea*, *The Battle of the River Plate*, *The Cockleshell Heroes*), in the air (*Reach for the Sky*, *The Dam Busters*), and on the land (*The Bridge on the River Kwai*, *Ice Cold in Alex*).

Prisoner of war dramas were popular (*The Colditz Story*, *The Wooden Horse*, *Danger Within*) as were ones involving special agents (*Carve Her Name with Pride*, *Odette*, *They Who Dare*, *I Was Monty's Double*).

One, I fondly recall, had an intriguing title: *The Man Who Never Was* (1956). British Intelligence floated a body of a Royal Marines officer on to the Spanish coast in the hope false documents he carried would find their way to the Abwehr in Berlin. The aim was to persuade Hitler that the Allied invasion from North Africa in 1943 would start in Greece rather than Sicily.

The ruse was eventually judged a success, as German troops were redeployed. The deception even led to the Germans refusing to believe a similar



Matthew Macfadyen and Colin Firth in a scene from the movie *Operation Mincemeat*

## Movie Review

occurrence involving real documents recovered from a senior officer killed during the Allied invasion of Holland a year later.

The movie was based on a memoir by one of its two key protagonists, Ewen Montagu, and has now been remade as *Operation Mincemeat* (Transmission). Its source is a book (1998) and subsequent BBC documentary (2010) by the prolific espionage writer Ben Macintyre (*The Spy and the Traitor*).

The result is a focus on factual events, with a romantic subplot involving Montagu (Colin Firth) and his secretary (Kelly Macdonald) replacing a fictitious one in the original movie of a pro-Nazi Irish spy trying to track down the bogus Major William Martin, whose body was that of an indigent addict.

Director John Madden (*Shake-*

*speare in Love*, the two *Marigold Hotels*) and screenwriter Michelle Ashford add political intrigue to the ethical issues, with Montagu having a potentially traitorous communist brother, and an extended account of events in Spain after the body is found.

This has less interest than the office politics in *Whitehall*, but fills out the story without revealing whether the Germans wholly fell for the deception. The cast also includes Matthew Macfadyen (*Succession*) as Montagu's collaborator, Charles Colmondeley, Penelope Wilton as Hester Leggett, who ran the office, and Johnny Flynn as the young Ian Fleming, who a few years later wrote the first of his James Bond thrillers.

Rating: Mature audiences. 128 minutes.

## CLIPS

### The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent (Studio Canal)

The Nicolas Cage cult was first noted in these columns in the May 31, 2020, issue. Cage turned his back on A-list movies two decades ago in favour of making four lesser ones a year, every year. Typically, he goes mad or bad, unless he is doing a cameo. Now he has an entire film based on this persona, as he is invited to a birthday bash by a mystery billionaire, who is a big fan and wants Cage to act as himself in a movie. It's a conceit that has launched too many Hollywood movies, but Cage cultists won't mind as the washed-up actor becomes part of a kidnapping plot set in Mallorca. The many references to past Cage movies are only part of the fun, as are the car chases, gunfights and an alter ego. Pedro Pascal (*The Mandalorian*) plays the billionaire, with all the panache of Burt Reynolds, who in *The Last Movie Star* (2017) gives Cage a run for his money in the over-the-hill acting stakes. Written and directed by Tom Gormican with co-writer Kevin Etten. Rating: Restricted to audiences over 13. 107 minutes.

### House of Gucci (MGM/United Pictures)

I missed the cinema release of Sir Ridley Scott's Oscar-nominated story of the Italian luxury goods clan, but was fortunate to see it at a private screening in 4K UHD, the highest technical standard in digital. The sumptuous sets and clothes do not distract from an Anglicised staging of how the Gucci family lost control to a corporate entity through the marriage of social climber Patrizia Reggiani (Lady Gaga) to an heir, Maurizio (Adam Driver). At first, she outwits him, his ailing father (Jeremy Irons), charismatic uncle (Al Pacino) and bumbling cousin (Jared Leto). But her calculated manoeuvres backfire when she takes revenge, egged on by her mystic adviser (Salma Hayek), over Maurizio's affair that breaks up the marriage. The big-gun actors carry the story through its exorbitant length, while Scott never misses a beat in his attention to detail. Rating: Restricted to audiences over 13. 158 minutes.

### The Roads Not Taken (Netflix)

British arthouse director Sally Potter (Orlando) was denied a cinema release for this highly personalised account of the effects of a child's death, and caring for a parent with dementia. A devoted daughter (Elle Fanning) tries to get her hospitalised father and novelist (Javier Bardem) to various appointments, while he relives his memories of two wives (Salma Hayek and Laura Linney), both of whom have rejected him, and locations as diverse as Mexico, Greece and New York. This is complicated by his refusal to visit the grave of his son, killed in a car accident. The action takes place in a single day, but by extrapolation it shows a deep emotional struggle for a daughter caught between staying with her father and living her own life. Netflix rating: Recommended for audiences over 13. 85 minutes.

# Author attempts to canonise liberation theology in Romero biography

**OSCAR ROMERO: A Man for Our Times** by Julio O. Torres. Seabury Press (New York, 2021). 208 pp., US\$19.95. Reviewed by TONY GUTIERREZ

Rather than looking at what St Oscar Romero can teach us, the Rev. Julio Torres co-opts the Salvadoran martyr's legacy to push an agenda that is antithetical to the Catholic Church's teaching on liberation theology.

Rev. Torres attempts to psychoanalyse St Oscar Romero in what is known as a psychobiography, to "shed light on the emotional forces that propelled individuals to act in response to their historical context".

While one can admire the effort, his methodology seems a bit dubious. Much of his research included interviews with people who had known the archbishop, though he readily admits that people trusted him because he was a "padre". Whether he made known he was an Episcopal priest and not a Catholic priest isn't made clear.

In analysing Archbishop Romero, he acknowledges the influence of Marxism on liberation theology, and readily admits that "the thread of liberation theology... will inform this work also."

Rather than taking a scholarly approach in analysing the archbishop's life, Rev. Torres falls victim to confirmation bias, where he has already predetermined the answers and is simply looking for the evidence to support it.

"Romero went so far as to condone the use of violence against the rich, even in such graphic ways as saying that they should take their rings off of their fingers and give them to the poor or else their hands would be cut off," he writes, taking

one of the saint's homilies out of context.

The archbishop's actual words were a plea to avoid a civil war rather than encouraging violence against the rich: "I appeal to you to listen to the voice of God, and to share gladly with everyone your power and your wealth instead of provoking a civil war that will drown us all in blood. There is still time for you to take off your rings so that they aren't removed from your hands by others."

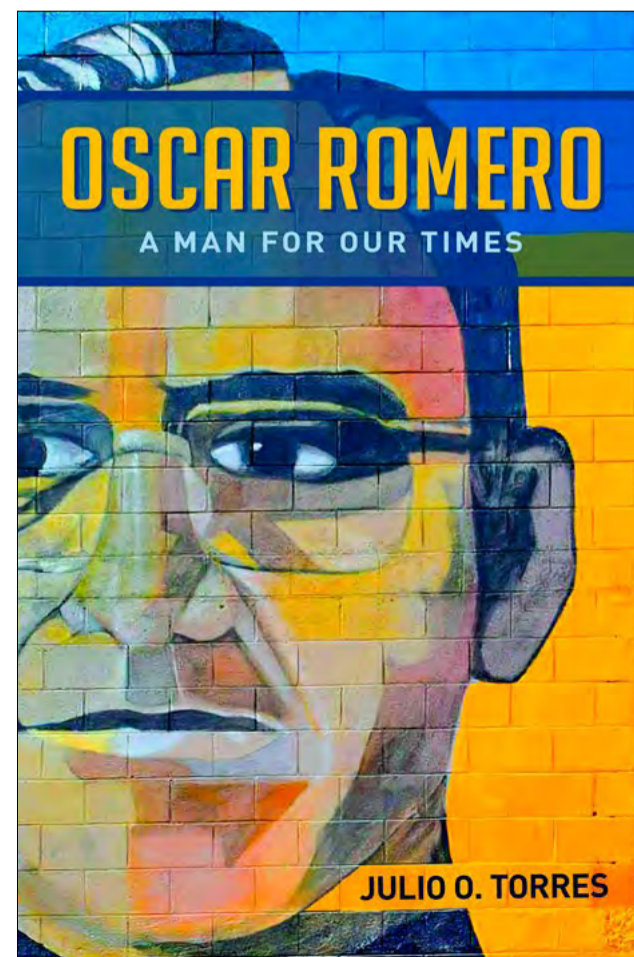
While he actively condemned violence and stood for the poor, St Oscar was not calling for some kind of Marxist revolution. "Marxist political praxis can give rise to conflicts of conscience about the use of means and of methods not always in conformity with what the Gospel lays down as ethical for Christians," he wrote in his August 6, 1979, pastoral letter.

"The best way to defeat Marxism is to take seriously the preferential option for the poor," he added.

Even Dominican Father Gustavo Gutiérrez, considered to be the "father of liberation theology," has acknowledged that, while he admired Archbishop Romero, the latter was not an adherent.

The one bright spot in the book is that Rev. Torres does go into St Oscar's very real struggles with self-doubt, anxiety and depression, referencing psychiatric evaluations that he voluntarily underwent, but noting that "none of the above implies moral failure".

Gutiérrez is a freelance journalist based in Cave Creek, Arizona, specializing in religion, and former editor of *The Catholic Sun*, official newspaper for the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix



THE CHURCH YEAR

We are here: ▼ Fourth Sunday of Easter

Advent

Christmas

Ordinary Time

Lent

Eastertime

Ordinary Time

# God's hand is always with us to empower our world

## Scripture

by Fr Kevin Waldie sm

**May 8:** Fourth Sunday of Easter. **Readings:** 1. Acts 13:14,43-52; **Psalm:** 100; 2. Revelation 7:9,14-17; **Gospel:** John 10:27-30.

Today's readings bring before us that special character that became the early Church's distinctive outlook and outreach after the Resurrection.

In Acts, Luke records certain events in this post-Resurrection era. And it is clear that Paul, in particular, was greatly endowed with the power to compellingly proclaim the Word of God. Beginning with his own people, the Jews, among whom he is given a mixed reception, he immediately signals that his mission is a broad one. Thus, he is aware that the message of the risen Christ must be taken to the whole world, that is to the Gentiles. Paul's preaching about

the eternal life is, therefore, a gift to be offered to Jew and Gentile alike.

The author of Revelation lets us know what he has seen through his vision of the heavenly throne room. And today's verses are focused upon the strange figure of the sacrificed Lamb now ruling gloriously over everyone and everything. This figure is also the shepherd who leads his flock to the waters of life. By mixing his images, this New Testament author wants us to understand that the risen Christ is with us, and his victory over death is an invitation to be embraced by that mystery.

The Gospel verses, brief though they be, are a

reminder that Jesus, the Word of God, set about ensuring eternal life for all believers. John's Good Shepherd image leaves us in no doubt that Jesus' life, death and Resurrection witness to the true power being exercised in our world. And so how we see and profess the risen Christ must be informed by the depth of meaning conveyed by John's verses.

These readings give a great boost to our belief in the reality of the Resurrection. For they contain a universal message that God's hand is always with us to empower our world.

# That Christ is truly risen demands attention

The Good News of and about Jesus Christ is the vital core of these Easter texts.

The urgency with which the early Church regards the proclamation of Christ risen is evident in the detailed description given in Acts today. Trekking over quite some distance, by land and sea, these verses recount how God's Word had to be announced far and wide, so that "a door of faith" might be opened to ever more people. Thus, the Church's mission was to make the risen Christ known everywhere, doing so with the blessing of God's grace.

Today's second reading, drawn from the latter stages of the book of Revelation, is a hopeful message for believers of the first century CE. In

and through the members of the Church, God's powerful reign lets itself be known. The newly revealed and truly heartening message is a great encouragement.

That Christ is truly risen demands attention. And that means that there is an urgent call for all humanity to acknowledge, and be embraced by, the royal kingship of Christ, seated upon his heavenly throne.

The love commandment that is so prominent in John's Gospel is a featured element within this Sunday's Gospel text. With Jesus' departure to his glorious heavenly state, there remains an earthly work that all disciples are called to be engaged in. It is precisely a work that Christ

**May 15:** Fifth Sunday of Easter. **Readings:** 1. Acts 14:21-27; **Psalm:** 145; 2. Revelation 21:1-5; **Gospel:** John 13:31-35.

showed in the flesh to all who heard his message and experienced his powerful presence. The love that his earthly life revealed is today's Easter message. As true believers, we are called to imitate the Lord, and show the extent of that love in and through our own lives.

Listening to these readings, we surely recognise their joyous reflection on the mystery of Jesus the Christ and the power of his Resurrection.

## SAINTED GLASS



The Gospel readings of the first two days of next week are about Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Flocks in Jesus' time were small, and the sheep knew their shepherd and came when they were called. They trusted their shepherd to keep them safe and did not stray very far. The idea that Jesus is just such a shepherd for us is an integral part of our faith. So much so that I have lost count of the number of "Good Shepherd" windows I have seen. This example is from St Brendan's, Annandale, Sydney. Is Jesus your Good Shepherd?  
— Glen McCullough

# Shroud of Turin is 'powerful image of God's love'

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Shroud of Turin is "such a powerful image of God's love because Jesus willingly underwent this for our salvation", said Brian Hyland, curator of the Museum of the Bible's current exhibit on the 14-foot-by-4-foot linen cloth many people believe is Jesus' burial shroud.

Though the artifact itself remains in northern Italy's Cathedral of St John the Baptist in Turin, the Washington museum's "Mystery and Faith: The Shroud of Turin" exhibit showcases all — from the shroud's history and artefacts to interactive activities — to teach visitors about this mysterious phenomenon.

"It is the heart of the exhibit," Hyland told Catholic News Service. "It doesn't matter that this is a facsimile. When you look at it through the eyes of faith, that is what you see."

The Catholic Church has never officially ruled on the shroud's authenticity, saying judgments about its age and origin belonged to scientific investigation, but recent popes have referred to it as an "icon" of Jesus. Scientists have debated its authenticity for decades, and studies have led to conflicting results.

The last public exhibition of the shroud was in 2015, but in April, 2020, Turin's Archbishop Cesare Nosiglia led a livestreamed prayer service in front of the shroud as part of a Holy Saturday prayer for an end to the coronavirus pandemic.

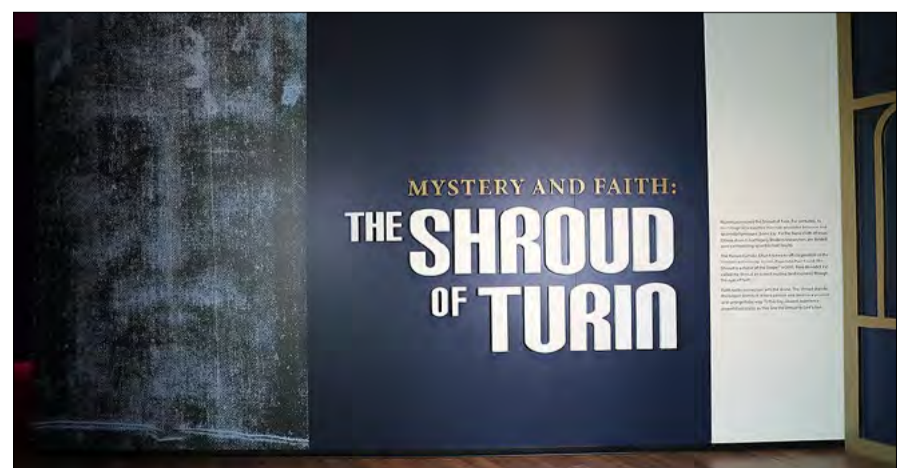
The Washington exhibit's history section takes the visitor on a journey through the Shroud of Turin's own expedition through time. It includes the shroud's locations

## Bible News

through time, its effects on historical events, and the circumstances in which it ended up where it is today. There also is a timeline of events that explains what caused distress to the linen, including burns, stains and the removal of entire pieces of it.

Whether one is a believer in God or not, the shroud represents many different aspects of faith, culture and history. The final interactive experience is meant to make people think about what they have just observed.

"Come to the exhibit with open eyes and an open heart. I think that is the way, even if you don't believe that the shroud is real, that it will have a tremendous impact on you," Hyland advises visitors.



This is part of an exhibit titled 'Mystery and Faith: The Shroud of Turin' on display at the Museum of the Bible in Washington. The exhibit opened on February 26, and runs through July 31 (CNS photo)

# Bequest clears most debt on retirement units

by JEFF DILLON

A generous bequest by a former Dunedin diocesan parishioner has enabled the diocese to clear most of the debt on the new units built to house retired priests at the Holy Cross Centre grounds in Mosgiel.

Originally, a fundraising effort saw four apartments planned and built during 2007, and ready for occupation by mid-2008. There were two structures built parallel to each other, embodying two apartments with attached garages for each structure.

The apartments contained two bedrooms and an open plan kitchen, dining and lounge spaces, plus bathroom, toilet and laundry and the attached garage. They were comfortable, with adequate space, and were similar to a townhouse concept.

By 2020, it was decided to build another two apartment units, based on the same footprint as the first four. Again, the new building would be parallel to the others. Initially the

costing for each of the two new units was \$290,000, although by the time they were completed there were cost over-runs.

Fortunately, there had been a generous donation which contributed greatly to the cost of one of the units, and additional fundraising and a loan from the CDF largely paid for the second. The first of the new apartments was completed in time for a retiring priest to move into by May, 2021. The second one was finished later in 2021, but as it was not immediately required for a retiring priest, it has been rented out privately in the meantime.

Recently, the diocese received a generous bequest from the late Les Hailes, a North Invercargill parishioner who previously lived in Nightcaps. It was decided to use that and other bequests to pay down the CDF loan, and therefore clear most of the debt on the two new units.

Of course, the area around the new building has required restoration and landscaping, with the final costs



The new two-unit block as seen from the Church Street entrance

for that work still to come in. The end result is regarded as a great asset for the diocese, and certainly the five clergy living there enjoy a well-deserved level of comfort and

warmth in their years of retirement. They have companionship of their fellow priests, and are just a few steps away from the parish church on the grounds of the Holy Cross Centre.

# Cistercian takes next step on vocation journey



Br Jonathan Craven

by Br JONATHAN CRAVEN

A few days ago, I made my simple profession as a monk. It's a step on the vocation journey where we naturally look ahead. But it is good to look back too.

I've been at Kopua monastery for three years, and one of the things that has impressed me is the story of the first monks who came out from Ireland in the 1950s. It must have taken a lot of courage and faith to come all that way. They were pioneers.

Their courage met with great generosity from the locals. The first benefactors of Kopua were a married couple. They gave their land and farm, where they had lived and worked their whole lives, to the Church for the building of a monastery.

The ordinary at the time, Archbishop Peter McKeeffry, played a significant part as well. He showed considerable fortitude, vision and calmness, which helped make the foundation of the monastery a success. He encouraged the resourcefulness and determination of the first monks, who set about acquiring buildings from a former refugee camp

that was no longer in use. Those structures, simple and humble, proved to be ideal for the monastery, and they are still in use today.

The local community and Church still rally around Kopua. Local tradespeople enjoy coming to the monastery when needed, and lay companions, as well as the numerous people who come to share in the spiritual life of the monastery while on retreat, all make up the human fabric of Kopua.

I'm very grateful to God for all that Kopua is. A living story of challenges and hardships overcome through the generosity of many known and unknown people who have believed in the vision of monastic life.

They have made it possible for me to seek God in a Cistercian monastery, living in New Zealand. [www.kopuamonastery.org.nz](http://www.kopuamonastery.org.nz)

# Otara's new school takes shape



An open day was held at the site of the new buildings of St John the Evangelist School in Otara, south Auckland, on April 28. The site is nearing completion and it is hoped that the opening will be within a few weeks. The photo shows the entrance to the new main administration block which is close to being finished.

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# Aust. nun continues solidarity work after expulsion

by FIONA BASILE

MELBOURNE, Australia (CNS) — Philippine elections are May 9, and a long-time advocate for Filipino farmers will be watching closely — from afar.

“The violence has already started, with some people already being killed. We’re constantly trying to monitor the situation and to get it out into the public,” said Sister Patricia Fox, 75, a member of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion who was deported from the Philippines in 2018.

Sister Fox ministered in the Philippines for 28 years. A lot of her work involved human rights advocacy, including speaking out on issues affecting the rural poor and working with them for change. She joined street protests, lobbied against mining companies that sought to strip farmers of their land, and visited military camps or prisons, trying to locate people who had been arrested.

The administration of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte accused her of taking part in illegal political activities — attending protest rallies and visiting prisoners — and of speaking out against the government.

Now back in Australia, Sister Fox remains active in this ministry by focusing on solidarity work online with those in the Philippines, and with like-minded groups in Australia.

Reflecting on the violence inflicted on Filipinos, particularly those in rural areas fighting for their land against large mining corporations and the military who enforce the government’s brutal policies, Sister Fox told Global Sisters Report she believes “the violence has gotten worse” since her departure.

“The imprisonments have kept going, too, and no one is immune. Whether you’re a politician, a religious, a farmer or worker, it doesn’t matter. You are at risk.”

She’s also aware of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused many rallies, meetings and movement among the people to stop.

The pandemic has only compounded the situation for poor rural and urban dwellers, unable to access adequate health care or Covid-19 tests, Sister Fox told Global Sisters Report. “Some of the young farmer organisers that I knew sent me a message saying, ‘Can you send over some money because we need to get tested’ — it was 4000 pesos (US\$77) or something like that per test, and these are people struggling to put rice on the table.”

## ■ Mourning

Sister Fox is also mourning two friends in the Philippines who recently died, she believes, at least in part because of actions by the repressive government. One died of COVID-19 while in custody last year, arrested on false charges, she said. The other was a National Democratic Front peace negotiator she had worked with, who was tortured and killed a year ago. Sister Fox said she suspects government agents were behind the killing, but nothing has yet been proven.

“So that’s hard because at times like that, I’d love to be there with the family, just to hug the family,” she said. “That’s when I really feel the distance. I used to love being with the people, the closeness, and how I was so much a part of their lives, and how much I loved being in the rural areas with the people.”

She takes some consolation in knowing there were some “small victories” for those for whom she advocated. She had spent several years with the Justice and Peace Action group in Aurora, a rural and mountainous area north of Manila, where land was under threat from mining and logging companies. The group worked with local farmers and Indigenous peoples to gather information and data and engaging with government offices, including the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and mining never began in the area. Sister Fox attributed this to the “strong and coordinat-



Sister Patricia Fox, then-superior of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion in the Philippines, is greeted by well-wishers before filing a petition calling for the review of her deportation case at the Department of Justice in May, 2018 (CNS photo)

ed movement” of everyone involved. “You could see the confidence growing in those speaking out for their rights,” she said.

She also was heartened when farmers were granted land from corporations, enabling them to grow their own vegetables and crops. “They were so excited to be able to offer you something when you visited. They have such dignity, even though they were still so poor and still under some threat.”

Sister Fox was motivated in being with the people because of their “determination, enthusiasm, love and support”. And, she added, “their sense of humour! Despite everything, they have a sense of humour and manage to make a joke about everything.”

She also takes some solace in knowing that there are still seven other Our Lady of Sion sisters in the Philippines ministering in various capacities. One of the sisters is employed by the Department of Social

Welfare.

Even though she is not personally in touch, Sister Fox is determined to remain connected with those fighting for justice in the Philippines, and to make their issues and struggles known in Australia. She has joined groups against human trafficking and has served as chair of the Australian chapter of the International Coalition of Human Rights in the Philippines, a role that keeps her informed of abuses that are taking place.

She is hopeful that the national elections in the Philippines will see a change in government that will allow her name to be struck off the blacklist so that she can return, or at least visit, sooner than later. If not, in two years she can apply to the courts to have her name struck off the list.

In anticipation, she joked, her “bags are packed”.

■ This story was originally published in Global Sisters Report, a project of National Catholic Reporter. The website is [www.globalsistersreport.org](http://www.globalsistersreport.org)

## 40 YEARS AGO

### WISDOM URGED, NOT WAR

Church leaders in Britain have voiced public concern over the Falklands crisis and the attitude which their government has taken on the issue.

Both Cardinal Hume of Westminster and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, have called for wisdom and good sense to prevail in the interests of peace and justice.

Cardinal Hume said that international law must be upheld, and legitimate national interests safeguarded, “but we pray that this may be done as far as humanly possible without bloodshed and the sacrifice of lives”.

Archbishop Runcie defended the “right of self-determination of peoples, whether they are large or small in numbers.” But he warned against the anger, fear and national pride which can “cloud wise judgments”.

Dr Kenneth Greet, secretary of the Methodist Conference, said the Falklands crisis had “demonstrated distressingly the ease with which large numbers of people can be worked up into a state almost of

euphoria at the prospect of military action”.

The crisis also revealed very clearly the basic immorality of the arms trade, Dr Greet said. In the event of armed conflict, “British personnel would no doubt be killed by weapons manufactured in Britain, and deployed by men trained in Britain,” he pointed out.

In an editorial, *The Tablet* of London suggested that the British government had failed to understand “Argentinian psychology and its natural and unanimous aspirations”; nor had Britain given due priority to resolving the “anachronistic situation” of the Falklands.

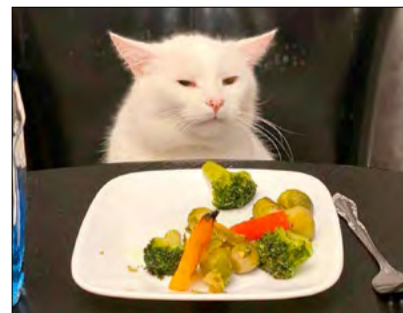
Claiming that neither Britain’s security nor the rights of its citizens were under threat by Argentina’s strike, *The Tablet* said that conflict would only postpone the day when Britain and Argentina would have to pay if we were to insist on what, in this instance, may be a question of wishes rather than rights.

— *Zealandia*, May 9, 1982

## CAPTION CONTEST

Write the best caption for this photo and win a \$30 Countdown voucher. Send in your ideas by Tuesday, May 17 to Caption Contest 634, NZ Catholic, PO Box 147000, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144. Or email: [design@nzcatholic.org.nz](mailto:design@nzcatholic.org.nz) Please include your postal address so that your prize, if you win, can be sent to you.

The winner of the Caption Contest from issue 634 (below) was **Kath Kenrick, Dunedin**.



What? No mouse?

Some other suggestions were:

“Hmm... mum is on this fad diet, saying it’s for lent.” — **Marian Dissanayake, Kerikeri**.

“What do you mean I can’t have any ice-cream until I have finished my vegetables?” — **Linda Jennings, Auckland**.

“I categorically deny ever saying I was vegan!!!” — **Carmel Anne Malone, Christchurch**

“Read my ears!” — **Alison Hale, Christchurch**.

“This Cat-olic isn’t happy about giving up meat on Fridays.” — **Paul McKee, Christchurch**.

‘I’m the cat that’s had the meat.’ — **Rosanne Wills, Auckland**.

“Steak, what steak?” — **Derek Hobbs, Auckland**.

“I’ve had the meat, thanks, and now I’m leaving the 4 veg for you.” — **Kevin McCormack, Wellington**.



# Hope and joy reawaken when old and young come together, Pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — If young people recognise all that they have received with gratitude and older people take the initiative of re-launching hope in young people for their future, then nothing can stop the flourishing of God's blessings among people, Pope Francis said.

Urging visitors to make sure they help bring young and older people together to talk and connect, the Pope said, this is a "bridge that we have to re-establish more strongly", because it is through this connection that salvation, hope and joy flow.

The pope made his remarks on April 27 during his weekly general audience in St Peter's Square.

The Pope continued his series of talks dedicated to the meaning and value of "old age" and focused on how important it is there be an "alliance" between old and new generations, highlighting the widow Naomi and her daughter-in-law, Ruth, as an example.

The story, presented in the Book of Ruth, of "these two faithful women shows that, in God's providential

plan, the covenant of love and fidelity uniting the generations can prove immensely enriching for families and for the growth of a society that respects the dignity and gifts of each of its members, however young or old", according to the summary of the Pope's catechesis.

Pope Francis said Ruth's devotion helps Naomi stop being so pessimistic, and even inspires her to take the initiative to help Ruth build a new future, by guiding and encouraging her.

"In some cases, the tendency of the elderly toward pessimism needs to be countered by the affectionate pressure of the young," he said.

There are all sorts of clichés and prejudices when it comes to family members, especially between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, he said.

Pope Francis, known for cracking jokes about mothers-in-law, said — jokes aside — it is important to recognise and honour their role as the mother of one's spouse.

"She is a mother, she is older. One of the most wonderful things about



Pope Francis greets the crowd during his general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican on April 27 (CNS photo)

grandmothers is them seeing their grandchildren. When their children have children, they come back to life," he said.

The Pope asked that families take special care in maintaining a good relationship with their in-laws, even if they sometimes act like they are "a little bit special".

The parents of one's spouse have

still sacrificed a lot, he said, and families can at least try to make their in-laws happy, so they can live out the rest of their years in joy, he said.

"And if they have some kind of flaw, help them to correct it. And to all the mothers-in-law out there, let me say, be careful with what you say, because the tongue is one of the ugliest sins of mothers-in-law. Be careful," he said.

The Pope asked that people "rediscover the Book of Ruth", especially its reflections on love and its catechesis on the family. "This short book also contains valuable teaching on the alliance of the generations: where youth shows itself to be capable of restoring enthusiasm to mature age, and old age discovers it is capable of reopening the future to wounded youth."

"If the young open themselves to gratitude for what they have received and the elderly take the initiative of re-launching their future, nothing can stop the flourishing of God's blessings among peoples!" he said.

## Scripture scholar reflects on Old Testament women

◀ Continued from page 19

has spoken, not only through Moses, but also through her and Aaron . . . the stress is on Moses' unique authority," he explained.

However, Br Kieran said that, beyond Exodus and Numbers, Miriam is remembered as part of the trinity of leaders, along with Moses and Aaron, and for leading the song and dance after the crossing of the Red Sea.

### Judith, the Courageous

The story of Judith is "ambivalent", according to Br Kieran.

"It is not an historical story. It is a story that would teach courage and wisdom," he said. "God delivers God's people when they cry to God, bringing low the arrogant by the hand of a woman."

The grisly tale depicts Judith as a woman who uses her beauty and charm to kill the Assyrian general, Holofernes, thus saving her people from oppression. In this story, after a night in Holofernes' bed, Judith beheaded the sleeping enemy, and brings his head to her people.

"Feminists criticise her blatant use of her beauty and sexual wiles," he said. "But she's a very intelligent woman."

Br Kieran pointed out that Judith was a widow, considered powerless in society. However, she

was rich, kind, God-fearing and beautiful, and she fasted and observed all Jewish festivals.

When Holofernes cut off her people's water supply, they became desperate, asking God for rain within five days. "However, Judith understands that the ways of God are often surprising," Br Kieran said.

Judith's ways may horrify modern readers, he said.

"The imagery, the characters and the plot belong to a particular culture and era, and to their way of telling a story. But the underlying struggle to be faithful to one's true religious identity, no matter how crushing the odds or insidious the obstacle, belongs to every generation," Br Kieran said.

### Esther, the Queen

Esther, on the other hand, is a beautiful young

woman, who was first passive, but later came to her own power as a faithful Jewish woman and Persian queen.

"The threatened destruction of her people brings her to full development. This is seen in her brave approach to the king to plead for her people," he said.

Through Esther's action, the wicked plot that would have seen her people killed rebounded to their enemies.

Br Kieran noted that Esther was the inspiration of Jewish Deborah Lipstadt, who famously won a libel case against Holocaust denier, David Irving, in 2000.

"Lipstadt's moment in history was unusual, but her reaction to the book of Esther was not. People of faith, Jew and Gentile, have found something in this book that makes us take stock of ourselves and wonder what God is up to," he said.

## DEATHS

**BREEN, Mary Gwendolyn** (Sister Marita Breen LCM), Sister Marita died peacefully at Nazareth House Christchurch on April 10, 2022 she was in the 63rd year of her Religious Profession. Loved and respected member of the Little Company of Mary and loved daughter of the late John and Marita Breen. Sr Marita was the 5th of 11 children, six girls and 5 boys, they lived mainly in Stratford, South Taranaki. Sr Marita's Requiem was celebrated at Sacred Heart Church Addington, Christchurch on Wednesday April 13, with Vigil Prayers on Tuesday at Sacred Heart. R.I.P.

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# Women in the Old Testament

by ROWENA OREJANA

Women were depicted as weak creatures in the Old Testament, but through their faith they were made strong by God to save their people.

At a Zoom presentation held by Titipounamu Study and Joy, Br Kieran Fenn, FMS, discussed three women in the Old Testament: Miriam (sister of Moses), Judith and Esther.

Br Kieran said that Judith and Esther's stories are called didactic works, which aim to teach a lesson.

"The choice of a 'weak woman' as the instrument of salvation highlights the power of God," Br Kieran said.

He also pointed out that, in the case of the story of Judith, "it [has] rarely ever been suggested that the author of the book was a woman".

## Miriam, the Prophet

Br Kieran said that Miriam was the first female prophet.

"The presence of women prophets is an important feature of the Scriptures," he said, citing other women prophets, Huldah (Old Testament) and Anna (New Testament).

She started out as the unnamed sister of Moses who watched her little brother float on the river Nile to the daughter of the Pharaoh. She also offered to find a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby, thus reuniting Moses with his mother.

"Miriam is called a prophet, but her actions don't follow the patterns of speech generally associated with Israelite prophets. They do, however, suggest rituals, ecstatic dancing and so on . . . because that actually, is part of prophecy," he said.

Br Kieran said that, after the crossing of the Red Sea, Miriam, the prophet, led the women in a victory song.

"And Miriam sang to them, 'sing to the Lord for he has triumphed gloriously'," he said. "Even though it is called the Song of Moses, most Scripture scholars are now saying that this is the Song of Miriam . . . as Moses became more and more important, the song was given over to him."

Br Kieran said that what Miriam does is interpret



A depiction of the Old Testament prophet Miriam, painted by Anselm Feuerbach (Wikimedia Commons)

God's action of deliverance. "That's a prophetic action," he said.

However, Miriam's fall came when she challenged Moses for choosing a Cushite wife, but the issue goes beyond this.

"It's about prophetic authority. Miriam believes God

► Continued on page 18

## WIT'S END

A reporter was interviewing a 103-year-old woman. "And what do you think is the best thing about being 103?" the reporter asked. The woman simply replied, "No peer pressure."

I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a whole lot more as they get older. Then it dawned on me . . . they were cramming for their finals.

**Girl:** My grandfather lived for 96 years and he never used glasses. **Boy:** Yeah, I know. A few people drink directly from the bottle.

You're over the hill when your back goes out more than you do.

How do you know that you are old? People call at 9pm and ask, "Did I wake you?"

In the May 22 issue:  
New site for  
theological college



## EMERGENCY APPEAL for Ukraine

Aid to the Church in Need Australia has launched an **emergency appeal to support the Catholic Church in Ukraine**. ACN is committed to strengthening and supporting the Catholic Church in Ukraine, as we have done for the past 70 years. The appeal has been given the support of Bishop Mykola Bychok CSsR, Eparch of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Australia, New Zealand and Oceania.

**ACN began its support to exiled Ukrainian Christians in 1953.** ACN was crucial in helping rebuild Church life and still has many projects

in Ukraine. These include the formation of some 900 seminarians - of both Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches - and the upkeep and restoration of seminaries, churches and monasteries.



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Please make a generous offering to help ease the burden that the people of Ukraine are shouldering at this time. Please pray for peace and protection for this country and its inhabitants who have already endured so much suffering and pain. **Despite difficulties and hardship, the Church promises not to abandon its faithful, whatever might happen.**



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