

The Common Good

Taking a Preferential Option for the Poor

A newspaper of the Christchurch Catholic Worker

No 65, Pentecost 2013

Price: free or donation

CW 80th Birthday – 1933-2013

Child Poverty—New Zealand's Shame

Susan St John

The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is aiming to hold the government accountable for the failures of the In Work Tax Credit to provide for our most vulnerable children.

CPAG argues we have seen negligible political progress on reducing child poverty since the introduction of Working for Families. We argue that the design of that programme has got a lot to answer for in the perpetuation of child poverty in many families. When so many low income families are systemically left out of provisions designed to reduce poverty it is no wonder that we see the distress in our communities. Badly designed policy contributes to the huge social distress evident among low income families without adequate work and works against the common good.

Badly designed policy contributes to the huge social distress evident among low income families without adequate work and works against the common good.

At CPAG we believe private charity alone, important as it is, cannot solve this problem and that major changes to government policy are needed. But how is change to be achieved?

The Working for Families package has been widely criticised for the speed at which it was passed into law and the lack of transparency around its



Young Mother

Irving Aizen

development – there was no public consultation - no green paper, no white paper, no select committee process and it was passed into law in one day. No account was taken of the 230,000 children who would miss out, despite New Zealand's human rights commitments to protect all children.

As low income families lose hours of work through the troubling redundancies we are seeing or by losing work in the earthquake, their children become un-entitled to this very significant payment, even when no benefit is

being accessed. We know of many instances first hand where families have been affected by the loss of this support.

Under the UN declaration on Human Rights - everyone has the right to social security measures such as family assistance payments to the caregiver aimed at reducing poverty. Maori and Pacific Island children miss out disproportionately so the policy is also racially discriminating in outcome.

In Work Tax Credit

In particular, a specific component of Working for Families – the In Work Tax Credit, a child-related family assistance payment – unfairly discriminates against 230,000 of our poorest children. This adversely affects the children of those



not in paid work meaning that these children – through no fault of their own – do not receive the same financial support as others.

Children of beneficiaries have the right to be treated like all other low-income children. But it is not only beneficiaries' children. As low income families lose hours of work through the troubling redundancies we are seeing or by losing work in the earthquake, their children become un-entitled to this very significant payment, even when no benefit is being accessed. We know of many instances first hand where families have been affected by the loss of this support.

Worse, the caregiver in these families can get bills from IRD for any overpayment made during this time. Some families may eke out an existence for weeks before going on a benefit and they may then find they are charged for overpayment as they were not meeting the hours of work rule for the IWTC.

In Australia, all low income children are treated the same, making their system much more effective than ours in reducing child poverty. We used to do that too until this element of the undeserving poor crept in, first in 1996 and then intensifying in 2006

Who are we?

Members of Te Wairua Maranga Trust, which publishes this paper, have since 1989 been operating as a community following a Catholic Worker spirituality. We view the Treaty of Waitangi as our nation's founding covenant. We try, however inadequately at times, to live the Sermon on the Mount and its modern implications. We operate two houses of hospitality in Christchurch named after Suzanne Aubert and Thomas Merton. We offer hospitality to people in need either on a temporary or more permanent basis. We have a continuing outreach to a number of families offering friendship and support. We usually receive back more than we ever give. We promote non-violence and a 'small is beautiful' approach to life, practise co-operative work and peace making, focus on issues of justice, support prison ministry, help create intentional communities, and try to practise voluntary poverty and personalism. We also engage in regular prayer and generally struggle along like everybody else.

We celebrate a liturgy every Wednesday at 6:00 pm at the Suzanne Aubert House, 8A Cotterill St, Addington, (off Poulson St, near Church Square), followed by a shared meal. Anyone is welcome – phone Francis, 338-7105.

We do not seek funding from traditional sources. We hope to receive enough to keep our houses of hospitality open and our various works going. Catholic Worker houses do not issue tax receipts since they are running neither a business nor a church social agency. We invite people to participate personally and unconditionally. Should you wish to make a regular contribution, you may do so through our Te Wairua Maranga Westpac Trust holding account (number 031703-0036346-02). Donations may also be made to **Te Wairua Maranga Trust, Box 33-135, Christchurch.**

under 'working for families'.

A child's needs don't change just because the work status of their parent does. The extra \$60+ per week the family misses out on currently could make a huge difference to their well-being. Since 2006 around \$3 billion dollars has been denied to the poorest families. It is no wonder we are seeing such distress.

In Australia, all low income children are treated the same, making their system much more effective than ours in reducing child poverty.

Because the government is not listening to calls to improve the common good, CPAG has been pursuing the issue in the courts since 2008. We argue that this policy discriminates against children on the basis of their parents' work status, which is prohibited under the Human Rights Act.

Court of Appeal Hearing

Our case has reached the Court of Appeal and we are committed to fighting for the rights of 230,000 New Zealand children. The ability to challenge the government in the courts has set a precedent. It affirms the right of non-government organizations to challenge policy on human rights grounds, on behalf of others, without the organizations having to be directly affected by discrimination.

As Professor Jonathon Boston, co-chair of the NZ Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Child Poverty says, 'Why are so few older people materially deprived? The answer, very simply, is that governments have implemented policies to minimise deprivation among the elderly. By contrast, New Zealand society has chosen to tolerate significant child deprivation. We could choose otherwise.'

The Child Poverty Action Group's appeal against this discriminatory government policy will be held in the Court of Appeal in Wellington 27-28 May 2013. We are seeking widespread support for our action. Messages can be sent to Susan St John, CPAG, Pvt Bag 92019, Auckland, or email – admin@cpag.org.nz, or phone 027 5364 538. Check our webpage - <http://www.cpag.org.nz>.

Help fight the injustice of discrimination against 230,000 children. Please support CPAG's legal challenge in the Court of Appeal.

Susan St John QSM is Associate Professor of Economics at Auckland University and economics spokesperson for the Child Poverty Action Group.

May 1st is the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Catholic Worker in New York and the publication of its penny-a-copy paper, *The Catholic Worker*. In this season of resurrection and new life and on this anniversary, we honour the CW co-founders and prophets Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin by publishing some prophetic voices of our own time. And we editorialise three prophets who have recently died.

It is not often that three people of the stature of Bryan Law, Jean Stewart and Jack Rogers all die within a month but such is the case this time.

There will be many who have never heard of any one of the three. But to those who work for peace and justice, their names and deeds are familiar. They have been light bearers for decades on unpopular issues which the public usually don't want to hear about. In speaking out and witnessing to justice in these spheres, they follow in the ancient and honourable tradition of the prophets of every age who have shone a light in dark places and held a candle to enable all to see.

Every age produces its share of prophetic figures. As believers, we say these people are raised up by God to highlight divine insights and truths which are being ignored. The most noticeable prophets are usually in the field of social justice. But it is worth noting, that prophetic figures can be raised up in any field – politics, medicine, art, to mention only a few.

Prophets have some things in common. One thing stands out. Almost all suffer from marginalization by the mainstream. I suppose it is logical, since they seek to change things and most people resist change. But it is less understandable in the Christian community which has a tradition of prophecy stretching back 3000 years, and whose founder was a

prophet. It seems that once power becomes entrenched within certain structures, there is no room for the prophetic voice. Indeed, such a one can expect to be marginalized if not persecuted. Jesus promised as much while on earth (Matt 19/28).

Obituaries for the aforementioned three recently deceased are printed later in this edition. All three promoted major shifts in the common perception. **Bryan Law** spent a life time acting non-violently in opposition to the acceptance by many Australians' of structural discrimination, especially in relation to Aboriginal rights and war making. In particular, he put his body on the line to oppose the deadly policies followed by successive Australian governments in their propensity to go to war in foreign countries – Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan to mention three.

Jean Stewart was a prison abolitionist in an age when the prison numbers were soaring and doing little to help offenders with the issues that led to their offending. Prison should only be used 'for the dangerous few' was her philosophy. She spent a lifetime promoting more productive alternatives and for many years was a lonely voice in the public arena on this issue.

Finally **Jack Rogers**, one of life's real gentlemen, who, like Jean had a Methodist background, was a committed pacifist in the tradition of the early Christians who refused to take up arms and fight for empire. As a conscientious objector, he spent four years in prison during World War II, and sixty-four years subsequently promoting a Gospel of peace and reconciliation in the tradition of Jesus.

We are humbled to acknowledge and honour these three great prophets on their passing to eternal life.

—Jim Consedine

Women are a troublesome minority in the prison system. They represent only 3% of the prison muster, tend to be in prison for shorter times, are less likely to have committed violent offences and have special needs. Most have been victims of domestic or sexual violence and over half had dependent children before sentencing and were more likely than men to have been primary caregivers. Some are pregnant when they entered prison.

For two reasons at least, the impact of prison on women is more severe than men. The first is distance. Only three prisons are available to women in New Zealand. This means that many women are isolated from the families and communities to which they belong. The situation becomes intolerable where mothers of young children are concerned. Facilities for visiting by children (even if this were financially practicable) are limited. With babies and small children, it is almost impossible.

Worldwide it is recognized that most women inmates are not public safety risks. So, why are women imprisoned? Aren't there better ways to respond to women offenders?

—Jean Stewart, *The Listener*, 1 October 1993

On 30 April 2008, a Ploughshares team – CWs Adrian Leason and Sam Land along with Dominican friar Father Peter Murnane OP – entered the grounds of the NZ Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB)/US National Security Agency spy base at Waihopai and punctured the dome covering one of the two antennae to disable and draw attention to the role of the base. The base forms an integral part of the US government's global spy network. They then built a religious shrine and prayed for the victims of 'the war on terror', while waiting to be arrested.

In March 2010, after an eight day criminal trial, the Waihopai Ploughshares were acquitted by the jury. It was an acquittal the Government could not accept. In response, in October 2010, the Attorney-General lodged a civil claim for \$1.2 million, on behalf of the GCSB. In August 2011, following a hearing in the High Court in Wellington, Associate Judge David Gendall issued a summary judgment awarding \$1.2 million damages in the government's favour, as well as court costs.

Last year, the Waihopai Ploughshares lodged an appeal against the High Court decision, and the appeal was heard by the Court of Appeal in Wellington on Wednesday and Thursday, 8-9 May 2013. The three appeal court judges reserved their decision.

The outcome of the appeal has wide implications for justice here. If the High Court decision stands, it makes it more likely that if the Crown is dissatisfied with the outcome of any trial, it can initiate costly civil proceedings against defendants who have been found not guilty.

In the week preceding the appeal, a community of believers engaged in a prayer vigil they labeled

Enemy Love Part II - six days and nights of fasting and prayer in solidarity with the Waihopai Ploughshares. It was held at St Andrew's on the Terrace, in Wellington.

There they explored the scriptures, meditated, prayed and explored gentleness, vulnerability, prayer and 'enemy love' in the service of a non-violent engagement with the discipleship required of our age. They particularly focused on how to 'love your enemy' as Jesus commanded. They remembered in prayer all the victims of war, rendition and torture. They join in fasting and prayer for whistle-blowers and peacemakers everywhere, as well as 'our brothers and sisters caught up in violent conflict.'

Given the fiasco engulfing the GCSB in recent weeks and the illegal surveillance and lawbreaking that has gone on unchecked for years by GCSB spies, it is surprising that the Government has proceeded with this claim against the three Ploughshares peacemakers. Each acted in a totally non-violent way and endangered nobody. At the trial, the spy base was shown to have played a critical role supporting violence and terror against perceived enemies overseas, sometimes endangering whole communities. Each has given a lifetime of service to the poor. All three practise voluntary poverty and have dedicated their lives to witnessing to social justice. None have significant financial resources. Two are subsistence farmers.

From an outsider's perspective, the State looks like an elephant trying to crush an acorn. How the agency that has broken the law with impunity so often can have the gall to sue others for law breaking is a mystery.

—Jim Consedine

Pope Benedict on the Non-Violent Jesus

'Love your enemies' (Luke 6:27; Mt 5:44) was something of 'manifesto' presented to everyone, which Christ asked his disciples to accept, thus proposing to them in radical terms a model for their lives. But what is the meaning of his teaching? Why does Jesus ask us to love our very enemies, that is, ask a love that exceeds human capacities? What is certain is that Christ's proposal is realistic...This page of the Gospel is rightly considered the 'magna carta' of Christian nonviolence; it does not consist in surrendering to evil—as claims a false interpretation of 'turn the other cheek' (Luke 6:29)—but in responding to evil with good (Romans 12:17-21), and thus breaking the chain of injustice. It is thus understood that nonviolence, for Christians, is not mere tactical behaviour but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is convinced of God's love and power, who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Loving the enemy is the nucleus of the 'Christian revolution,' a revolution not based on strategies of economic, political or media power. God does not oppose violence with a stronger violence. He opposes violence precisely with the contrary: with love to the end, his cross.'

Around the Traps

National CW Hui – Honouring 80 Years

The national CW hui will be held from 4.00pm Thursday 29 August until 4.00pm Sunday 1 September 2013 at Southern Star Abbey, Kopua Rd, Takapau, Hawkes Bay. Please bring a sleeping bag, koha, and food to share for the days you will be there. There is limited accommodation for older people at the Kopua guesthouse. For others, mattresses will be on the floor at James and Celia's adjoining farm. There may be some local billets available, or you could bring a campervan or house truck, or stay at the nearby Norsewood Hotel. Such are the accommodation options. If you wish to come, please email numbers to Kathleen at doygalpress@yahoo.com or ph 03 3329192

Besides reviewing our local situations in the context of a national review, among the workshop themes will be ones on '80 years on - living and sharing in the footsteps of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin,' 'peacemaking in the light of the GCSB debacle', and 'living intimately and consciously with Mother Earth'. Under the guidance of the monks, a Christian meditation group will meet at 7.00am and 7.00pm each day. Daily Eucharist will be celebrated. Each evening there will be shared entertainment in James and Celia's large barn.

To commemorate and celebrate the 80th anniversary of the CW, we held a liturgy followed by a party at Suzanne Aubert CW. We invited several guests including our strong supporter, local priest Fr John Craddock, our attorney-at-law Michael French, and Paul Dalziel and Jane Higgins who were at our first ever meeting at Cardijn House 25 years ago and have supported us ever since. We fed up large, drank lots of fizzy drink and had a jam with the guitars that took us well into the evening.

Early in April, it was with great sadness that we heard of the sudden death of Jessica Wolken, eldest daughter of Lynn Egan and step-daughter of Jock. Lynn and Jock have been regular attendees at our Wednesday night gatherings for several years. Jessica, mother of two small children, had lived in Australia for some time. Lynn and Jock flew to Perth for the funeral. Our prayers and thought are with them and the wider family at this time.

On a continuing sad note, the Wellington coroner concluded the Inquest of our friend Kieran Gallagher-Power, who was killed in a train accident in September 2012, delivering an Open Verdict. According to the evidence, the train driver was

distracted by something to the left of the track and saw Kieran for 5 metres - a quarter of a second - before the train hit him. The train driver was the only witness. The kaumatua who blessed the site said there was a warm good feeling there, which was unusual. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with Kathleen, Mike, Sean, Therese, Ronnie, Rosie, Liam and all the whanau at this time.

Our friend Mary Shand died suddenly in late April. Mary was a welcome guest at our Wednesday night gatherings over several years. She always prayed for her family in a bold and imaginative way. At her funeral Jim and Sally spoke in her memory on behalf of the CW and along with others recalled the many delightful facets of Mary's interesting life. May she rest in peace.

In early May, Jim joined other CWs at the Court of Appeal in Wellington in support of the three Waihopai CW peacemakers – Sam Land, Adi Leason and Fr Peter Murnane OP – who were appealing a summary judgment against them in the High Court for costs of \$1.2 million for damages. The three had previously been acquitted of criminal charges. The judgment allowed them to be sued under civil law.

Fr Peter told the reporters outside the court 'If our appeal is unsuccessful, we will not pay damages. They can turn me upside down and shake me but they'll only get a few coins. I have not held a bank account for 50 years and my two friends are subsistence farmers. We have no intention of paying a cent, even if I had it, because I don't believe it's a just case. None of us have the money to pay damages. We live lives of simplicity in order to help keep this planet on a course of sanity and see that everyone gets their share of the world's resources. We actively work for peace as Jesus commanded to prevent the hugely expensive, totally immoral damage inflicted by war and preparations for war.'

'We damaged the spy base in an effort to stop 'dreadful practices' fuelled by military intelligence supplied from the base which led to death, destruction and torture in the Iraq war. Now the GCSB is suing us to get 'their gun', their weapon of war, back. These satellite dishes play a vital role in wars. It's like an armed murderer saying, "You broke my automatic weapon, I want my gun back. I'll sue you." They have no moral grounds for suing us. They're doing dirty work and we want it to stop.'

It was highly significant that as the Wednesday the Appeal was being heard, around the corner the

attorney-generals from five countries – the UK, US, Australia, Canada and NZ – were meeting. The GCSB action was brought by the NZ attorney-general. Directly opposite in the Parliament, the GCSB Amendment Bill was introduced. The latter

seeks wide raging extension to the powers of the GCSB including ‘legalising’ all its illegal activities from the past. The Ploughshares peacemakers were witnessing in the midst of this web!

Rowena , aged 10

Look Rowena! See the two dolphins
Leaping to the air in Miramar wharf
Lifting their weight as you lift the weight
Of my two score years
Till caught in your smile
Whirled on the fun cup’s rim
My heart is sprung
Gushed, glow gushed the gold you
Glad, glad, glad the grey me

Two in a turn spin
Joy, joy to be in
The day’s dull lure offers its arm
To the tumbled heart
No longer awash in the gleam
Of the blue eyed grin
But limping now and lingering
In the dying glimmer of the spent moment

—*Pauline Vella*

farewell to the forest

you stood for a century
sheltered millions of birds
a panorama of life
stunning beyond words

but nature has spoken
your time has come
the roots all perished
all dried in the sun

salt water the culprit
seeping up without sound
sucking the life
poisoning the ground

down you come crashing
the whine of the saw
a haven for birdlife
standing no more

as nature provided
so nature gave birth
the decision not ours
it belonged to the earth

—*Jim Consedine*

Funeral Choice

www.funeralchoice.co.nz
A Catholic Worker project
Cheaper alternatives to
consumer funerals

CW website

- Leading articles from the first 16 years of *The Common Good*
- Alternative funerals
- Restorative justice
- Other theological issues

www.catholicworker.org.nz

Growing up on a CW farm

Teresa Land

Growing up on a Catholic Worker farm was definitely my favourite way of growing up. From swimming in the river as much as I wanted, to learning the love of working with and for God and the *whanau*, our wider family.

I was born in the winter of 1994 in my parent's room, the last of seven kids. My dad, Joseph, was 31, my mother Catherine 37, and my siblings Abraham 12, Kate 10, Mathew 9, Elijah 8, Gilbert 6 and Patrick 3. Knowing Hokianga weather, it probably rained for the first two months of my life!

When I was born, there were about 25 people living in our valley, Maikio, all but a few related to me.

They included our family, two of dad's brothers, one of his sisters and their families and my grandparents, Peter and Judith. They had moved here in 1978 with seven of their nine children and my great-grandmother, then aged 91.

My childhood memories consist of cousins, swimming, home schooling, riding to church on horses, morning jobs, dad reading out loud in the evenings, Monday prayers and good times. The most important things for me in the years 2000-2001 were two families moving out of the valley and my two oldest siblings leaving for the USA and other countries for a year.

We also 'joined' the Catholic Worker, but I didn't really notice. Nothing changed apart from mum and dad stressing about writing a paper. For mum and dad it was exciting to find a movement that fitted and enhanced our lifestyle. I am forever grateful that the CW found its way from New York to the Hokianga.

As time went on different people came and went. I wasn't aware that some of them had quite serious problems. I never felt threatened or afraid but unbeknown to me I was never left alone with them. I remember mum and dad telling us that if we felt something was wrong or if something happened, to tell them straight away no matter what. Somehow they managed to say this without us thinking less of people.

We live without power except 12 volt lights and a car stereo. We also don't use machines on the farm because we believe that a more simple standard of living is more viable for the planet. This includes

ploughing with Clydesdale horses and digging *riwai* and *kumara* for a week or two with a fork. Sawing wood is a big part of our morning. Scrubbing, washing takes time but can be a space to think or socialize. We also cook on an open fire, baking bread in camp ovens with coals on top. Our bread is half maize which means putting it on at 7am. A few years ago we were given a sourdough which is hardly sour but still rises as bread. It suits us as we are quite fussy.

A few of us get up at 6am to clean up, light the fire and grind white maize in time for 7am prayers before breakfast. In summer we have about 20 people per meal. At the end of the day one feels exhausted but content.

As I hit my teenage years, I became aware that this was the work I wanted to do, partly because my sister Kate wasn't around so much and also I enjoyed it. Trying to fit home school into making lunch, sawing wood and hanging out became quite an art.

Gardening is a big part of our lives. When I was born we had only one acre of garden and were going shopping every month. But as time went on we went shopping less and less and our gardens got bigger and bigger. Now in 2013 we do the bulk order every two months, don't really go shopping at all anymore, and have 4 acres of garden, a quarter of which is fallow. We talk of the day when tea, coffee, flour and sugar are no longer part of our diet, or we produce our own. Being humans, old habits die hard!

I'm 18 now and don't really plan on leaving this place of my childhood. My three oldest siblings are married with kids who spend every other day here. We are building a new house out of cob (clay, gravel and straw), a couple of metres from our old house. Me and mum are quite sad because we don't want to leave our little dwelling, but I guess we'll be able to host bigger groups in our new house.

To all those parents with young children I advise you to look to Catholic Worker farming. It makes for a childhood worth remembering.

Teresa Land lives at St Francis CW Farm in the Hokianga with her extended family. This article was first printed in Bread and Roses, the newspaper of the Hokianga CW.



Gospel Obedience

John Dear SJ



Civil disobedience in a world of total violence, war, poverty and nuclear weapons is a way for me to follow the nonviolent, civilly disobedient Jesus. I agree with Gandhi, that great practitioner of civil disobedience, that Jesus practiced perfect nonviolence, was the greatest nonviolent resister in history, and engaged in regular civil disobedience.

I am trying to follow Jesus. Jesus was nonviolent and practiced civil disobedience and was eventually arrested, jailed and executed. I'm supposed to be his follower, and in this world of total violence, injustice, poverty, war and nuclear weapons, it seems inevitable that I, too, must engage in nonviolent civil disobedience. I want to keep following Jesus all the way to the cross.

I have come to the conclusion that Jesus engaged in civil disobedience every single day of his public life, that nearly everything he did was illegal, that his mere nonviolent presence was a threat to empire. I used to joke that Jesus was a one-man crime wave walking through the Roman Empire. Actually, he was even more threatening -- he was a movement organizer, building a community and a movement among poor people to nonviolently resist the empire and the unjust religious system that backed it in the name of God.

As I have studied the Gospels, I have discovered nearly a dozen types of civil disobedience that Jesus practiced: his prophetic proclamation of the coming of God's reign and his reading from the book of Isaiah in the Nazareth synagogue as subversive truth-telling that threatened the empire; touching and healing lepers, which others thought would threaten everyone's health; dining and associating with 'public sinners,' outcasts and the marginalized; repeatedly breaking Sabbath laws; violating the cleanliness laws and eating codes; visiting 'enemy' territories and associating with the enemy (such as the Samaritans) and with violent revolutionaries (the Zealots); engaging in symbolic action and political street theatre (riding into Jerusalem on a donkey and fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 about the coming of a king of peace who will end war forever); and urging people not to pay their taxes (one of the 'capital crimes' for which he was 'capitally punished').

Certainly the climax of his public work – even his life – was his nonviolent civil disobedience in the temple, where he turned over the tables of the money changers and prevented people from engaging in the profitable big business of organized religion. The Synoptic Gospels tell the same basic story: Jesus marched from Galilee to Jerusalem on a campaign of nonviolence like Gandhi going to the sea or King marching from Selma, Ala. He entered the temple, where the religious authorities worked in conjunction with the empire and forced the faithful to pay a hefty sum to visit God, and engaged in nonviolent direct action.

The person we claim to follow

The Synoptics make it clear that Jesus' final civil disobedience in the temple led to his arrest a few days later, his jailing, trial and brutal execution. This is a great challenge to anyone who seriously wants to follow this Jesus. Are we willing to give our lives to resist empire, injustice and the oppression of the poor? How seriously do we want to follow him?

But turns out there was one more final act of civil disobedience left to come: The Resurrection. The Resurrection is the greatest act of civil disobedience in all of human history.

As Daniel Berrigan once said, just as the crucifixion of Jesus was perfectly legal, so the resurrection of Jesus was totally illegal. Matthew's Gospel emphasizes this point: The Roman authorities placed guards at his tomb with the imperial seal, saying, in Dan's words, 'We've killed you and we put you in the tomb and now you're dead. So stay there.' But Jesus rises from the dead, breaks the imperial seal and, indeed, breaks the law that says, 'Once you're dead, you're dead.' His resurrection is the perfect nonviolent revolution and changes everything.

To this day, the illegally risen Jesus remains at large, out and about, forming his underground movement of nonviolence, organizing for the abolition of war, poverty, empire and nuclear weapons and for the coming of God's reign of nonviolence. Wherever people are resisting injustice and giving their lives for justice and peace, he's there.

John Dear SJ is a peacemaker, retreat giver and author, resident in the US and visited NZ in 2009 at the invitation of the Catholic Worker. This is a summary of an NCR article, 26 March 2013.

Obituaries

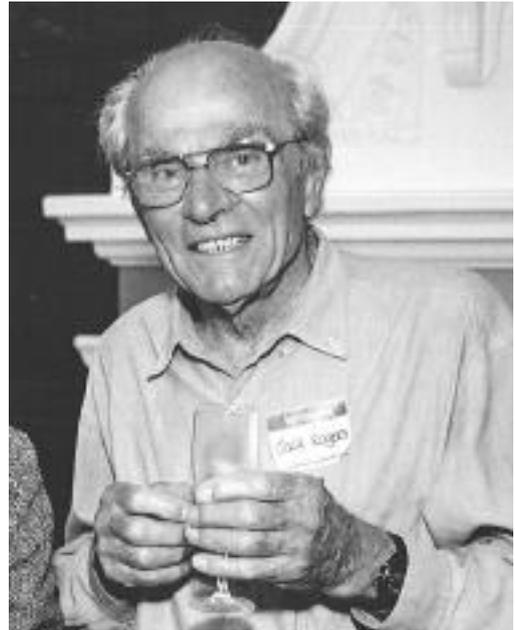
Jack Rogers (1918-2013)

Jack Rogers, a leading member of the Christian Pacifist Society and conscientious objector in World War II, died on 12 February 2013 in Christchurch aged 94. Born just before Armistice Day on 20 October 1918, he claimed to have been a pacifist from birth. In a fascinating interview with filmmaker Kathleen Gallagher in 2005, he explained that he believed ‘all babies absorb pacifism with their mother’s milk; but it is knocked out of them.’ Jack came from a ‘reasonably devout Methodist family’ in Wanganui. On first hearing the Sermon on the Mount, he found it ‘revolutionary’.

Jack drew strength from his involvement in the Methodist Bible Class. In 1936, aged 18, he joined the Christian Pacifist Society, which was associated with the UK-based International Fellowship of Reconciliation and War Resisters International. At the time, the Bible Class movement was extraordinarily strong: each year they paid for a couple of bright university students, usually Christian Pacifists, to travel throughout New Zealand helping organise summer and winter schools and annual conventions – usually in Auckland or Wellington. At one of these, a declaration was adopted against war stating that, because Christianity insists on pacifism, Christians should take no part on warfare, nor support medical services which were under military control. In 1940, soon after the outbreak of World War Two, Jack showed his commitment by cycling from Wanganui to Wellington to attend a conference.

Jack was 21 when he was conscripted, studying hard to become an electrician; and he was only six weeks off completing the syllabus. Registering as conscientious objectors, he, and later his younger brother Arthur, went before the appeal board. This consisted of a magistrate, a crown prosecutor, a representative of the workers and a representative of the employers.

He was sent to Wanganui Prison for a month, where his father was the visiting magistrate. On release, he was taken to Trentham and held in guardhouses until the conscientious objector detention camps were ready. He was sent to the ‘bad boys’ camp for recalcitrants’ at Hautu, near Turangi, for nearly five years, and wasn’t released until February 1946, six months after the war ended. He became the runner for a clandestine courier service carrying mail and food, set up by the prisoners



between Hautu and the nearby Rangipo Prison because they were not allowed outside information. He had to get out through three lots of barbed wire under floodlights, then jog for five to six miles through the scrub to where we had hidden a golden syrup tin under pine needles.

New Zealand was the only allied country where conscientious objectors, 823 of them, were imprisoned for the duration of the war. Some, like Reverend Ormond Burton, were imprisoned for 2½ years for speaking publicly against the war by quoting the Bible, despite having been decorated for his military service during the First World War. Connie Summers from Christchurch was the only New Zealand woman to be imprisoned, for three months for ‘sedition’.

While in prison, he ‘formed a close emotional relationship with a certain dental nurse,’ with Jean, who had treated the COs. After they were married in 1947, they lived in Halswell, Christchurch for over 50 years, where they brought up four sons while building their own house and Jack worked as an electrician. Active in Christian Pacifist Society (disbanded in 2002) and various local peace groups; they remained stalwarts of the local Methodist church.

At Jack’s funeral, there were glowing tributes from family and friends about Jack and Jean’s many interests, which included tramping, gardening, building and community activities. His sons remembered his strong Christian views against any form of violence and alcohol.

— *Kate Dewes*

Bryan Law (1954-2013)

Bryan Law died suddenly in Rockhampton while preparing for his ploughshares trial for disarming a Tiger attack helicopter. A number of us including myself were preparing to go to Rockhampton to support Bryan and Graham Dunstan during the trial.



Bryan spent a very large portion of his life working on peace, environmental and social justice issues, the last decade largely dedicated to a struggle against war and militarism.

His own father was deeply scarred by what he saw in World War II, and even tried to take his own life while part of the occupation forces in Japan. It was only later in life that Bryan realised how deeply his father's war experience impacted on his whole family.

Bryan had great faith that peace was possible, that a better world was possible, despite any available evidence, and he acted on this faith. His chief tools were civil disobedience and a brilliant mind. He had been arrested many times, and had more than one spell in prison. He was not afraid of jail!

He and Margaret Pectorious, a Catholic, were married about 14 years ago. Slowly Bryan began to be inspired by Catholic peacemakers, those he knew, and those he read about. In 2009, Bryan entered the Catholic Church.

The following year he was confirmed, and took the name of Francis, after Franz Jagerstatter the Austrian resister who was executed by the Nazis. After Bryan's conversion his rhetoric often included the name of Jesus. Here is what he told the magistrate at his 2012 committal hearing for damaging a military helicopter and 'beating it into a ploughshare':

'I'm glad I did it, your Honour. I'm glad that for however brief a moment that infernal helicopter death machine couldn't fly and couldn't be used as a weapon. In a time of depraved warfare in Afghanistan and of military slavery to the US empire, I'm glad I made this witness to the prophecy of Isaiah and the promise of our saviour Jesus Christ. We must disarm.' It was a public statement that summed up his life and beliefs.

Bryan's funeral was held in the Cathedral in Cairns, and presided over by the Bishop James Foley. Bishop Foley deeply admired Bryan. During his homily, I was amazed to hear an Australian bishop speak out strongly against a war in which Australia is involved. In his praise of Bryan, Bishop Foley stated clearly that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were not justified, and were not about 'peacekeeping'.

Obviously Bryan and Margaret had a positive influence even on the bishop.

Bryan is survived by his wife and 14 year old son, Joseph.

—*Jim Dowling*

Jean Stewart – Founder of MAP

Jean Stewart was born in what was then rural South Auckland. From there she went to Auckland University to become a teacher. Jean taught in both the state sector and the Methodist Church. Jean with her late husband Ted and children Patrick and Ann also spent time in the UK. Having a strong social conscience, Jean became a long time supporter of the NZ Labour Party.

Jean was best known in Auckland where she led the Movement for Alternatives to Prison (MAP). She was an outspoken champion for prisoners' rights, and was absolute that prisons should only exist for the 'most dangerous' offenders in our society. She was a member of the International Congress of Penal Abolition, and attended many meetings overseas promoting the notion of the abolition of prisons and their replacement by alternative forms of sanction. She was a driving force behind the ICOPA international conference held in Auckland in 1997.

Jean was a founding member of the Mt Albert's University of the Third Age and also of St Luke's Selwyn Centre, an outreach of the Selwyn Foundation. Gardening had always been a love of Jean's and lately saw her taking on a solo father to help her. She also took on an Albanian refugee seeking housework. Reading was Jean's great love. She was also a crossword wizard and a Scrabble aficionado. My last outing with Jean was to Waiheke Island, where Jean chose her favourite treat, fish and chips. Jean spent a short time in hospital and died peacefully, 24 March, aged 89.

—*Sheelah Chalklen*

Letters

135 Mt Pleasant Road,
Christchurch 8081

Dear Jim,

I enjoyed reading your thoughtful piece on forgiveness in *The Common Good*, no 64. I would like to add that from my experience, forgiveness is somewhat like grief, is a journey. The direction and story of this journey can depend on the particulars of the situation and the I-and-thou involved. Sometimes the 'thou' factor – or perhaps the absence of it – sends us down an angry, bitter or negative side-road. The 'I' has to stop and turn around and make it back to the main road and check the 'forgiveness map.' (Don't rely completely on the 'forgiveness journey GPS' – as with all technology, it may not be infallible!)

Facing the 'thou' and receiving acknowledgments, apologies and redress can all speed up the journey considerably. But sometimes when we seem to be zooming along the road to forgiveness, an obstacle will pull us up short. Maybe we feel we are heading back to our starting point. ...Or maybe it is a short lived diversion.

We can expect to come across unplanned detours and side-roads and be slowed down by one-way bridges, speed humps, traffic jams and mobs of sheep. We may have mechanical problems along the way. Who do/would you call on for roadside rescue if it is not something you can mend for yourself?

When asked about forgiveness, Bishop Penny Jamieson said, 'It took time. I let it happen when my heart was healed.' How do we achieve that healing? Particularly if the 'thou' is not involved? Is the heart healing a separate journey or part of the forgiveness one? How do we know when the healing is complete? Can we expect to be left with scars?

There is much to reflect on. Thanks for the reminder.

Sincerely,

Denny Anker

Kapiti Catholic Parishes,
P O Box 1,
Paraparaumu 5254

Dear Jim,

Thank you for the latest edition of *The Common Good*. I have received permission from John Weir to

reprint his wonderful article on James K. Baxter. And have used it for our seminarians who made a *hikoi* to Kapiti and Hiriarama this week and reflected on Baxter's letters 'To a Priest 1969 – 70'.

With kind regards and thanks,

Rev Michael McCabe

Solomon Islands

Dear CW,

"If anyone sues you for your coat, give him your shirt as well..." (Jesus, in Matthew 5:40)

Even though I live in the Solomon Islands, the two days which the Waihopai Ploughshares group had in the Court of Appeal (May 8 and 9) were too important to miss.

As at our criminal trial in March 2010 – where we were declared *not* guilty of burglary and wilful damage – many supporters again filled the public seats in the courtroom. Many of these had spent a week praying and fasting in St Andrew's church on The Terrace. Thousands more New Zealanders agree with our action and current stand: that the Government Communications Security Bureau is itself guilty of much worse crimes than any we are accused of: they helped the USA to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq; they feed it day and night with a flow of information from which – at worst - names are selected to be kidnapped, tortured or killed by drones in the mad "war on terror", which creates new terrorists daily. At very least the USA uses the GCSB's information to gain advantage over persons and governments around the world... unlawfully.

Our friends went even further to support us. To protest at being sued when we are not guilty and have not had a chance to defend ourselves in a courtroom against this civil suit, we followed Jesus' advice and planned a further non-violent action, which many friends shared with us. Because the Government is suing us for the shirts off our backs, we decided to give them our trousers as well. During lunch break from the courtroom, we took off shirts and pants, marched across the street in our underwear to Parliament and offered the large bundle to the Prime Minister. He has not as yet thanked us!

Thanks for your support.

Peter Murnane OP

In this issue	Page
Susan St John on child poverty	1-2
Editorials – Prophets in our time and Waihopai Ploughshares	3-4
Around the Traps, Poems	5-6
Theresa Land on growing up CW	7
John Dear on gospel obedience	8
Obituaries, letters.....	9-11

The Common Good

Te Wairua Maranga Trust
 Box 33-135
 Christchurch 8244
 New Zealand



Catholic Worker National Hui

Southern Star Abbey, Kopua, Hawkes Bay
 4pm Thursday 29 August – 4pm Sunday 1st September 2013
 Register – Kathleen Gallagher at doygalpress@yahoo.com or Ph 03 332 9192
 Please bring food to share and a sleeping bag. Mattresses provided.

Pass it on— When you've finished this issue of The Common Good, why not share it with someone else? You could give it to a friend or workmate, or leave it for the next reader to find - in the creche, bus depot, magazine rack at Bellamy's, local library... Help The Common Good get around.