

Welcoming Refugees and Migrants

Patrick O'Connor



*With what I have,
with what you offer,
our basket will be full.
We who have landed
from the canoes of the
world, we descendants
of the four winds,
welcome to Aotearoa. A
place for all to stand.*

Maori Proverb

New Zealand is one of the most desirable countries in the world as a migrant destination. It reflects the fact that essentially, we are all migrants, and there have been waves of migrants since the beginning. The first big wave came from Polynesia and beyond in the 1300s. Others followed from Europe in the 1800s. More again came later in the 1960-80s; others arrived only last year.

If we pride ourselves on being a generous natured people, surely we could be far more compassionate and welcoming towards our homeless neighbour?

In addition to continuing to receive migrants via complex policies, New Zealand also has a formal agreement with the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) to accept 750 refugees per year. This has reduced from a figure of 800 in 2002. So while our migrant numbers total about 50,000 per year, our refugee quota is only 750. This is a meagre number in a world where 50 million refugees await resettlement! If we pride ourselves on being a generous natured people, surely we could be far more compassionate and welcoming towards our homeless neighbour?

The UNHCR regards New Zealand as a great country for resettling refugees. But requests by UNHCR to successive NZ Governments over several years to increase our quota from 750 to perhaps 1000 or more, have been repeatedly rebuffed. Interestingly, the Tony Abbott Government in Australia recently doubled its annual intake!

Humans usually migrate fundamentally for reasons of economy, adventure, education, employment, family re-

unification, improved living standards, global safety, security, weather, and most importantly, children's futures. However, the case of refugees is different. They are fleeing danger - usually either war, famine, religious or ethnic persecution. Technically refugees are not defined as immigrants. This is a mistake. They should be. This would mean they could be incorporated as an integral part of our overall immigration policy.

New Zealand offers comparatively excellent health, education, social welfare, justice and housing/living policies and practices, although it can be argued resettlement standards are in decline or stagnating in some areas.

Pope Francis on Immigration

Pope Francis is a champion of Immigrants. In his first visit outside Rome after his election, he chose to go to the southern Italian island of Lampedusa, near Sicily, a primary destination for immigrants from Africa. In 2014 alone, more than 3000 died making the treacherous journey in fragile boats. Most were escaping war, destitution, persecution and famine at home. Francis spent time among them in their camps and celebrated Mass for them. He reminded them that Mary, Joseph and Jesus were all migrants escaping terror when they fled to Egypt. In the liturgy, he prayed that 'all would have a heart which will embrace immigrants. God will judge us on how we have treated the most needy.'

In a later address to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, 25 November 2014, he described Europe's immigration policies as 'elderly and haggard' and called for urgent reform. 'Inaction on immigration concerns risked furthering slave labour conditions and exacerbating social conditions.' He challenged European leaders 'not to allow the Mediterranean to become a vast cemetery.'

Cultural Orientation

New Zealand is an increasingly ethnically diverse nation with over 220 ethnicities dwelling here. There are approximately 170 in Christchurch alone. There are many more in Auckland. That is a huge diversity of peoples already in this country.



Such diversity offers many benefits but also poses challenges, particularly as we have rather ad hoc integration policies. For example, there is no national languages policy. A draft policy, acclaimed favourably by experts in the field, was shelved in 1991. Such a definitive policy is urgently needed.

The satisfactory acquisition of English language by non-English-speaking migrants and refugees is paramount, as is the maintenance of the mother tongue of migrant/refugee newcomers. Such programmes should be universally free and compulsory. Internationally, language experts agree that the satisfactory acquisition of a second language is greatly enhanced by the learner's fluency in their mother tongue. Since humans' capacity to acquire language peaks at about age 10, first language maintenance policies should aim at pre-school and primary children.

Also of much importance is the compulsory attendance by newcomers at cultural orientation courses where such topics as the following could be covered:

Te Tiriti O Waitangi, overview of NZ history, education, family/community services, NZ justice system/basic law/policing, tax/small/business, human rights/race relations, employment, the health system, and central and local government

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 three houses of hospitality in Christchurch named after Suzanne Aubert, Joseph Cardijn 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 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 engage in regular prayer and we also 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.** *The Common Good:* Editor: Jim Consedine - jim.conse@xtra.co.nz;
Layout - Barbara Corcoran - burkespass@gmail.com

These courses would be offered with an interpreter in various languages and expert speakers in the various topics. English and cultural orientation are fundamental for smooth integration and benefit all stakeholders.

Cultural and linguistic differences as well as similarities are to be celebrated and the host society needs to move beyond indulgence in the superficial (dragon dances and Kebabs) to genuine, deep, sophisticated understanding of settling cultures.

Cultural and linguistic differences as well as similarities are to be celebrated and the host society needs to move beyond the indulgence in the superficial (dragon dances and Kebabs) to genuine, deep, sophisticated understanding of settling cultures. Local and Central Government policies that promote inter-cultural understanding could be introduced. This should start with well-designed programmes from primary school through to secondary, in all aspects of diversity.

Culture - a definition

Culture is what holds a community together giving a common framework of meaning. It includes how people communicate with each other, how we make decisions, how we structure our families and what we think is important. It expresses our values towards land and time, and our attitudes towards work and play, good and evil, reward and punishment.

Culture is preserved in language, symbols and customs and celebrated in art, music, drama, literature, religion and social gatherings. It constitutes the collective memory of the people and the collective heritage which will be handed down to future generations.

Education curriculum designers also need to promote vigorously the study and acquisition of a second/third language in schools. We now have free trade agreements with China and Korea and soon with India, so linguistic dexterity is multi-dimensional in its benefits. Of major importance is the enhancement of race relations in our country. The time to act is now.

The commitment to inter-cultural development is incumbent upon all stakeholders - the newcomers, their families and communities and the host society.

Let's Bury the Myths

Established New Zealand citizens must consign to the dustbin the stereotype of immigrants and particularly refugees being a burden on our country and its resources. Some refugee communities have 90% - 95% employment rates, and all are strongly committed to seeking, gaining and maintaining work. Further training and study are vigorously pursued. For example, New Zealand Somali refugee children have gained over 60 university degrees in the last 5 years, in addition to scores of other tertiary qualifications from hairdressing to plumbing to graphic design. Refugees have acquired PhDs, and occupy senior

positions throughout the country. Scores of refugees are operating businesses, and have succeeded despite English being another language to learn.

Migrant and refugee people are highly motivated to contribute to their adopted country and possess a strong work ethic. The global trade culture is expanding from our traditional markets, and we, as a small vulnerable nation, should take advantage of the human resource we have among our newcomers.

New Zealand's United Nations quota for refugees should be significantly increased in what would be a win/win situation.

Refugees are not a burden, they are a gift. They are all People of God, our brothers and sisters in the human family, loved by God, redeemed in Christ's blood. They should be welcomed with open arms.

The Way Forward

New Zealand has an ageing population and we need people - particularly young people - who will likely have

Editorial 1 TPPA - Government thinking insane

Thomas Merton, the famous Trappist monk, writer and mystic, once wrote a fabulous essay on the life of Adolf Eichmann, the architect of the Nazi final solution programme responsible for the deaths of 6 million Jewish people in World War II.

Merton reflected on the fact that, after Eichmann's capture by Israeli agents in Argentina and his return to Israel for trial, he underwent a lengthy series of psychiatric examinations as to his sanity. The psychiatrists concluded unanimously that Eichmann, who had acted in such a deranged way for so long, was absolutely and completely **sane!** In so doing, they redefined the definition of sanity.

I am reminded of this fact when I reflect on the supposedly sane pathway that John Key, backed, it seems, by his government – is leading New Zealand into the abyss of the **Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement**. Now, John Key is nothing like Eichmann. But the point Merton makes is that the 'banality of evil' can come from the most seemingly civilised situation. Wicked deeds do not just come from street gangs, psychopaths and drug barons. They also come from suited men with combed hair in collars and ties.

The TPPA is wicked. It is evil in its effects. By signing up to it, among other things, we will trade away in part, if not wholly:

- NZ's sovereignty and independence to overseas trans-national corporations. The Agreement will give international corporations the right to sue our democratically elected government if we interfere with their profits and don't toe their line on issues like imports, workers' rights and the Treaty of Waitangi.

more than the current average 1.5 children per child-bearing age female. Young refugee arrivals should be immediately trained in English and academic/technical skills to contribute, so that we have a dual refugee/immigration policy that benefits all stakeholders. Investment, not cost is the key.

Migrant and refugee people are highly motivated to contribute to their adopted country and possess a strong work ethic. The global trade culture is expanding from our traditional markets, and we, as a small vulnerable nation, should take advantage of the human resource we have among our newcomers.

They are a resource worth investing in much more comprehensively to yield benefits for our evolving society. We need to embrace the diverse tapestry that our nation already is in 2015, and welcome its further development.

*Patrick O'Connor is the founder (1991) and director of PEETO, the Multi-Cultural Learning Centre in Christchurch, which works with immigrants, refugees and international students.
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- Public health care as it now exists. Profit margins of overseas investors can in some cases over-ride NZ Government health policy. The TPPA will prevent Pharmac from bulk bargaining for some generic drugs.

- Environmental legislation, which will be able to be overruled by mining companies and deep-sea oil companies.

- Employment law in NZ which protect workers' basic rights (remember *The Hobbit* fiasco!).

The TPPA is only 'good' for those corporations whose god is making more money from the poor and building even bigger 'barns' for themselves. Evil venal fools are behind it! They see people only as consumers. In addition, the whole deal is being negotiated secretly. The NZ public know nothing of the text of the Agreement.

Greed is a breeding ground for the spread of evil. It stands in stark contrast to that most basic principle of the Gospel: social justice for all and the promotion of the common good.

Greed is driving the TPPA, and John Key is its main acolyte in New Zealand. This is a deal driven by super-rich transnational corporations who want still more. The Government appears to be leading us into a trap of giant proportions with corporate rats who are further carving up the world and its resources for their own greedy ends.

This is a huge sin being inflicted on current and future generations of New Zealanders. The Key Government seems not to care. The banality of evil.

By any standard of reasoning, isn't this insane?

—Jim Consedine

Editorial 2 Stay out of Iraq

The British Foreign Secretary, Phillip Hammond, was totally cynical in his application of pressure for New Zealand to join the coalition against ISIS (ISIL) 'because we are part of the family'. What a shabby dirty family they are when it comes to war-making! And all to protect their own business interests. We should have no part of it!

Despite appearances to the contrary in the West, ISIS didn't appear from nowhere. Testimony from the Dominican Sisters living in Iraq for decades (*NCR Global Sisters Report, 2015*) lays the charge that it was the Blair/Bush coalition's immoral invasion of Iraq that forced the formation of ISIS in the first place. The war left what had been a highly structured, cultured, educated and sophisticated society in ruins. The power vacuum which resulted played right into the hands of al-Qaeda, which spawned ISIS.

The 2003 invasion by US/UK led coalition forces decimated the Iraqi infrastructure and services, many of which have not been adequately repaired. Even the Iraqi Dominican Sisters, who used to run schools, hospitals and orphanages in and around Mosul, were forced to close most of their institutions when the Iraq War began.

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More tellingly, when Saddam Hussein's regime was toppled, it created a power vacuum that was left largely unchecked, launching [a civil war](#) and allowing al-Qaeda to gain a foothold in Iraq [for the first time](#). As the report says, the highly organized, well-armed and well-funded ISIS introduced itself to most of the world in June 2014 via a series of high-profile attacks. First, it violently [seized control of Mosul](#), Iraq's second-largest city, and then captured [nearby Qaraqosh](#), where many of Mosul's refugees had fled.

Christians, who were plentiful in both cities, were told to leave, convert or die. Gruesome tales of Christians being raped and beheaded began to populate the Internet. Although they got most of the international attention, Christians weren't the only targets. Religious and ethnic minorities of all kinds were singled out as ISIS blazed a bloody path to international notoriety. By the end of 2014, ISIS [would have its self-proclaimed caliphate](#), and it would control what the *Wall Street Journal* estimated was a [Belgium-sized](#) chunk of Iraq and Syria. What a wonderful legacy for the Blair/Bush/Obama coalition forces!

A caliphate Islamic State in Iraq would have no place for Christians, Yazidis, or Shiite Muslims save those

women and girls forcibly converted and sold as sex slaves. How tragically ironic that a major moral force behind Bush's war were conservative Christians in the US?

NZ Involvement

There are many moral and practical reasons why New Zealand should have no truck with intervention in this war. The public are not fully aware of those reasons because the media propaganda has been so relentless in favour of us going, and the PM had been softening the nation up for months. The official invitation to join the war was prearranged, a *fait accompli*.

We wisely stayed out of Iraq in round one when the country was nearly destroyed. We should stay out this time.

Regrettably, the Waihopai Spy Base has placed us at the heart of this war. It will implicate NZ in atrocities and human rights violations committed by any of the countries involved. The base clearly puts our own security at risk. It also aligns us intimately with western military and corporate interests, which have always been structured to benefit only the rich and powerful. The poor will pay again the price - through more bombings, death, disease, mayhem, and through becoming cannon-fodder for the military..

Most Kiwis still have no idea why ISIS was formed. Furthermore, they can't understand why they are so numerous, well trained and disciplined. But ISIS haven't come from nowhere. This situation has been building for decades.

Westerners know so little about the decades of military and corporate exploitation of Middle Eastern resources and the massive resentment it has built among its peoples. It is simply off the mainstream media agenda here. The pro-western propaganda is relentless. As scripture says, 'We reap what we sow.'

Now we are off to another war, hanging on the coat tails of 'the family'. This at a time when New Zealand has just spent millions of taxpayer dollars in gaining a seat on the UN Security Council. If there was ever any justification for gaining that position, it was that we were perceived to be a somewhat neutral country with an independent mind. That will go out the window the minute we arrive in the warzone.

Our sycophantic government is sucking up to the big powers again, placing our little nation at risk and neutralising any positive effect that we could have on the Security Council. When the time comes to sit down with the warring parties involved, surely NZ will be totally compromised?

It is a pretty grubby blood-stained family that Phillip Hammond invited us to join. It's not too late to say no - and stay at home.

Jim Consedine / Dominican Sisters of Iraq

Editorial 3 Go to the Margins - *Pope Francis speaks*

The credibility of the Church and of the Christian message rests entirely on how Christians serve those marginalized by society.

I urge you to serve the Church in such a way that Christians -- edified by our witness -- will not be tempted to turn to Jesus without turning to the outcast, (will not) become a closed caste with nothing authentically ecclesial about it.

Serve Jesus crucified in every person who is marginalized. See the Lord present even in those who have lost their faith, or turned away from the practice of their faith, or who have declared themselves to be atheists.

We will not find the Lord unless we truly accept the marginalized! Truly, the Gospel of the marginalized is where our credibility is at stake, is found and is revealed!

Like the way Jesus responded to the leper in the Gospel (Mark 1/40-45), we need to be compassionate, to seek to 'reintegrate' the marginalized, and to 'respond immediately' to those left most in need by society.

We can fear to lose the saved and we can want to save the lost. Even today it can happen that we stand at the crossroads of these two ways of thinking. The thinking of the doctors of the law would remove the danger by casting out the diseased person. And the thinking of God, who in his mercy embraces and accepts by reinstating him and turning evil into good, condemnation into salvation, and exclusion into proclamation. These two ways of thinking are present throughout the Church's history: casting off and reintegrating.

The Church's way, from the time of the Council of Jerusalem, has always been the way of Jesus, the way of mercy and reintegration.

This does not mean underestimating the dangers of letting wolves into the fold, but welcoming the repentant prodigal son; healing the wounds of sin with courage and determination; rolling up our sleeves and not standing by and watching passively the suffering of the world.

The way of the Church is not condemning anyone eternally but to pour out the balm of God's mercy on all those who ask for it with a sincere heart. The way of the Church is precisely to leave her four walls behind and to go out in search of those who are distant, those on the 'outskirts' of life.

In a word: charity cannot be neutral, indifferent, lukewarm or impartial! Charity is infectious, it excites, it risks and it engages! For true charity is always unmerited, unconditional and gratuitous!

Total openness to serving others is our hallmark, it alone is our title of honour!

Jesus responds immediately to the leper's plea, without waiting to study the situation and all its possible consequences. For Jesus, what matters above all is reaching out to save those far off, healing the wounds of the sick, restoring everyone to God's family! This is scandalous to some people! Jesus is not afraid of this kind of scandal!

Jesus does not think of the closed-minded who are scandalized even by a work of healing, scandalized before any kind of openness, by any action outside of their mental and spiritual boxes, by any caress or sign of tenderness which does not fit into their usual thinking and their ritual purity.

Jesus wanted to reinstate the outcast, to save those outside the camp.

Pope Francis, 14 Feb 2015, homily to new cardinals

The shepherds of the galaxies, the Hubble telescope astronomers, have released photos of the universe from fourteen billion years ago. As I attempt to fathom the very notion of billions of years, my gaze settles on a large maple tree outdoors. Nestled in the fork of the trunk and a snow-covered limb, a squirrel wrapped in its tail is sleeping. Its ability to slumber while so precariously balanced is as mind-boggling as the distance of light years – equally deserving of the 'I-don't-know-what' of God. Awareness is a gift. Meditation on God's mystery, whether it be the creation of the universe or the ingenuity of providing squirrels with tails for winter sleeping, is a gift. The presence of God in one's life is a gift.

Carmelites of Indianapolis, Hidden Friends, p67

A LETTER FROM HONIARA BEACH

Peter Murnane OP

Honiara Beach
Solomon Islands

Dear Friends,

Sunday evening, just before sunset. As usual it is still above 30 °C and quite humid, but there's still time for a walk before evening meditation and Vespers. As I leave the front gate of our Dominican students' house and turn left towards the sea, a group of children are playing in front of the school across the road.

Reaching the beach, my heart lifts, as always, at the sight of the immense Pacific Ocean, even though today it is lead-coloured under cloud. In front of me, embedded deep in the grey sand are the remains of an iron pontoon that has been rusting here since the Japanese or the US forces left it in 1942. During their bitter, seven-month struggle to control Guadalcanal, each army in turn landed immense quantities of soldiers and materials on these beaches.

The goal of all the fighting was the strategic Henderson Field, now the international airport at the end of our street. In the months of struggle to secure it, about 38,000 soldiers died and 1200 planes were destroyed. No one counted the 'collateral damage' among the indigenous of all ages, slain by violence or starved when their food gardens were robbed or bombed.

I look out across Iron Bottom Sound, in whose depths lie some 60 ships and the bones of many sailors. One night, the people of Savo watched gun-flashes from the deafening dog-fight in which five or six big ships destroyed each other.

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Our teacher, Jesus, challenges us to love our enemies. Have we Christians ever taken him seriously? As I picture the thousands who died violently near here, I ask myself yet again whether it was right to 'defend our country' by using the same inexcusable methods as those used who were attacking us.

I am persuaded by Dorothy Day's comment immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbour, that if 'we' retaliated by declaring war on Japan, we would end up doing the same terrible things that we were trying to prevent Japan and Hitler from doing. The gratuitous horrors we inflicted by burning Dresden and Tokyo and

obliterating Hiroshima and Nagasaki leave no doubt that she was right.

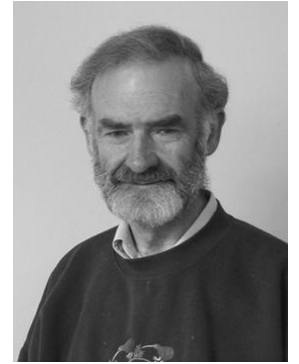
Are we really loving our country when we teach our population to hate, and train our young to kill their brothers and sisters who like themselves have been forced or cajoled to wear a uniform? When will we admit – and teach our children – that such hatred is the root of future wars? Our enemies are created largely by our own earlier violence or injustice. The punitive sanctions imposed on Germany in 1919 led to the Nazi regime; the exclusion of Japan from the world community and trade stoked its imperial ambitions; for a century 'Western' invasions and exploitation of peoples in the Middle East have induced some to fight back at last with methods deigned to 'terrorise', just as ours have been from the beginning.

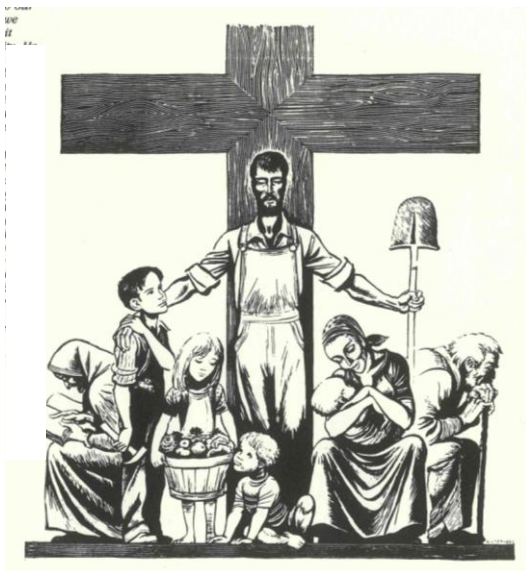
Those who challenge 'pacifism' always object that we need to use force against people who massacre children or kidnap hostages. Plenty of that recently. But does it have to be 'all or nothing'? In the current primitive stage of our development, it can be argued that we need to use *some* force to counter these. And armies *can* use force with a determined effort *not* to kill. The 'peace keeping' forces of which New Zealand was a part in East Timor and the Solomons achieved their goal with almost no deaths. However these 'more human' armies still train their recruits to fight and kill by partly de-humanising them; and the politicians who control them are all-too-easily seduced to join larger allies in the worst of imperial campaigns.

Long after the ships and guns lay rusting around Guadalcanal, Japanese and US visitors came in friendship to reclaim the ashes of their relatives who were slaughtered by high explosives or died in even greater numbers of hunger and tropical diseases.

I am more sure than ever that the world will not be healed by huge armies or institutions, which must rely on large-scale destruction and which unthinkingly abandon individual persons to all kinds of neglect and torture. The life-stories of those who commit inhuman crimes always reveal damage done to them by others' abuse. Only *one by one* can we turn back to see each other truly, as human – with all the mystery that implies – and treat each other with the dignity that *every* person deserves.

Fr Peter Murnane OP lived in Auckland for many years and was one of the three Catholic Workers who attempted to 'disarm' the Waihopai spy base in 2008. He works now in the Solomon Islands, and moves soon to Papua New Guinea.





passover remembered

Pack nothing.
Bring only
your determination
to serve and
your willingness to be free.

Only surrender to the need
of the time - to love
justice and walk humbly
with your God.

Set out in the dark.
I will send fire
to warm and encourage you.
I will be with you in the fire
and I will be with you in the cloud.

You will learn to eat new food
and find refuge in new places.
I will give you dreams in the desert
to guide you safely home to that place
you have not seen.

The stories you tell
one another around the fires
in the dark will make you
strong and wise.

You will get to where you are going
by remembering who you are.
Touch each other and keep telling stories.

—Alla Bozarth-Campbell

ash wednesday

a biting wind
sweeps this desolate beach
signalling the start of Lent
that time of repentance

where great sins cry out
for sorrow and tears
sins of greed, self indulgence
war mongering and violence

oppression against women, children
against this very climate
its winds, its waters, its air
sins against hope

this cold blast
watering windswept eyes
carries a challenge
to receptive souls

—Jim Consedine

holy week

It all begins
The day he enters Jerusalem
The place of the Skull beckons
The crowd wave palms
Shout Hosanna! Sing psalms!

Supper, wine of bitterness, gall
Trial, betrayal, denial
Passion consumes all
We kiss the Cross
And walk away for a day or two.

Sabbath. The long silence begins
The doors are locked, no one remains
Who keeps company?
The tabernacle is a tomb
Where faith lies waiting

The day of Resurrection
Hands and side pierced
Christ come to Mass, shoeless, transfigured
Still bearing the holes in his feet
At the tomb, only a shroud remains

Along the street
Littered with cans of bourbon and cola
An icon of Christ stands at the brazier
Offering fish and bread
'Come in from the night, come and eat,' he said

—MJ Walton

Around the Traps

Suzanne Aubert CW

The earthquake renovations are completed. EQC did some basic work including removing the asbestos in the roof and other structural repairs. However, they refused to accept responsibility for other damaged parts, claiming they pre-dated the earthquakes. We begged to differ but it made no difference. It has been a story repeated many times all over Canterbury!

Thanks largely to the work of a handful of Filipino migrant workers, we got the final work done over the Christmas break. They painted, cleaned and refurbished our rather elderly house. Aided by Brian McNabb from Christchurch, Ben, Diano, Napoleon, Raphael, Teresa and Dennies were fantastic – dedicated, skilful, cheerful and hardworking. We salute them. No wonder New Zealand employers have been hiring more and more Filipinos in the re-build of Christchurch. Our special thanks to Mark and his team who laid the carpets and fixed the doors. And to Marama, Dean, Craig, Sue and Maria who polished the brass, cleaned up the mess, put in the flowers and turned the house into a dream home. Thank you.

The whole repair operation was supervised by Sue McNabb, our Wellington-based trustee, who generously gave a week of her holidays to be on site every day and work on the house. Thank you Sue, and to Morrie, who helped with some difficult parts. Gary Brislane did the bathroom and transformed it in a couple of days. And came back three weeks later for a second helping! Thanks, Brizz.

We are also grateful to Fr John Craddock SM, the Addington parish priest, for his support and for some curtains to grace the rooms. The house was finally completed early in February, when the bathroom was painted and renovated, the ancient bath retired, a new basin and shower installed. After three months, we can now wash again! We officially re-opened on 5th February when Fr John blessed the house and we had a liturgy and supper. Thanks be to God, and well done everyone!

Initial costs were mainly met by a generous grant from the Home of Compassion Sisters in Wellington, who have been great supporters of the Suzanne Aubert CW for many years. We are extremely grateful for their kindness, support, generosity and ongoing interest. Further on-going work was required. Our total cost for the upgrade was \$16 000.

They Saw a Star in the South

It was lovely to have visits during the Christmas period from Catherine and Joseph Land, and their son Gilbert, all the way from the St Francis Farm in the Hokianga. They also spent time in Mid-Canterbury and visited Erewhon Station where daughter Theresa has been working for some months, before they all stayed

over with Kathleen and Mike en route to the CW in Otaki and eventually home. Lovely too to meet up with Margaret Ingram and husband Alon, and family Guy, Neta and Pelig, over from Israel for a South Island tour. Margaret claims to be the only Catholic Worker in Israel! They stayed a few days, made yodelling noises in the driveway and then left, their echoes still lingering. Apparently it is an Israeli habit!

Intrepid Traveller

Our veteran (72 editions) layout editor, Barbara Corcoran, has been back home in Georgia, USA, with her ailing mother for some months at the end of 2014. In January she travelled to Switzerland to spend time with family, before linking with husband John and youngest daughter Eileen in Liverpool for a month. Then it was back to Switzerland and home to NZ early March. She still managed to edit both this and the previous edition of *The Common Good* - this edition has been worked on in Liverpool, Bern, and Singapore before final touches back in Burkes Pass. Talk about a trooper!

Advent Appeal

We have had a somewhat slow response to our annual appeal. From 56 subscribers, we have received \$4300, for which we are extremely grateful and which will help with our costs through the coming year. This figure is down on last year when \$7300 came in from 66 subscribers. Any donation is very welcome, as we have annual costs of \$20 000, half of which goes on producing *The Common Good*. We have also spent an additional \$16,000 this year for house repairs after EQC left. However, we did receive an anonymous donation of \$3,000 towards the cost of the new bathroom, for which we are truly appreciative.

Philippines Government Changes Recruitment Fee Law

Filipino migrant workers can no longer be charged exorbitant fees to come to New Zealand. The Philippines Government has made changes to bring its recruitment law into line with New Zealand labour law. It is also in line with laws for Filipino migrants to the US, Canada, Britain, Ireland and the Netherlands. Filipino workers had faced paying fees of between \$2000 and \$15 000 to recruitment agencies for a job in New Zealand. New Zealand is now a 'no placement fee country'. This means employers are prohibited from charging for a job placement. This should help protect vulnerable migrants. Immigration New Zealand will now decline work visa applications if it believes employment was offered as a result of payment for the employer. *The Press*, 12 January 2015

From the Archives

Phil Berrigan, # 242-139
Raxbury Correctional Institute, USA
20 June 2000

Dear Jim,

Thanks for yours and for circulating some info on *Depleted Uranium Three* in the CW paper. Pretty impressive – a circulation of over 4000.

We've got a whole spate of mail from NZ. Such fine people. Serious Christians.

Just to highlight our dilemma as Americans. Reminiscent of the old Roman Empire, on the skids and the barbarians at the gate. A similar period is upon us, unrecognised by most Americans. But with this difference – the barbarians are our own people: politicians, generals, CEOs, bankers. As one journalist put it – the lunatics are now running the insane asylum.

Put it this way. America's efforts to globalise the economy through trade and tariff agreements masks a vision and effort towards world domination. Economic/military domination, through political domination.

The oligarchs in D.C. will stint the Pentagon nothing because the encroachments in other societies requires

military muscle, including a nuclear strike-force. In brief, this seems to be the imperial agenda.

I wonder how you see the above? And a Christian/just response on the part of NZ? I know of your work of closing American/UK ports to nuclear warships. It seems to me that your government is as good as it is because it learned from its people.

I wonder how you saw switching tracks from prisons – admittedly good work – to return to the war craze, led by the U.S.? Simply because you're most qualified to do this. And you know what channel and measures to take. It strikes me that 'the last shall be first' applies to countries as well as the poor. Please give me your thoughts on the above.

Thanks to you and the love and peace of Christ.

Phil Berrigan

Phil Berrigan, prophet, was arrested more than 150 times over 45 years for peaceful vigils and nonviolent protests in opposition to US war policies and nuclear weapons. He served many prison terms, totalling more than 11 years. He died in December 2002.

Operation Condor

Robert Consedine

When reading or reviewing books on Pope Francis, it is important to remember the context in which he worked in the early years after his ordination in December 1969. The Argentinian military coup in the 1970s was part of 'Operation Condor' which was launched by the United States Government. It brought together six Latin American National Security States – Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay.

The purpose was to wipe out any left leaning political movements: socialist, Marxist, social justice movements, trade unions, health care workers, human rights advocates, labour organisers, priests, journalists, social workers, liberal intellectuals and anyone working with or advocating for the poor, or even women advocating for their jailed husbands.

Anyone promoting liberation theology, a 'preferential option for the poor,' or working for social justice with the dispossessed in the slums, was considered a target. More than 80,000 people were either tortured, disappeared or murdered.

'Operation Condor' was a murder network of death squads, torturers, rapists and assassins, directed by military dictatorships and carried out by police and army networks, trained and funded by the United States Government. This 'terrorist' training camp for the

torturers and murderers was located in Panama from 1946, before it moved to Fort Benning in Georgia in 1984. At that time, it was called *The School of the Americas*. Later, after it gained huge notoriety, it was re-named *The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Co-operation* (WHINSEC). The training at the school was designed to subvert democracy. Nothing substantial has changed since the name change.

Among its graduates have been the leaders of the Atlacatl Battalion of El Salvador, who massacred more than 1000 peasants comprising the whole village of El Motoze on 10 December 1981, the assassins of the six Jesuits intellectuals (and two civilian housekeepers) in El Salvador on 16 November 1989, and Col. Robert D'Aubuisson, who ordered the assassination on 25 March 1980 of Archbishop Oscar Romero, recently declared a martyr by the Vatican and nominated by Pope Francis for canonisation.

In each of the above countries, a neoliberal, free market capitalist economic system, not unlike the one we have in New Zealand, was imposed by military decree. Tens of thousands died to protect corporate business interests in the name of the 'free market'.

Letters

St Albans,
Christchurch, NZ

Dear CWs,

From January 16th 1991, from a crowded prison cell in upstate New York, I watched the most intensive bombing campaign ever unleashed unfold on television.

Iraq, the cradle of civilisation, a diverse and modern country with no history of jihardist movements, was bombed back into the pre-industrial age by US-led coalition forces. Water supplies, power facilities, factories, churches, hospitals, road, bridges, and homes were destroyed.

What followed were many years of punitive sanctions where almost anything that could be used to sustain or rebuild Iraq was blocked, including medicines, vaccines and chlorine. Between 1991 and 1998, 500,000 children under the age of 5 died as a result. Out of the conditions inflicted on the people of Iraq, arose another terror – ISIS.

New Zealand's prescription is further violence. My hope lies in the non-violent opposition to this war and the call for all sides to disarm.

In Christ the peacemaker,

Moana Cole.

Megan Rice, No 88101 – 020
Metropolitan Detention Centre,
P O Box 329002
Brooklyn, NY 11232

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Once again I'm doing a one for-each-and-all reply to your many kind letters of the past months. I've tried to be mindful of each one of your messages, and to allow the thoughts you share so generously to inform my reflections on this very special year that is ending, so we can move into the 70th year since Hiroshima and Nagasaki with renewed hopes for transformation.

The creativity among us seemed to be bubbling over. And what has emerged has been a 20-part concert created on the theme 'Merry Christmas to the Whole World!' This has meant decorations, writing short dramas, traditional dances and songs, all illustrative of the variety of cultures among us: Caribbean islanders, Russians, Koreans, Chinese, South and North Americans, Samoan and Thailanders, Israelis and U.K. citizens and residents.

As I write, my eyes take in one of the wall posters naming the seven principles of Kwanzaa: Unity, Self, Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity and Faith –

yes, all ingredients for transforming an attempted U.S. empire-in-decay from monarchy into democracy again, with life-enhancing alternatives.

Here is a quote to take into next year: 'If we want to live nonviolent lives, we must learn to stand... between the way things are and how they might be, faithfully... breaking our collective hearts open to justice, truth and love.'

Gratefully,

Megan Rice shcj

Sister Megan Rice, aged 84, is doing a three year prison sentence for a non-violent Ploughshares disarmament action at a nuclear weapons plant in the US.

Catholic Worker,
55 E. 3rd St.
New York, N.Y. 10003,
email: newsfromcathy@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

A week or so ago I sent emails to two doctor friends in Baghdad. In these last weeks and months I have, for the most part, felt paralyzed to write friends in Iraq as my heart was too heavy at the horrific accounts coming out of Iraq. And from those fleeing Syria and Iraq to Turkey, Lebanon or Jordan...to any country which will take them. Even Kurdistan (in northern Iraq) announced recently that they would have to close their borders to the rest of Iraq, as they could no longer cope with the massive influx of refugees.

One of the doctors I emailed was quoted not long ago in an article by Claudia Lefko entitled *Iraq's Solitude*. 'Over time Iraqis have become a community with a distorted image of ourselves, a community that has lost a sense of loyalty to their land which didn't give them any sense of belonging, stability and prosperity but misery and loss on all levels.'

Both doctors responded almost immediately to my brief emails. One wrote '...your kind words give us some power to continue; nevertheless we feel that we are working inside a cadaver and not a living body.' The other wrote '...we are still going on with the same difficulties without knowing when we will have the right to live as normal human beings. We don't know our fault to be punished in this hard way by world crazy politics as if they have nothing but Iraq since 1980...Thanks so much for remembering us.'

Another close friend from Baghdad writes about a new phenomenon which has reared its ugly head, that of young people taking their own lives. 'They tried many times to find a solution and in the end they decide to

commit suicide.'

I have drawn comfort from re-listening to a radio interview Krista Tippett did with Bishop Tutu (*On Being A God of Surprises*, 2010). He was asked about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa (1995-1998) where victims were invited to tell their stories and hear the confessions, as it were, of the perpetrators of often unspeakable crimes. The perpetrators in turn were granted amnesty.

Bishop Tutu spoke of his amazement at how powerful an instrument it is to tell your story. For so long, he said people were anonymous and faceless, like non-entities. In hearing the stories, Tutu said that he felt he should take off his shoes, that he was standing on holy ground. When he said that we have gravely underestimated the damage to our psyches that apartheid has done, I could

Book Review

***Bergoglio's List, How a Young Francis Defied a Dictatorship and Saved Dozens of Lives*, by Nello Scavo. St Benedict Press, Charlotte, North Carolina, 208 pages. NZ\$26.80. Reviewer: Robert Consedine**

On 24 March 1976 a military junta, lead by graduates of the 'School of the Americas,' based at Fort Benning, Georgia, with the support of the United States government, deposed the democratically elected Government of Argentina and began terrorizing the population using abduction, rape, torture and murder.

The military junta drove out of office governors, judges; dissolved congress and the Supreme Court; abolished the constitution; banned labour unions; censored newspapers and outlawed all forms of political dissent.

Approximately 19,000 Argentineans were shot in the streets, 30,000 disappeared presumed dead, among them 500 children. Untold thousands were imprisoned and about two million people went into exile. The regime also assassinated 30 bishops, priests and sisters and over one hundred catechists they believed to be communists. In fact, they were working with the poor and implementing the Church's social teachings on justice

Known as 'the dirty war', people suspected of opposing the state in any way was abducted and brutally tortured as subversives. A climate of terror permeated every corner of society. A neoliberal capitalist economy was imposed.

Bergoglio's List by Nello Scava is a compelling story of how one man, Father Jorge Mario Bergoglio – now Pope Francis - remained under the political radar and risked his life to save over 100 people who had been identified as enemies of the Argentinian junta. He was able to warn dozens more. The author estimates he indirectly saved more than 1200 lives.

Described by the author as a Jesuit version of Oskar Schindler, Bergoglio quietly passed off people who were

only think of how damaged Iraq is after decades of war, sanctions and carnage. And the killing continues with no end in sight.

He spoke also about how human beings leave him speechless, not only by the horrible things they do, but by the incredible things as well. 'We are made for goodness,' he said, something I also deeply believe.

I am hoping to travel, hopefully in April-May, to bear witness to the reality that Iraqis are experiencing, to hear their stories, to give them names. I am writing to ask for your help. I very much dislike asking for money, but it is your generosity over years which has made the trips possible, and as always, you are at my side.

I send you warmest greetings and heartfelt thanks,

Cathy Breen

targets of the terror by:

- Building an elaborate network consisting of clandestine passageways, secret hideouts, and covert automobile rides to help regime targets to escape.
- Enrolling atheists as seminarians or laity on retreat, and then helping them move out of Argentina.
- Giving a man his own passport and priests clothing in order to make his escape.
- Personally accompanying escapees to the airport and onto a plane.
- Sheltering a 'wanted' woman and three small children in the seminary and spiriting them out of the country in the cargo hold of a fruit boat.
- Gaining an audience with one of the junta by convincing the regular chaplain to call in sick. He then obtained the release of two of his Jesuits from prison effectively saving their lives.

The role of the Catholic Church is not explored in detail. The author mentions that although the bishops officially condemned the dictatorship, on the whole the Church was complicit with the regime. There were heroic exceptions amongst individual bishops, priests, religious and laity many of whom were murdered.

Bergoglio's public silence during the 'Dirty War,' has been challenged. As a 'conservative' leader of the Jesuits, before his 'conversion' while later working in the slums, many of his fellow Jesuits thought he was a disaster. However, the author defends his 'public silence' arguing that he would have not saved anyone had he been jailed or executed.

Pope Francis has never spoken of his work and never cooperated with this book project which records the stories of some of those he rescued. The author, Nello Scavo, a legal journalist, has collected these wonderful, inspiring stories which reflect the actions of a courageous priest who risked his life to save others in the face of evil on a grand scale. The book is now published in eight languages. Believe me, it's a great read.

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The Common Good

Te Wairua Maranga Trust
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8th National Catholic Worker Hui

4.30pm Thursday 19 March until Sunday 22 March 2015

Contact – Adi Leason, Otaki CW

38 Bennetts Road, Otaki 5512, ph 06 364 8966, email: adileason@gmail.com

Please bring food to share, any musical instruments and a sleeping bag – and your pills (where applicable!).

We have all known the long loneliness, and we've learnt the only solution is love – and love comes from community. (Dorothy Day)