

The Common Good

Taking a Preferential Option for the Poor

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Abandoning the Just War theory?

by Terence J Rynne

The Catholic Church's ongoing move away from the Just War theory as 'settled teaching' to a more expansive call to proactive peacemaking has been made clear at a global conference held in Rome in April.

Sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Pax Christi International, the conference, *Nonviolence and Just Peace: Contributing to the Catholic Understanding of and Commitment to Nonviolence*, gathered educators and activists from all over the world, particularly from the global South. The precise purpose of the conference was to more fully develop a vision of nonviolence and just peace for the Catholic Church.

Five reasons underlie this pivot to a positive vision of peace and a point of view that goes well beyond the Just War theory:

- Modern wars have made the just war theory obsolete;
- The rise of a Christology 'from below';
- A clearer understanding of how the New Testament relates to contemporary problems;
- A renewed appreciation of the way the early Church practiced Jesus' teachings on peace;
- The compelling, thrilling saga of nonviolent action over the 60 years since Gandhi.

Modern wars

For centuries, the Catholic Church made the just war theory its standard teaching on war. In recent decades, however, Church leadership has realized that the Just

War theory is truncated and minimalist. It does not go far enough. Its focus is war, not peace. Even what it sets out to do -- discriminate from unjustified wars -- has been rendered null and void by the massive, indiscriminate violence of modern wars.

Key criteria of the theory, namely, proportionality and protection of non-combatants, are never met by modern wars. Civilian deaths in World War I were 10 percent of the deaths.

In modern wars, such as the internal conflict in Syria or the U.S. invasion of Iraq, civilian deaths now range from 80 percent to 90 percent of all war casualties. By the very criteria of the Just War theory, **in our era there is no such thing as a justified war.**

Once peace is not defined negatively as the absence of war but positively, the door opens to a new expansive vision for Christians. Peace has to be built. Pope John XXIII said it is like a cathedral -- positive peace has many layers and facets.

A society is peaceful only when it has all of the following:

- The rule of law;
- Its people enjoy the full gamut of human rights;
- The economy is just;
- They are able to grow to their full potential;
- They are at harmony with one another;
- They have the skills of solving conflict without violence.



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The agenda for peacemakers is clearly expansive and challenging and a vision is needed that matches the scope of the agenda. It turns out that the clarion call in the New Testament to positive peacemaking, particularly the Sermon on the Mount, gives us that vision.

That is what the Catholic Church has begun to adopt as its central teaching on war and peace.

Christology from below

In his 1975 article *The Two Basic Types of Christology*, leading theologian Jesuit Fr. Karl Rahner explains the meaning of a 'Christology from below.' This Christology is intent on presenting an accurate historical understanding of Jesus in his own context by attempting to understand as clearly as possible the cultural, economic, political and religious milieus of Jesus' time.

The focus is not on Jesus the Christ first, but on Jesus of Nazareth, the flesh-and-blood human being, and on his life -- the way he lived and confronted the evils of his time, the way he struggled to renew Jewish faith, the way he resisted the temptation to the violence of his time, and the way he insisted on an inclusive community.

A Christology from below makes Jesus' life normative for Christians. He lived a heroic life of resistance to the 'powers that be.' He struggled to relieve

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 peacemaking, 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

the suffering of his people, both their physical suffering as a healer but also the grinding suffering from an unjust political system that bled the people dry.

Trying to relieve the structural evil of the system, he engaged the 'powers that be' of his time -- the Pharisees, the priests, the Herodians. He wept over the city of Jerusalem because he understood the great anger and seething violence in the people that was gathering momentum.

He could foresee that, unless they took a different tack, that anger would explode into a cataclysm of violence in a revolt against Rome and that violence would lead to their destruction.

He taught an alternative way to respond to the 'enemy,' the way of nonviolence. 'Love your enemies. Do good to those who persecute you.' His teaching reflected his life. The call to be his disciples is a call to live as he lived -- and died.

A Christology from below opens for Christian disciples the full meaning of peacemaking and our call to be peacemakers. It is a positive vision of peace, not just the absence of war. It is a call to do as Jesus did -- work to relieve peoples' suffering, change the economic and political structures that bring so much pain, and remove underlying causes of violence and war. And, most importantly, introduce the power of nonviolent action to the world.

A Christology from below opens for Christian disciples the full meaning of peacemaking and our call to be peacemakers. It is a positive vision of peace, not just the absence of war

The Just War theory, on the other hand, ignores the New Testament. It is an ethical discipline that came to us from the 'pagan' Cicero by way of St. Augustine. It approaches the problem of war and violence using natural law thinking and does not measure up to the call to positive peacemaking that we find in the New Testament.

That new understanding of how to read the Scriptures is reflected in the heartfelt appeal of the Second Vatican Council for the Church to come up with 'an entirely new attitude to war and violence,' one that recognizes the 'signs of the times.' This enriched way of reading the New Testament in dialogue with contemporary problems explains why recent popes unabashedly embrace the example of Jesus' life, not the natural law, as the primary guide for Christian peacemaking.

The early Church

For the first three-plus centuries of the early Church, Christians followed the nonviolent, positive way taught by Jesus. They demonstrated that it was not dreamy idealism, but politically effective.

The very **first** political challenge the early Christians had to face was whether to join their fellow Jews in the revolt against Rome in the year 66AD. Reflecting on the example and teaching of Jesus, they refused to enter into the violence and withdrew across the Jordan to the city of

Pella.

They were the only group, besides the small group of Jews who left to found a Torah-based community in Jamnia, to refuse to fight. The rest of the Jews, including the Pharisees and the Essenes, joined the revolt. What Jesus feared would happen came to pass -- the destruction of the Temple and the slaughter of the Jewish people.

The **second** great political challenge the early Church faced was how to respond to Roman persecution. Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, knew the apostle John personally. The five letters he wrote as he was dragged to Rome in the year 110 by Roman soldiers for execution are filled with counsel to continue to greet violence with love. One of the letters asked the people in Rome not to interfere with the martyrdom. He was happy to follow in his Saviour's footsteps.

All the early fathers wrote as if the prophecy of Isaiah and Micah had come true in their midst. *'They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid'* (Micah 4:4-5).

For the first three-plus centuries of the early Church, Christians followed the nonviolent, positive way taught by Jesus. They demonstrated that it was not dreamy idealism, but politically effective.

Tertullian, the crusty old lawyer from North Africa, wrote in *On Idolatry*, 'When Peter cut off Malchus' ear (at Gethsemane), Jesus 'cursed the works of the sword for ever after.' And Thomas Merton wrote in *Conjectures*

of a Guilty Bystander: 'The early Church converted the Roman Empire through nonviolence.' Their example emboldens us to re-embrace Jesus' way.

Nonviolent action

The sparkling, fascinating sign of the times that supports and illuminates the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is the recent track record of nonviolent action campaigns. Given the last 60 years of experimentation with nonviolence -- as Gandhi predicted -- Christians are beginning to see that as violence continues its wasteful, ineffective way, there is indeed an alternative worth embracing.

We have witnessed the achievements, against all odds, of nonviolent campaigns across the globe -- in Poland, East Germany, South Africa, the Philippines, Serbia, Tunisia and the US civil rights struggle. And we are now beginning to hear the witness of Christians from all over the world, especially from the global South, who are harnessing the power of coordinated nonviolent action in multiple small settings to achieve marvellous results.

Leaders of the Catholic Church, due to the Church's global presence, are able to hear the many stories of nonviolent successes from the grassroots. It is no surprise that Catholic Church leadership is emboldened to proclaim the Sermon on the Mount and the message of positive peacemaking all the more loudly and confidently.

Now is the time to embrace and practice that message Church-wide and parish-deep.

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What is Easter all about?



Easter designates the transformation of the Jesus who rises from the dead in Jerusalem to the Jesus who rises, if we allow it, in us. The Resurrection of Jesus is about coming to grips with the transformed and transforming presence of Christ then, now, and always. Once that happens, life is never again the same. Life begins anew.

To say, 'I believe in Jesus Christ...who rose from the dead,' then, is to say I believe that the Resurrection goes on and on and on forever. Every time Jesus rises in our own hearts in new ways, the Resurrection happens again. Every time we see Jesus where we did not recognize him before—in the faces of the poor, in the love of the

unloved, in the revelatory moments of life, Jesus rises anew. But that is not all. The real proof of the Resurrection lies not in the transformation of Jesus alone but in the transformation awaiting us who accept it.

To say, 'I believe in Jesus Christ...who rose from the dead' is to say something about myself at the same time. It says that I myself am ready to be transformed. Once the Christ-life rises in me, I rise to new life as well. 'Christ is risen; we are risen,' we sing at Easter. But it has a great deal more to do with life than with death. If I know that Jesus has been transformed, then I am transformed myself and, as a result, everything around me. Transformation is never a private affair. But it is always a decisive one.

Until we find ourselves with new hearts, more penetrating insights, fewer compulsions, less need for the transient, greater awareness of the spiritual pulse of life, Resurrection has not really happened for us. Resurrection is about transfiguration.

—from *In Search of Belief* by Joan Chittister (Liguori Press).

Editorial 1 Steamrolling the TPPA

First, we had the secret negotiations spread over several years. That is, kept secret from ordinary citizens who were to be the most affected by it. Not kept secret from the corporations and their allies. Their fingers were in the pie from the beginning because the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) is a mechanism set to favour them and consolidate their power in the world over resources and industry.

Second came “the Road Show” – a government effort to try and appease the widespread opposition to this shonky deal by parading a flashy presentation in major centres for the public to come and hear ‘the true facts’ about the benefits of the deal. This cost an arm and a leg, but probably was funded from a PR budget somewhere.

Third came the travelling Select Committee, an unusual event but not new. The members of the Foreign Affairs and Trade Select Committee came to the three main cities outside Wellington to hear submissions in person. Each presenter was allocated 15 minutes. The Christchurch Catholic Worker submitted that the Church’s teaching on the common good provided the best values to build an agreement upon.

However, the TPPA failed the criteria in every respect. The Agreement only reinforced the current lopsided and patently unjust global economic structure where 62 people hold the same amount of wealth as one half of the world’s population, 3.5 billion people. The Agreement would further expand this enormous imbalance. The Panama Papers subsequent release only

served to reiterate how rotten to the core the global economic system has become.

We said that trans-national corporations and wealthy elites are playing by different rules from everyone else. They refuse to take responsibility for this sinful inequality, nor pay the taxes that society needs to function. They fail to meet any requirements of basic social morality required for building a just society. We said the TPPA seeks to expand the control of the rich and powerful using a totally discredited model of economics to do so.

Fourthly, opposition parliamentarians were then given just four days to read and absorb all the hundreds of submissions, the time shortened with no explanation from the four weeks previously promised.

Finally, the legislation locking this and future generations of New Zealanders into a clearly unjust economic and social pact with 11 other countries, will later be presented to parliament and probably passed into law.

The whole process has been an absolute farce from the beginning. The image of our democratic ideals and admired image of us as a fair minded people living in a just society has been abandoned. This orchestrated process has been anything but democratic. It has been steamrolled from the beginning to suit vested interests.

The Government should hang its head in shame.

Jim Consedine

Editorial 2 Rome conference abandons ‘just war’ theory

The participants of a first-of-its-kind Vatican conference have bluntly rejected the Catholic Church’s long-held teachings on just war theory, saying they have too often been used to justify violent conflicts and the global church must reconsider Jesus’ teachings on nonviolence.

Members of a three-day event co-hosted by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the international Catholic peace organization Pax Christi have also strongly called on Pope Francis to consider writing an encyclical letter, or some other ‘major teaching document,’ reorienting the church’s teachings on violence.

‘There is no ‘just war’. Too often the ‘just war theory’ has been used to endorse rather than prevent or limit war. Suggesting that a ‘just war’ is possible also undermines the moral imperative to develop tools and capacities for nonviolent transformation of conflict.’

‘We need a new framework that is consistent with Gospel nonviolence,’ say the participants, noting that Francis and his four predecessors have all spoken out against war often. **‘We propose that the Catholic Church develop and consider shifting to a Just Peace approach based on Gospel nonviolence.’**

Just war theory is a tradition that uses a series of criteria to evaluate whether use of violence can be

considered morally justifiable. First referred to by fourth-century bishop St. Augustine of Hippo, it was later articulated in depth by 13th-century theologian St. Thomas Aquinas and is today outlined by four conditions in the formal *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

The Rome conference brought experts engaged in global nonviolent struggles to reconsider the theory for the first time under the aegis of the Vatican. It comes after a number of bishops and theologians have criticized continued use of the theory in modern times, saying that both the powerful capabilities of modern weapons and evidence of the effectiveness of nonviolent campaigns make it outdated.

At a press event launching the conference’s final appeal document -- *An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-Commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence* -- several of the event’s participants said the church should simply no longer teach the just war theory.

The group’s final appeal states succinctly: ‘The time has come for our Church to be a living witness and to invest far greater human and financial resources in promoting a spirituality and practice of active nonviolence. In all of this, Jesus is our inspiration and model. Neither passive nor weak, Jesus’ nonviolence was the power of love in action.’

Jim Consedine

Editorial 3 Restorative Justice: An Opportunity Squandered

The release of statistics relating to the success of restorative justice (RJ) has been trumpeted by the Government. Justice Minister Amy Adams is correct in claiming RJ 'is proving effective in reducing crime. Greater use of restorative justice is one of the ways we are using to lowering crime rates through reduced reoffending'.

She quoted official figures from 2008 to 2013 showing reoffending rates for those who participated in RJ within 12 months was 15 per cent lower than comparable offenders who did not participate. RJ was even more effective with young offenders aged 17 to 19, where reoffending rates were 17 per cent lower and 30 per cent fewer offences were committed per offender. (*The Press*, 15 /4/16.)

Restorative justice is now firmly established within the judicial system and the results are generally excellent for those who participate. The positive community spin-offs are also substantial. But it is a small player in a big field.

It could have been so much better. When RJ was first introduced in pilot schemes in the late 1990s, much of it became entrapped in government red tape and bureaucracy and its application reduced to fit only less serious offending. The original dream was to involve local communities wherever possible backed by government resources, and to include anyone who offended and their victims, where appropriate and willing to engage.

In the RJ conference where facilitated face-to-face meetings occur, there would be accountability for offenders, an opportunity for victims' pain to be recognised and acknowledged, and for all to have a say in any sanctions to be imposed. RJ would become a central dynamic force within the criminal justice system. It should have a special branch of the Justice Department devoted to it.

Such a process would require a fresh approach to the

practice of criminal justice procedures. Because the process would be so difficult to engage with, the option of prison sentence reduction should become part of the equation where appropriate. RJ seeks to provide real justice and not just punishment. The sniff of a carrot is usually enough to make most of us front up honestly! That is human nature. Incentives are not by definition bad *per se*.

It was a visionary concept, full of possibilities of reducing not just crime rates but also bringing a healing component to victims and the justice system. This ideal would have required a shift in the public's thinking about crime and its consequences, an extensive education campaign to inform the wider public, extra resources in terms of training and employment for the number of facilitators required, and a variety of other incremental expenditure.

The expenditure would have been small compared to what we sink into our current prison system - \$91,000 per head for 9,400 people, \$1,300 million in 2013, with double bunking now not uncommon. (NB: Meals cost the government \$5.20 per person per day!)

Alas, it was not to be. Instead, what we have is a greatly watered-down very conservative RJ process which, instead of reducing the numbers caught up in the criminal justice system, has widened the net to make RJ just another form – positive though it be – of state control. Prison numbers continue to blow out and have gone up by nearly 800 since December 2013 to 9400 currently imprisoned. This continues to keep NZ at the very top end of worldwide imprisonment scales per capita.

While Restorative Justice now has a proven track record, its introduction (so far) has largely squandered a wonderful opportunity to create a truly just, humane and effective criminal justice system.

Jim Consedine

Obituary Teresa Grady – 1928-2016

Teresa Grady, the matriarch of one of the US best-known Catholic Worker families, died Sunday 10 April 2016 at her home in Ithaca, N.Y. Grady, 88, who suffered from dementia, had recently been in declining health.

With her late husband, John Grady, the couple's activist roots stretched back to the civil rights and the anti-Vietnam War movements. Teresa and John (who died in 2002), were contemporaries of the Berrigan brothers, Daniel, Phillip and Gerry. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, John and the late Philip Berrigan played major leadership roles in what became known as "the draft board raids" in opposition to the Vietnam War. In the 1980s, three of the Grady children (John, Ellen and Clare) were arrested and sent to prison for being involved in the anti-nuclear weapons Ploughshares movement.

Recently, Teresa's eldest child, Mary Anne Grady Flores, 59, was jailed at the Onondaga County Correctional Facility in upstate New York stemming from an alleged misdemeanour at a nonviolent anti-drone protest. On March 7, after close to two months in jail, Grady Flores was released on bail pending an appeal.

In an interview with NCR, Ellen Grady DeMott said her mother's life and work were informed by her study of the social teachings of the church, which she always wanted to share with others. 'Her deep faith informed everything she did, how she lived in the world. Peace and justice were central to her life. Loving and caring for the poor was always part of her work. It was essential to her to share with her children and others what she had learned.'

Pope Francis restores the good sense of Jesus

Leonardo Boff

Pope Francis' speeches are not framed either by the doctrines or dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. It is not that he does not appreciate them, but that he understands that they are theological works created during different historical times. Those doctrines and dogmas provoked religious wars, schisms, excommunications, the burning of theologians and women (such as Joan of Arc and the women considered witches) at the stake of the Holy Inquisition. That lasted for several centuries and the author of these lines had a bitter experience in the cubicle where the accused were interrogated in the forbidding building of the former Inquisition, located to the left of the Basilica of Saint Peter.

Pope Francis has engendered a revolution in the thinking of the Church, returning to the praxis of the historical Jesus. He is restoring what is now called 'The Tradition of Jesus', that precedes the present Gospels, written 30-40 years after His execution on the cross. The Tradition of Jesus, or as it is also called in The Acts of the Apostles, 'the path of Jesus', is grounded more on values and ideals than on doctrine. The essentials are unconditional love, mercy, forgiveness, justice and preference for the poor and the outcast, and a total openness to God the Father. Jesus, to put it bluntly, did not intend to found a new religion. He wanted to teach us how to live. To live with fraternity, solidarity and caring for each other.

Good sense

What stands out most in Jesus is His good sense. We say that someone has good sense when that person has the right word for each situation, appropriate behaviour, and the ability to quickly identify the gist of a question. Good sense is linked to the concrete wisdom of life. It distinguishes the essential from the secondary. It is the capacity to see and put things in their rightful places. Good sense opposes exaggeration. This is where the madman and the genius, who are so close in many aspects, are fundamentally distinguished. The genius radicalizes good sense. The madman radicalizes exaggeration.

Jesus, as the Gospels witness, manifested Himself as a genius of good sense. A matchless freshness runs through everything He says and does. God in His goodness, a human in his frailty, society with its contradictions and nature with its splendour, appear with crystal clear immediacy. Jesus neither preaches theology nor appeals to superior moral principles. Jesus does not get lost in tedious and heartless questions of right and wrong. His words and attitudes go directly to the point where reality bleeds and the human must make a decision for himself and before God.

His warnings are incisive and direct: 'first be reconciled to thy brother' (Mt 5,24). 'Swear not at all' (Mt 5,34). 'Do not fight back against evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also' (Mt 5,39). 'Love thy enemies, and pray for those who spitefully use thee and persecute thee' (Mt 5,44). 'When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth' (Mt 6,3).

This good sense has often been missing from the institutional Church (popes, bishops and priests), but not from the Church of the bases, especially on moral questions. The institutional Church can be hard and implacable. Humans with their pain are sacrificed to abstract principles. The institutional Church is often ruled by power, rather than mercy. As the saints and wise men and women warn us: where power prevails, love vanishes and mercy disappears.

How different Pope Francis is. The principal quality of God, he tells us, is mercy. He often repeats: 'Be merciful as your heavenly Father is merciful' (Lk 6,36). And Pope Francis explains the etymological meaning of mercy: *miseris cor dare*: 'give the heart to the miser', to those who suffer. In his Angelus talk of April 6, 2014, he said in hushed tones: 'Listen well: there are no limits at all to the divine mercy offered to all'. And asked the multitude to repeat with him: 'There are no limits to the divine mercy offered to all'.

He reminds us as a theologian that Saint Thomas Aquinas affirms that, where practice is concerned, mercy is the most important virtue 'because it overflows to the others and also succours them in their weaknesses'.

Modern practices

Filled with mercy in the face of the dangers of the *zika* virus epidemic, Pope Francis opens a space for the use of contraceptives. It is about saving lives: 'to avoid a pregnancy is not an absolute evil', the Pope said in his visit to Mexico on February of the current year. To the new cardinals, he admonishes them with the words: 'The Church does not condemn forever. The punishment of hell used to torment the faithful is not eternal'. God is a mystery of inclusion and communion, never of exclusion. Mercy always triumphs.

This means that we must interpret the Bible references to hell not in a fundamentalist way, but pedagogically, as a way to lead us to do good. Logically, we do not enter in any form into the Kingdom of the Trinity. We must first pass through the purifying clinic of God, until we emerge, purified, into the blessed eternity.

This message is truly liberating. As Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation confirms in *The Joy of the Gospel*. This joy is offered to everyone, including non-Christians, because it is the path of humanization and of liberation.

Pentecost – Presenting a Cosmic Vision

Kevin Burns

There is a wealth of literature revealing the presence of the Holy Spirit in the world. In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, we read, ‘Now the earth was a formless void. There was darkness over the deep and God’s Spirit hovered over the waters’. The bible narrative continues over thousands of years revealing the presence of the Spirit and the interaction of generations of people with the Spirit. We know now the spirit not only hovers over the formless void but becomes an intimate experience in our human life.

We began Lent by recalling the remarkable experience Jesus had with the Spirit. In Luke’s gospel we read of this experience in the life of Jesus. ‘Filled with the Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan (where he had been baptised) and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness for forty days’. In Paul’s letter to the Church in Thessalonica he reminds the people to treasure the Spirit within them and I quote, ‘never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the Spirit’s gift of prophecy with contempt’. Yes in Jesus’ life, and in the Gospel narrative, and in the Old and New Testament teaching, we have come to know the Spirit not only hovers over the deep but is in the depth of human history.

A present day theologian, South American Leonardo Boff has researched and reflected well on the Holy Spirit and has written extensively on the presence of the Spirit in the whole of creation. These days through new awareness and new scientific discoveries we learn how the universe is connected. Nothing in the universe is isolated or unconnected. Everything is connected to everything else. In Leonardo’s recent writings he has presented an old anonymous saying on the Spirit that is very insightful. The saying is this ...

The Spirit sleeps in the stone, dreams in the flower, awakens in animals and knows it is awake in humans. The point in this exquisite description of the Spirit is that the Spirit is present in the universe in different ways. The Spirit becomes manifest as an explosion of energy, as a principle of all life and as an awakener of consciousness in human beings.

The Spirit is fully present in the universe inspiring great dreams, building courage, provoking holy rage against injustice. Jesus in the Gospel filled with the Spirit and breaks through weird customs that destroy the dignity and unity of human beings. Yes, it is the Spirit that is active in Jesus, in all of us, bringing communion with all life. (Boff)

Another present day theologian, Jürgen Moltman who like Boff studied deep and long the relationship between the Spirit and the cosmos. This great theologian writes that God, Creator of heaven and earth, is present in every creature and in the communion of creation. God is not only Creator but the Spirit of the universe.

We need to hear teachings like this to enhance our relationship with the whole of the universe and to live in the truth. Pope Francis wrote in his encyclical *Laudato Si’* and I quote, ‘*The universe unfolds in God who fills it completely. Hence there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a dew drop and in a poor person’s face*’.

So our loving and careful relationship with all creatures of the earth quickens our movements towards prayer and draws us into closer union with the Spirit. Simply gazing into a leaf or viewing a drop of dew or turning to look into the face of another draws us closer to our God who is present in all things.

Kevin Burns, a priest of the Christchurch diocese, preached this homily at St Mary’s Church, New Brighton

La chanteuse

the jazz musicians
piano man and
singer, drums and bass
trumpet tenor
trombone player,
reappear, together,
but the one
with the most,
la chanteuse
sings like there is
no tomorrow,
and you know, she is
right; we feel the
danger she feels
atop a precipice.
she laces her lyrics
through integrate
patterns of snow
falling, sometimes a
blizzard, other times
each crystal flake is
polished, dissolved
on her tongue. She
so real, she sings
so beautifully, all I can do
watch my tears
drip from her voice.

Jim Boyack

Around the Traps

Long-term Catholic prison chaplain, Mary Kamo, was farewelled at a dinner hosted by the Thomas Merton CW in early May. Mary had been chaplain to Christchurch Women's Prison since 1983 and retired at Easter. At the dinner, fifteen previous chaplains or assistants collectively paid tribute to her work and her faithfulness over this lengthy period.

Mary has been a staunch supporter of the CW in Christchurch during that time and, alongside Francis Simmonds and Jim Consedine, pioneered an ecumenical prison chaplains' team in the 1980s - 1990s that sought to effect improved treatment for prisoners and better justice for their families. She was an early advocate and practitioner of restorative justice believing it to reflect gospel values much better than the prevailing retributive system. On her last day, the prison held a farewell at which two *tukutuku* panels woven by 20 inmates, to be hung in the chapel, were unveiled in her honour.

Trickle-up theory! Auckland has 240 residents worth at least \$30 million each, a further 790 worth \$10 million or more and 23,100 millionaires. The number of the ultra-rich has grown 128% since 2005 and is projected to increase by another 43% in the next decade. The trickle-down theory is a farce and always has been a fatal flaw in neo-liberal economic thinking. *The Press*, 4 March 2016

Multinational companies are dodging nearly \$500 million in tax through 'profit shifting' tax loopholes in New Zealand. A *NZ Herald* analysis showed the 20 multi-national companies most aggressive in shifting profits out of New Zealand paid virtually no income tax, despite recording nearly \$10 billion in annual sales to Kiwi consumers. Analysis of financial information of more than 100 multi-nationals and their NZ subsidiaries shows that had the NZ branches of these 20 firms reported profits at the same healthy rate as their parents, their combined income tax bill would have been nearly \$500 million. This missing (stolen) lost \$500 in revenue could have gone towards new schools, hospitals and under-funded public services. *New Zealand Herald*, 18 March 2016.

City divests from nuclear weapons production funds. Cambridge, Massachusetts, has announced that the Cambridge City Council has unanimously decided to divest their city pension fund from nuclear weapons production. *'It's my hope that this will inspire other municipalities, companies and individuals to look at their investments and make similar moves'*, Simmons

said. The Cambridge Retirement System currently manages about \$1Bn in assets. The US and Russia currently have about 7,000 nuclear weapons each, and a long string of near-misses have highlighted the continuing risk of accidental nuclear war triggering a nuclear winter that could potentially kill most people on Earth. Despite arguments that much fewer are needed to deter enemy attacks and that the US military is too soft against the threat of accidental nuclear war, the currently proposed plan is for the US to spend about 4 million dollars per hour for the next 30 years upgrading its nuclear arsenals.

US prison system. CW Mary Anne Grady Flores, 59, Teresa Grady's eldest child and a grandmother herself, has been in jail at the Onondaga County Correctional Facility in upstate New York stemming from an alleged minor violation at a nonviolent anti-drone protest. On 26 February, prison officials granted Grady Flores a visit to her 88 year old mother, who suffered from dementia and was clearly dying. Of the visit, Grady Flores wrote: 'I walked, shackled, wrists-to-waist and ankles, to be at mom's side, leaning over her to kiss her big smiling face. I told her over and over that I loved her, my tears wetting her soft cheeks. I asked if she was in any pain. 'No, I'm not in pain. I'm OK.' She kept smiling and fell asleep. What a precious, blessed moment' in a demonic system!

The next steps have begun for the canonisation of Dorothy Day. Dorothy was the co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement and its newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*. Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the Archbishop of New York, opened the canonical inquiry into her life and is gathering evidence to determine if Dorothy Day lived a life of "heroic virtue" in the eyes of the Church.

Dorothy Day founded the CW movement with Peter Maurin in 1933 in New York City, following her conversion to Catholicism in 1927. Its "houses of hospitality" minister directly to people living in poverty and operate in over 120 places in the United States and as far away as New Zealand. In addition to providing food and shelter to those in need, members of the Catholic Worker movement publish community newspapers and websites and publically promote nonviolence in response to social concerns. Catholic Worker houses accept no government funds—a tradition established by Day and maintained to the present. Dorothy Day remained active in the Catholic Worker movement until her death in New York at the age of 83 in 1980.

America Magazine, 20 April 2016

Sex Trade in Children in the Philippines

Fr. Shay Cullen SSC

I drove from Olongapo City in the Philippines to Subic town recently and pointed to the journalist the row of shuttered, dilapidated and closed-down sex bars that lined the road at Calapandayan, Subic. It is evidence of the success of an anti-trafficking operation conducted by the Preda Foundation social workers with the help of the Philippine police and an agent of the US Homeland Security where as many as 15 young girls were rescued from the horrible life of forced prostitution.

Some younger minors, so traumatized after being trapped and abused for over a year in this kind of sex slavery, were in need of therapy, support compassion and friendship and hope for a better life. They came to the Preda Home for Girls and have made a recovery and are empowered to testify.

Others had been newly recruited for jobs as food servers in the hotels at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone but were forced into prostitution in a sex hotel. They were freed and were brought to the homes in a town south of Manila by the government social workers. They were later intimidated by the sex mafia and were too scared to testify. The bar operators walked free except one US national who is on trial.

That is the common course for the victims. They are poor, helpless and need strong support, witness protection and encouragement to find justice but sadly the government agencies do not provide these services effectively.

The long term success of that operation is that we had volunteer retired federal police from Australia who went undercover as sex tourists and infiltrated the sex bars and clubs. (see www.preda.org links to YouTube 'Children of the Sex Trade' and 'The Raid' of ABC New York)

These secret surveillances are hopefully still ongoing around the Philippines and are popular with retired police and have many sex tourists and bar operators worried today because they don't know if the sex tourist downing a cold beer and chatting beside them is a fellow exploiter of young girls or a retired police officer on a undercover mission for the Philippine police.

These retired officers are good men determined to save children and working to end sex trafficking and slavery. The evidence could put the bar operator and owner in a filthy jail cell where he could die of malnutrition or disease. These kinds of operations are very necessary to curb the growing abuse of younger teenagers disguised as adults with fake documents.

It's a crime against humanity, according to Pope Francis, who has spoken and has acted to bring together police and church leaders to find a more effective response to this crime that destroys young lives. The Santa Marta Group of senior police officers, diplomats and church leaders brings together the energy and resources worldwide to combat this evil trade in human

beings. It was first held in Vatican City in the Santa Marta guest house where Pope Francis lives from which the group got its name. Last week, they had their annual meeting in New York. They need to work faster.

As many as 21 million people are in slavery in the world today in its various forms. Many are children under 18 year of age who are sex slaves without rights or freedom. They are held in the sex bars, clubs, houses and hotels where prostitution is rampant. Most young girls are without identity, freedom of choice and are usually lured into debt and scared to escape.

Their families may have taken advance payment on the child's so-called 'salary' and are threatened if the minor runs away from the sex bar, the pimp or the human trafficker. It is a false argument to claim the girls are working to support their families back in the province. Some do but most apparently don't. Poverty and inequality is at the heart of the problem.

Their documents showing them as adults are fake or those of an elder sister. Prostitution is illegal in the Philippines but this is ignored. Children as young as 14 are offered for sex on the street and sex bars.

Corrupt officials are getting payments from the human traffickers and club owners. So outside police are needed. That's why I promote the formation of a multi-national police force with jurisdiction wherever they are assigned to investigate traffickers using trained undercover officers.

Local mayors give operating permits to the sex bars. Such government approval is at the heart of the crime. In the Philippines alone, there is an estimated 100,000 minors trafficked and sexually exploited every year. The worldwide business is worth US \$ 110 billion, according to the UK's Anti-Slavery Independent Commissioner Kevin Hylan, a dedicated campaigner.

What is needed is action on the ground to rescue, protect, heal and help them recover and testify and bring the criminals to justice. That is not there sufficiently. That's why we need a special human trafficking court in each region on which two international retired judges will sit trying the child abusers and human trafficking suspects. A new law for this can be passed if there is commitment.

But one thing is certain: this crime is the shame of humanity and the blight of each nation. To fail to act against it is to condone it and silence about abuse is the greater crime.

Irish Columban priest Shay Cullen SSC has lived and worked among the most exploited youth in the Philippines for more than 40 years.

Easter

it is good
to be in darkness
where visions have fled
and dreams are stilled.

for there,
where only silence
and emptiness live
the soul sleeps,
resting,
until the breath of God
stirs in the shadows,
beckoning life.

and then,
having absorbed the darkness'
we rise, healed and renewed,
to face and embrace the world's pain
with mercy and compassion

Edwina Gately

market madness

our neighbourhood
ordinary people, good folk
has the house next door
up for sale, back section

780k said smooth talking
mister real estate
it's a cinch, could go for more
depends on the market

madness, I said, utter madness
who can afford that?
not struggling workers
around here, with kids

sold plenty for a million plus
he grinned, not joking
no better condition than this
great prices, huh?

I looked steadily at him, quizzically
seeking and getting confirmation
this guy needs treatment
why did we ever close the asylums?

Jim Consedine

Holy Spirit – Autumn/Ngahuru 2016

A great blue kereru flaps lazily across the valley
Korimako, green finch, kotare,
Piwakawaka, sparrow, piopio are singing up the
dawn

Without warning
a digger digging into rock screams out
an angry metallic sound

A single blackbird on wing flies above the ngaio
A flock of seagulls glide the high wind current
Bees slip tongues inside rosemary flowers

Three tiny white pink clouds exhale
Wind rustles the flaxen leaves of the ti kouka
cabbage tree
The fig branch quivers, a green finch is fig eating

The digger digging into rock
screams out
its angry metallic sound

A monarch butterfly rises higher and higher on the
wind
Above the totara
Tiny insects fly and drift sunlit across the sky

The breeze ruffles the tail feathers of
The biggest most beautiful dove in the world the
blue kereru
Hops along the branch of the great snakeskin gum

Headless the digger stops
The digger creeps away into another space
The piercing metallic sound departs with the digger

Soulless
Undiminished
Heedless of the beauty in its wake

The kereru flaps up and up directly ascending into
sky
At her peak she turns and descends straight down
A Holy Spirit dive into the arms of the ti kouka

Her descent broken at the perfect moment she
plants her feet
Here in the ti kouka she regains her balance
Her sense of peace

Kathleen Gallagher

Letters

Rome,

16 April 2016

Dear CW friends,

Peace! I'm writing just after finishing the historic conference on peace and nonviolence at the Vatican this week. Truly it was one of the greatest experiences of my life. The most amazing people! There were 80 people from 20 nations; plus the real involvement with the Vatican, all discussing peace and nonviolence. We did not meet with the Pope, but received a long letter from him, and had the real involvement with many of his staff.

At the end, we issued a closing statement calling Pope Francis to abolish the just war theory, return the Church to Jesus' way of nonviolence, and write an encyclical on the issue.

Sending blessings of peace,

Rev John Dear

johndearsj@msn.com

Catholic Worker
Denver, Colorado

19 April 2016

Hi Jim,

Thanks so much for your contribution to the rebuild of our CW house which was destroyed by fire. I find myself wondering how your community ploughed through all that it takes to rebuild. Of course it is a perfect time to think about doing things differently and each idea gets registered and considered as we try to figure out what kind of a setting should be the new one - all in the context of limited resources and limited places that somehow fit our resources. I am sure that it will all come round right in the end.

Take care., and God bless.

Anna

Review

Gracing the Wind, Poems – 1966 – 2016, Jim Boyack, Editions Taina, P O Box 147 – 319, Auckland, 1144. 110 pages, S30. Reviewer: Jim Consedine

Jim Boyack has had a heart for justice ever since his youth in New York, where, like Dorothy Day, he refused to shelter underground for the mandatory nuclear bomb drills and faced arrest. Time and wanderlust brought him to Tahiti in the late 1960s and the French anti-nuclear protests at Mururoa, which he reported on for a variety of news outlets. Settling in Auckland in 1973, he worked for Greenpeace and later studied law.

More than 40 years later, his heart remains the same. He has championed restorative justice and defended the poor in court over several decades as a successful barrister. Now he is retired but faces a huge personal crisis having been diagnosed with terminal cancer. One last project he wanted completed was to get this book of poems published.

It's a nicely presented book of over 90 poems, many giving insights into his own personal journey through those decades of social turmoil. Jim is a gifted writer, a wordsmith. Words are important to him. He made them so in court. He has made them so here. What also emerges though is a somewhat frustrated person who really wanted to be a poet all his life but got side tracked into other things. He muses with insight on what makes a good poem, a good poet. He reflects a lot on the nature of poetry and the role of the poet. His poetry is evocative if a bit uneven as befits someone putting a lifetime's work into one volume.

Jim's soul shines through each page as he honestly expresses his insights into what is around him, sharing all the doubts, mysteries, mistakes, loves and triumphs of his journey. Two of New Zealand's finest contemporary poets, Brian Turner and John Weir, are friends and have contributed to this very tidy volume, which is graced by Cathy Harrison's photography.

Funeral Choice

A Catholic Worker project
Cheaper alternatives to consumer
funerals

www.funeralchoice.co.nz

CW website

Leading articles from the first 20 years of

The Common Good

Alternative funerals

Restorative justice

Other theological issues

www.catholicworker.org.nz

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The Common Good

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



To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness... What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction...And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvellous victory. -- Howard Zinn