

The Common Good

Taking a Preferential Option for the Poor

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Pope Francis Speaks

Pope Francis has issued the first comprehensive statement on nonviolence from the Church—in history. It is a call for the Church to re-evaluate its approach to violence in all its forms, including war and both structural and domestic violence.

In the tradition of Mohandas Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, the Vatican's 50th World Day of Peace message issued by Pope Francis is called *Nonviolence—A Style of Politics for Peace*.

In his historic statement, Pope Francis discusses the violence of the world, Jesus' way of nonviolence, and the viable alternative of nonviolence for today.

Francis writes that 'We need to make active nonviolence our way of life', and suggests nonviolence become our new style of politics. 'I ask God to help all of us to cultivate nonviolence in our most personal thoughts and values, may charity and nonviolence govern how we treat each other as individuals, within society and in international life. When victims of violence are able to resist the temptation to retaliate, they become the most credible promoters of nonviolent peacemaking. In the most local and ordinary situations and in the international order, may nonviolence become the hallmark of our decisions, our relationships and our actions, and indeed of political life in all its forms.'

Violence Is Not the Cure for a Broken World

'Today, sadly, we find ourselves engaged in a horrifying world war fought piecemeal. It is not easy to know if our world is presently more or less violent than in the past, or to know whether modern means of communications and greater mobility have made us more aware of violence, or, on the other hand, increasingly inured to it. In any case, we know that this 'piecemeal' violence, of different kinds and levels, causes great

Non-violence - the Way of Jesus



suffering: wars in different countries and continents; terrorism, organized crime and unforeseen acts of violence; the abuses suffered by migrants and victims of human trafficking; and the devastation of the environment. Where does this lead? Can violence achieve any goal of lasting value? Or does it merely lead to retaliation and a cycle of

deadly conflicts that benefit only a few 'warlords'?

'Countering violence with violence leads at best to forced migrations and enormous suffering, because vast amounts of resources are diverted to military ends and away from the everyday needs of young people, families experiencing hardship, the elderly, the infirm and the great majority of people in our world. At worst, it can lead to the death, physical and spiritual, of many people, if not of all.'

'To be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence,' Francis writes. He quotes Pope Benedict, who said that the command to love our enemies 'is the magna carta of Christian nonviolence. It does not consist in succumbing to evil..., but in responding to evil with good and thereby breaking the chain of injustice.'

Practicing the Nonviolence of Jesus

Jesus lived and taught nonviolence, which Francis calls 'a radically positive approach. Jesus unfailingly preached God's unconditional love, which welcomes and forgives. He taught his disciples to love their enemies (cf. Mt 5:44) and to turn the other cheek (cf. Mt 5:39). When he stopped her accusers from stoning the woman caught in adultery (cf. Jn 8:1-11), and when, on the night before he died, he told Peter to put away his sword (cf. Mt 26:52), Jesus marked out the path of nonviolence. He



walked that path to the very end, to the cross, whereby he became our peace and put an end to hostility (cf. Eph 2:14-16). Whoever accepts the Good News of Jesus is able to acknowledge the violence within and be healed by God's mercy, becoming in turn an instrument of reconciliation.'

'To be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence,' Francis writes. He quotes Pope Benedict, who said that **the command to love our enemies 'is the magna carta of Christian nonviolence.** It does not consist in succumbing to evil..., but in responding to evil with good and thereby breaking the chain of injustice.'

Nonviolence Is More Powerful than Violence

'The decisive and consistent practice of nonviolence has produced impressive results,' Francis explains. 'The Church has been involved in nonviolent peacebuilding strategies in many countries, engaging even the most violent parties in efforts to build a just and lasting peace. Let us never tire of repeating: 'The name of God cannot be used to justify violence. Peace alone is holy. Peace alone is holy, not war!''

'If violence has its source in the human heart, then it is fundamental that nonviolence be practiced within families. I plead with equal urgency for an end to

domestic violence and to the abuse of women and children. The politics of nonviolence have to begin in the home and then spread to the entire human family.'

'An ethic of fraternity and peaceful coexistence between individuals and among peoples cannot be based on the logic of fear, violence and closed-mindedness, but on responsibility, respect and sincere dialogue. I plead for disarmament and for the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutual assured destruction are incapable of grounding such an ethic.'

Pope Francis' Invitation to Nonviolence

'Peacebuilding through active nonviolence is the natural and necessary complement to the Church's continuing efforts to limit the use of force by the application of moral norms, Jesus himself offers a 'manual' for this strategy of peacemaking in the Sermon on the Mount. The eight Beatitudes (cf. Mt 5:3-10) provide a portrait of the person we could describe as blessed, good and authentic. Blessed are the meek, Jesus tells us, the merciful and the peacemakers, those who are pure in heart, and those who hunger and thirst for justice.'

'This is also a program and a challenge for political and religious leaders, the heads of international institutions, and business and media executives: to apply the Beatitudes in the exercise of their respective responsibilities. It is a challenge to build up society, communities and businesses by acting as peacemakers. It is to show mercy by refusing to discard people, harm the environment, or seek to win at any cost. To do so requires 'the willingness to face conflict head on, to resolve it and to make it a link in the chain of a new process.' To act in this way means to choose solidarity as a way of making history and building friendship in society.'

His concluding words should be a source of consolation as well as a challenge for us in the days ahead:

'Active nonviolence is a way of showing that unity is truly more powerful and more fruitful than conflict. Everything in the world is inter-connected. Differences can cause frictions, but let us face them constructively and non-violently.'

'I pledge the assistance of the Church in every effort to build peace through active and creative nonviolence. Every such response, however modest, helps to build a world free of violence, the first step towards justice and peace.'

'In 2017, may we dedicate ourselves prayerfully and actively to banishing violence from our hearts, words and deeds, and to becoming nonviolent people and to build nonviolent communities that care for our common home.'

The Pope's message is a breath of fresh air for all, and offers a framework to envision our lives and our world.

Issued in Rome, 1 January 2017, 50th World Day of Peace. Edited by Rev. John Dear.

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 - burkesspass@gmail.com

Editorial TPPA wrap-up: a gospel perspective

Greed has become the great destroyer of life, taking without offering back, consuming the earth with abandon, leaving death, disease and destruction in its wake...Injustice, oppression and greed will turn back upon hearts of stone, children unborn will reap a harvest of lost dreams. Ps 78

Evil does not come wearing horns. It is not that obvious. While there are innumerable instances of evil perpetrated by individuals, mostly evil comes from the planning of people in grey suits or pleated skirts. None have horns! It more often takes a collective form where seemingly faceless people institute practices that are detrimental to the common good, humanity or the environment. Rarely are these people held accountable.

The corporate world is full of them. For example, the many making millions of dollars every day from shareholdings in arms manufacturing companies, destructive environmental products or malfeasant banks. These deadened souls never get their hands dirty or bloodied. But would Syria be the mess it is today without them? Would Iraq?

Unstitching the stitched

Some of the most binding international agreements are based on immoral values which have wide-ranging malignant effects. One such agreement was the proposed Trans-Pacific Trade Agreement (TPPA).

The TPPA was a modern example of barefaced greed at its very worst. Because control of financial institutions gives power, this was all about power and the blatant abuse of it. Of evil creeping up and taking control under the guise of good. Of plots to steal from humanity on a previously unheard of scale. This was all to be done under the cover of secrecy and by deceit. In the small print, nations were to be locked into deals that could never change. Now that is evil.

The surprise election of Donald Trump as US President had at least one welcome dividend, the scrapping of the TPPA – even if it has been done for all the wrong reasons and may yet morph into something similar.

It is a singular victory because, though presented as a trade deal, the TPPA was a whole lot more pernicious and wide reaching in its effects. Stitched up in secret, it represented a further giant shift away from democratic ideals and transparency into the shadowy lands of corporate transnational capitalism and its voraciously insatiable appetite.

‘Free trade’ itself, with its focus on consumerism, is a myth. It is never free. It usually comes at a massive hidden cost, built on the backs of hundreds of millions of poor non-unionised workers with no collective bargaining power, who are paid a pittance for their labour in defiance of ILO basic wage standards. It often involves

little more than indentured labour, which is just short of slavery. It entices men, women and millions of children to work in inhuman conditions for long hours, often at the expense of the planet’s shrinking resources.

The TPPA was to be another mechanism by which the powerful and the already obscenely wealthy could seek control of more and more of the world’s resources and money. It was a plan by the rich and powerful elite and their political allies (including the NZ Government) to get further control of resources and financial structures. It reflected further worship of the ‘golden calf’. It would lead to even more stolen wealth ending up in the hands of the few.

The billions of the poor of the earth, the *anawhim*, the ones Jesus identified with most because they were more open to his message, would have been those most badly affected by it as the gap between rich and poor widened further. This would have left an insurmountable barrier for generations to overcome in the future.

A cancerous sin

Named as such from the earliest days of the Church, greed is one of the deadliest sins. It is a destructive force that undermines the dignity of each of us as human beings and can eat away at our souls. It is one of the pivotal driving forces underpinning unfettered capitalism, or as Dorothy Day used to say ‘that filthy rotten system.’ It underpinned the TPPA.

Greed is the violent spirit behind the inequality that grows every day in all parts of the world. It is the spirit of evil that drives deforestation, global warming, racism, poverty, sexism, war and the global arms trade, environmental catastrophe, the pollution of waterways, oceans and rivers, and other destructive forces that are destroying the planet. Scratch the surface and greed is there.

The insatiable drive for more and more profit based on unprincipled greed has led to these sinful situations. Corporate capitalism is its flagship in our time. It is one of the demonic ‘principalities and powers’ written of in the New Testament. It has become an institutionalised feature of life in most parts of the world. Ugly as it is, television advertising has magnified greed and made it glamorous.

None of us are immune from it. Most are not aware of its personal impact. It is so pervasive in our western culture that most don’t even consider that it is sinful in the eyes of God, an affront to the Great Spirit of Life.

Greed was the moral force driving the TPPA. Because of its scope, it was simply a wicked plan, benign in its presentation, malicious in its effect.

It deserved to be scrapped.

— Jim Consedine

NZ: Peacemaker or arms exporter?

Peter Matheson

We like to think of New Zealand as a peace-loving nation, championing a nuclear-free and independent Pacific, and using our professional skills as in recent times as peace-keepers.

In the Solomon Islands, for example, after communal hostilities in 1998-2003 had seen 100 deaths and about 40,000 people driven from their homes, we moved in successfully at the request of the Solomon Island government. Together with Australian police and military forces, peace was restored. We have also put our name to various international agreements to limit the arms trade.

It comes, therefore, as a shock to learn that our Government is now actively engaged in promoting a growing New Zealand arms industry; that we are busily expanding our exports of arms to countries such as Saudi Arabia, currently waging a deadly campaign in Yemen.

How many of us know that more than 250 New Zealand companies are currently involved in the provision of weapons, other military hardware and services, and that all this comes with the active involvement of Government?

Many of the New Zealand firms involved, such as Lockheed Martin, Babcock, Rakon, SAAB and Tactical Solutions, are New Zealand subsidiaries of huge overseas armaments manufacturers.

The November arms conference in Auckland highlighted these developments. Defence Minister Gerry Brownlee fronted up as one of the main speakers at the so-called NZ Defence Industry Forum at the Viaduct Events Centre.

The conference, which was basically an arms fair, was co-sponsored by the Government and giant overseas armaments manufacturers, companies such as Lockheed Martin, which are here to lobby for government contracts. (Currently, Lockheed Martin is carrying out a \$446 million upgrade of our frigates.)

The focus of the arms fair was on exhibiting arms and exchanging information about new technological advances. Admission to the conference was restricted to registered delegates, each paying \$480.

The arms fair coincided with the celebration of the New Zealand Navy's 75th anniversary, dubbed Operation Neptune. A total of 30 navies were invited to participate, including a United States warship. It culminated in their crews marching through Auckland streets.

This gaudy arms fair seems an odd way to celebrate Remembrance Day.

Shift in Policy?

It certainly raises some serious questions. Have we just drifted into this? Is the trade and exporting tail of Government wagging the political dog? Is our foreign policy, our commitment to world peace and justice, compromised by chasing the dollar in this fashion?

As an Auckland Presbyterian minister, the Rev Stuart Vogel has commented, is there not something obscene about this promotion of arms sales as we read each day of the carnage in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere?

The inner-city Auckland churches participated in a peace walk to protest at this arms fair.

There were protests in Wellington and a peace service was held in Knox Church by Dunedin's inner-city churches.

Is ignorance bliss?

But most New Zealanders have no idea of what is going on. No wonder. It is difficult to get full information about the extent of arms exports, and requests through the Official Information Act tend to fall on deaf ears.

The respected Stockholm International Peace Research Institute however does provide some accurate information.

Government involvement is certainly ongoing and enthusiastic. Annual awards are made to the best defence contractor. NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) sends staff overseas to meet arms manufacturers and encourage New Zealand exports. NZTE also sponsors trade stalls overseas.

Tait Electronics, in Christchurch, receives substantial grants through the Callaghan Innovation Fund, well over \$10 million; Cubic Defence, a subsidiary of the US Cubic Corporation which supplies US and Israeli armed forces, also receives substantial grants.

Our arms exports go currently to a variety of countries, including the US, Australia, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

They include computers to control artillery and mortar fire, radio equipment, components for missile guidance and drones, transport vehicles, Hamilton Jet engines, and ammunition.

It is not possible to put a figure on this, but \$200 million has been mentioned. If so, this is still pretty small beer, and one wonders if we have thought this through politically, not to mention morally? Is the game worth the candle? How have we got into touting for exports in the deadly business of arms? What does it do for our international image?

How does the close collaboration of our Government with these massive multinational arms manufacturers square with our commitment to a free and independent Pacific and to our role in the UN?

Was this gaudy arms fair, plus a planned triumphalist march through Auckland, an appropriate way of remembering the sickening horror of two World Wars?

Peter Matheson is a Dunedin historian. This article was first published in the ODT on Armistice Day, 11 November 2016.

3rd World Meeting of Popular Movements

Forrest Chambers

The world's future depends not solely on world leaders. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples who are working for change.

— Pope Francis

What is a 'popular movement'? It is people gathered around an issue, working for change; those who see (or experience) suffering, and organise to prevent it, to improve the lives of the poor, and the environment.

So, the meeting in Rome, 2016, was made up of a rich diversity who work with and for: 'waste pickers' (recyclers), prisoners, street vendors, refugees, campesinos (peasant farmers), slum dwellers, seed-savers, and the unemployed – to name but a few. These are the people – along with the uncounted movements not at the meeting – whom Pope Francis upholds as examples of the people on whom the future of humanity rests.

What immediately struck us kiwis is the difference between our context (a wealthy country with an imperfect, but still comprehensive social service) and the 'third world' countries that many of the delegates came from. For example, early in the meeting, tribute was paid

to Berta Caceres of Honduras, who attended the first

Popular Movements meeting in 2014.

She was murdered last year because of her work organising the *campesinos* to resist land-grabbing. No one has faced trial for her murder. Their poverty and struggle for survival is in a different order of magnitude to what we know in New Zealand.

Discussion focused around three key topics:

land, labour and lodging – how can people gain access to these? Through all the speakers and discussion came the recurring consensus: the increasing poverty and environmental destruction is ultimately caused by one thing, the logic of capitalism and pursuit of wealth. This regards people and nature as nothing but exploitable and expendable resources. Or, as Pope Francis told the meeting at the conclusion:

money has become the idol which tyrannises us, and consumes the world.

Personally, I was surprised at how few Catholics were at the meeting (called by the Pope, and held in Rome!). There were times when I felt that the discussion was focussed on 'practical solutions', and lacked theological reflection on the bigger issues. However, this recognition by Pope Francis of all people (of all faiths, and no faith) doing the *mahi* is perhaps the most important point of the meeting.

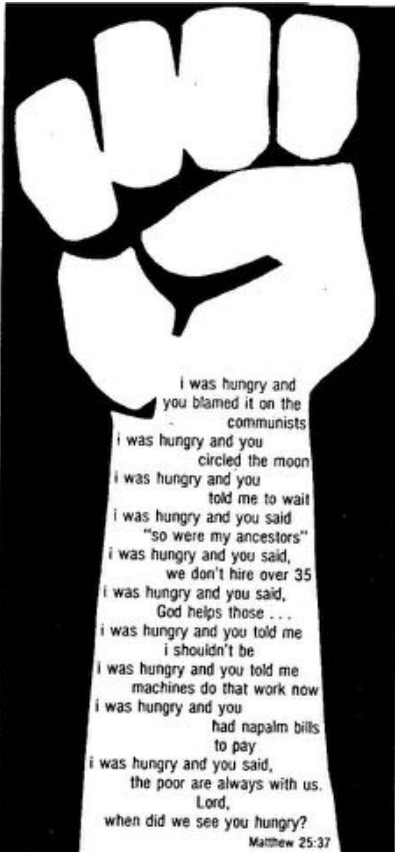
His message is two-pronged: first, Catholics are not the only ones doing the work of salvation. It is the work of all peoples (and we need to get out of our religious silos and connect on our common tasks). Second, his message is to the Church: to live out the Gospel means to work with and for the poor, addressing the root causes of poverty and suffering (as an extension of the works of mercy). It is not enough for Catholics to merely lead a life of 'personal holiness' without concern for our brothers and sisters suffering in poverty, and without concern for the state of the planet.

His final address beautifully summed up the issue: a world dominated by money exploits our fear. Our fear leads us to build bigger walls, armies, and pension funds – which ultimately leads to exclusion, environmental destruction, and a world in which we are all endangered, which in turn heightens our fears. It is a vicious circle.

He proposed mercy as the antidote to fear, and a 'joyful, unselfish, and disciplined austerity'. In other words, we should not indulge in the world of wealth, and its empty promises of happiness and security. 'Your example (of how you live) is more powerful than words, Facebooking, and Tweets.'

It was an honour and a privilege for my daughter Maia and me to attend the meeting, and I am inspired to continue the work back at home.

Forrest Chambers and his daughter Maia are members of the Otaki CW.



John Minto – prophet of social justice



The poor tell us who we are, the prophets tell us who we should be. So we hide the poor and kill the prophets.

—Phil Berrigan

John Minto has a wonderful heart for justice and a spirit that drives him to seek it for everyone.

He has been a part of thousands of vigils and protests promoting social justice for more than 40 years and is known nationally for his focus on these issues. In private life, John is a gentle soft-spoken courteous man, now in his early 60s, with a passion for the common good. And a great sense of humour.

John was born into a strong Catholic family in Dunedin and grew up with a developed social conscience and a good grasp of the Church's social teachings on justice and the dignity of people. His formative years were in Napier, and while at Teachers Training College in the early 1970s, he became involved with the anti-apartheid struggle.

He took a stand. It changed his life. He became a key leader of the anti-apartheid movement at the time of the 1981 Springbok rugby tour, a position which propelled him into the national limelight. He was elected fulltime national chairman of HART – the Halt All Racist Tours movement – for 5 years in the 1980s. He has been arrested innumerable times on picket lines, at marches and demonstrations for his non-violent opposition to injustice.

A sensitive and caring man, John is a born educator. Currently, a teacher of physics and maths at Hornby High School in Christchurch, he has been teaching professionally for most of his adult life holding positions in Auckland before he moved south. He believes New Zealand as a society is 'sleepwalking' the free-market agenda of big business to the future, leaving more and more casualties lying on the roadside as the powerful and rich tighten their grip on the levers of power.

Coming to Christchurch in 2013, he set up the Christchurch Progressive Network and is a strong supporter of KOA – the *Keep Our Assets* movement. In 2015, these movements propelled him into a head-

to-head contest with incumbent Lianne Dalziel for the Christchurch mayoralty. More than 15 000 people voted for him.

He is an active member of Mana, a people centred social justice political party with a strong but not exclusive base among Maori, and has stood for them at elections. He was deeply involved in the recent anti-TPPA protests, believing them to be a tool to remove the scales from the eyes of those willing to see the catastrophe the TPPA proposed in the 'secret small print'.

While much of his interest in the past has been in issues relating to race, gender and class, he now believes that the economic base is the key underlying lens from which all else must be understood. (*The Press*, 23 April 2016)

His financial arguments are compelling. The past 30 years of neo-liberal economic 'reforms' introduced by Roger Douglas, have resulted in the inequality gap widening daily between the rich and the poor. The new structure introduced forces disparity, creating always a wider gap. It is the same in every country where free-market policies have been followed. John has been an outspoken opponent of them, even publicly warning President Nelson Mandela, on his 1997 visit to Auckland, of their danger to South Africa.

Free market policies have left NZ with a growing swag of millionaires and an expanding underclass with thousands buried in poverty, a massive housing crisis making homes unaffordable to most, has made homelessness and overcrowding almost common, created beggars in every city, forced City Missions into having queues around the block for food parcels – all a direct result of the poverty wrought by this economic switch. Such social consequences of Government policies have not been seen in NZ since the 1930s. And, as he says, our uncaring Government sails blithely on and we keep voting them in!

John Minto is usually described as an activist, with an implied negative tone. But surely an activist for social justice is simply one who takes the love of or care for neighbour to a higher level and is prepared to act on the words spoken? The causes John espouses are deeply aligned with traditional biblical social justice positions promoting the common good, and flow from his search for a fair deal for all.

John does this publicly week in week out, with steadfastness and good humour.

—Jim Consedine

Disrupting the War Makers

Liz Remmersvaal Hughes.

The NZ Navy's 75th birthday bash, which was coupled with the Lockheed Martin sponsored arms fair in Auckland, sparked a flurry of peace activities during November, ably coordinated by Auckland Peace Action.

The 'Week of Peace' began with the visit of veteran anti-nukes campaigner Dr Helen Caldicott, who spoke at the blockade of the arms fair at the Viaduct and was interviewed both by TV3's Paul Henry and Radio NZ's Wallace Chapman.

At the blockade, well-trained protesters put their bodies on the line and managed to prevent most of the delegates getting in the building. The day was largely nonviolent, and protesters and police impressively held their lines for over six hours, though there were some rough incidents during the day, though no arrests.

By the NZ Defence Industry's own accounting, at least 350 of the 550 expected guests could not get into the conference, and therefore the business of warmongering was disrupted, resulting in a small dent in the global military-industrial complex.

Organiser Valerie Morse says the spontaneous joy of the dance party at the end of the day was the best evidence that everyone who had blockaded long and hard all day knew they had made that dent, and felt good about it.

One of the main goals of the week was to build bridges in the peace movement, and though challenging at times, with the many differing ideologies of those taking part, this certainly took place. Those who took part included veteran pacifists as well as members of groups including the Peace Foundation, Pacific Panthers, Peace Action Wellington, the Quakers, Pax Christi, Anglican Pacifists, Greenpeace, WILPF, union members, climate activists, environmentalists, and many others.

The week had begun with the shocking earthquake on 14 November and the subsequent deployment of Canadian, American and Australian warships to help at Kaikoura which meant the '1000 Sailors March' down Queen St was cancelled, though there were still plenty of sailors from Indonesia, Japan, Chile and other countries in port.

Weather was cited as the reason that the Navy changed the day of the ceremonial harbour entrance of the ships, but the 'Peace Flotilla' boats came out in force on the windy Saturday, albeit having to cope with a greatly restricted area to sail in. Also on that day, several thousand people joined a happy peace march through the city headed by two 97 year olds, while a fascinating 'Just War' study day stimulated much informed discussion on that topic.

The Sunday warship open day on the waterfront saw a collection of colourful real and pretend 'Grannies for Peace' making 'Tea Not War' and singing peace

songs for the crowds.

Meanwhile a more serious gathering took place outside the Holy Trinity Cathedral where the official naval commemoration was taking place with an alternative service featuring *Prayers for Peace*, led by Reverend Emily Worman, daughter of David Lange. Earlier in the week there was a ceremony at Mission Bay called *Karanga Tangaroa* led by the Pacific Panthers to challenge the appropriation by the military of Maori culture. Their exercise was called 'Operation Tangaroa.' Unfortunately, those taking part felt like the sacred ceremony was marred by the presence of the police and a noisy helicopter nearby.

It was heartening to see so many peace organisations working together to make things happen for this impressive 'Week of Peace', hopefully the sign of things to come in the future as we celebrate the 30th anniversary of 'Nuclear Free NZ' in 2017.

Liz Remmersvaal Hughes is a Quaker, a former Regional Councillor and a peace activist. She lives with her family in the Hawkes Bay.

prophet

(for my brother, Robert)

called to the cutting edge
a singular journey

the clarion cry from deep
within the ancestral breast

sometimes mocked
worse still, ignored

echoes the age-old trilogy
race, poverty, war

a lodestar pointing
God knows where

fanning Tara's embers
bringing light, justice, hope

—Jim Consedine

Around the Traps

At 4.31pm on All Saints Day, John Miller died at Cashmere Lifecare Centre after a long struggle with Alzheimer's and eventually heart failure. He was 87. His wife Leony, daughter Corazon (Cory), Andrew Donaldson and Jim Consedine were with him when he died. They had kept vigil for three days expecting him to go at any time. He had been anointed twice in his final days and the prayers for the dying had been prayed several times.

John was a lifelong Methodist, formed in the heyday of the radical pacifist Methodist Church just prior to WWII. He maintained his pacifism and love for the poor right until the end. Everyone recognised John's passion for the Gospel and his love of Christ and the Church.

We had the privilege of giving him a simple do-your-own CW funeral with a casket made by Mike Coughlan, notices and documents filed by Cory, while Andrew and Jim led the two home vigils and funeral service at St Mark's Methodist Church in Barrington Street which John attended. It was a fitting farewell for a committed Christian man who loved simplicity and had a great heart for justice.

On the Wednesday following the funeral, after a blessing by Andrew and Jim, Leony and Cory (pictured above standing right) cut the ribbon and officially opened the John Miller Caravan for the homeless at the CW. We feel this is a fitting tribute to his memory. May he rest in peace.

On January 4th, we honoured Sister Judith Murphy on her 60th year of profession as a Sister of Mercy. For many years, Judith has been an active CW providing food for our Wednesday evening liturgy (curried sausages one of her popular specialties!) and has had an outreach to some of the neediest in our city. She is an inveterate visitor to the elderly and a vital member of our leadership team. Francis and Jim paid tribute to her at our gathering that evening and she was thanked by all present.

We had a wonderful dinner for about 35-40 in the yard at Suzanne Aubert CW on Christmas Day. In the kitchen graced by Lilly's wonderfully decorated tree, a highly skilled team consisting of Sister Judith, Chiara, Louise, Tony, Francis, Mike and Jock (master carver) helped prepare and serve a wonderful three-course meal to our guests and organize take-aways for later. Though overcast, the weather held to its side of the bargain, and after Jim had jetted in and prayed the grace, we all tucked in. The following day, a lucky 10 including Liz, Raewyn, Jason and Anita gathered to celebrate Brian McDonald's 66th birthday, feasting off the Christmas left-overs. It seemed the right thing to do!

It is with gratitude we record the wonderful response of readers to our Advent appeal. In all, 101 individuals responded contributing \$8616. This will



enable us to meet a large portion of our annual budget of \$22 500. We thank you for your generosity.

Joseph Darone, a volunteer for many years at Maryhouse, the New York CW, dropped by during January. He was immediately employed helping to shift some whiteware around flats. Task done, he enjoyed a nice lunch with us and departed. It was lovely to meet him and share stories. Jim was particularly appreciative as he had stayed at the NYCW on three occasions in 1980s-90s.

This issue of *The Common Good*, No 80 is an opportunity to acknowledge and thank key team members who have put our little paper together on a quarterly basis since 1996, completing 80 issues. Jim Consedine has been the editor, Barbara Corcoran our lay-out person (even after shifting to Burke's Pass), Sister Helen Goggin, the final set of eyes reviewer before we go to print, Francis Simmonds in charge of the mail-out and Maree Williamson keeps the labels accurate and up-to-date. Angus Trevella oversees our website. They are joined by many others who help with the mail-out and distribution and supported by a wonderful array of donors who help get the bills paid. We are deeply grateful for these unsung contributors who each play a vital role in promoting the Reign of God in our time through our paper.

We join others in congratulating Mary Kamo, appointed a CONZM in the New Year honours list. Mary has been a constant support to the CW over her 33 years of prison chaplaincy, a champion of restorative justice and prison reform, and regularly distributed *The Common Good* to inmates. We wish God's blessing on her and Raynol in their retirement at Birdling's Flat.

An 2017 Oxfam report, which shows the world's richest 1 percent own more than the remaining 99 percent, also shows NZ's two wealthiest men – Graeme Hart and Richard Chandler - own as much as the poorest 30 percent of Kiwis combined. It also shows the richest 1 percent of Kiwis possess 20 percent of the country's wealth, while 90 percent own less than one half. Figures from Inland Revenue also show that of the 252 Kiwis worth more than \$50 million each, where the top income rate of 33 percent applies, a third declared an income of less than \$70 000. Now that is tax dodging!

What would Jesus drive?

What would Jesus drive
In our world today?
Would he go to war
To make the Arabs pay?

As we experience global warming
Would he look the other way?
Would he bless the 'war on terror'
Or have something else to say?

'You go to church and worship me
But hear not what I say
For your oilaholic ways
You will really have to pay!

Pay the price in global warming
And disaster round the world
Or repent and change your ways
Then you'll experience my day.

A day of reconciliation
When ALL are housed, clothed and fed
And throughout the world
No-one without a bed.'

—John Miller

the homeless Christ

a scourge uncovered
in bitter winter weather

mouldy damp houses
overcrowded cars, garages
stuffed full of people
where kids get sick, the old die

from Mangere to Cuba Mall
Cathedral Square to Bluff
hundreds brave all weathers
the pavement their headrest

consciences pricked
many blame the men and women
on the streets for being there
calling them lazy, workshy

blithely they ignore 30 plus years
structured inequality, job losses
forcing their emergence
onto sidewalks, into derelict buildings

abandoned by middle New Zealand
the homeless Christ sleeps rough

— Jim Consedine

Obituary John Miller (1929-2016)



One of the Catholic Worker's most committed members, John Miller, died on All Saints Day 2016, aged 87. John had been in declining health for some years. He died peacefully with his wife Leony and daughter Corazon at his side.

John was a lifelong pacifist formed in the tradition of the Methodist Church of his youth, which, until WWII, held to the strongly pacifist tradition of the early Church. In his late teens, he had met with Les Clemens and Arch Barrington at the pacifist Riverside Community in Motueka, which he joined. Though he only stayed one year, he never wavered from his pacifist

position and his love of the poor.

In 1983, John travelled through the Philippines, then under martial law. The trip had a huge impact on him as he saw the poverty of millions sitting cheek-to-jowl with the opulence of the rich 'all of them claiming to be Christian'. He also married his second wife, Leonida (Leony), and returned to Invercargill, where their daughter Corazon (Cory) was born. (He had two sons, Richard and Mark, by an earlier marriage).

A joiner by trade, John later became a lay missionary in the Solomon Islands for three years, rebuilding churches and learning the skills of lay preaching. In 1957, he cadged a ride on a scrap metal ship to Japan and while there found himself in Hiroshima on the 12th anniversary of the first nuclear holocaust. There he addressed the 3rd World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs and for Disarmament.

Then, in the early 1990s, John and his family took a trip by van around the US, where they visited the only racially integrated intentional community in Georgia, the

Koinonia Community in Americus. It was founded by the famous Clarence Jordan of *Cottonpatch Gospels* fame. The Millers then visited the Open Door CW in Atlanta, the only Protestant CW. These visits left a lifelong impression on John.

Upon their return, the Millers shifted from Invercargill to Auckland, where they were regulars at the Pitt Street Methodist and St Benedict's Catholic churches. In 1997, the family came south to join the Catholic Worker in Christchurch, where he was a core group member for some years.

John always remained a staunch Methodist, 'and a catholic with a small c meaning universal', he'd say with

a smile. Totally ecumenical throughout their entire marriage, he and Leony would attend services at both Methodist and Catholic churches every Sunday.

If one characteristic stands out from John's life of commitment to Christ, a life of simplicity and to social justice, it was his consistency. His heart raged against injustice. He never let up. As Cory said in her beautiful eulogy, 'Perhaps if there were more like him prepared to challenge the status quo, who believed in peace at all costs, and were more compassionate to people from all religions and races, the world would be a better place.'

—Jim Consedine

Letters

Center for Non-violent Training and Education
P O Box 489
Kurtistown
Hawaii 96760
USA

Dear Jim and CW friends,

Malaho for the long solidarity of your lives. Once again we write to ask for your help for the work of our center, *Malu 'Aina*, where we have been planting seeds and sharing food with people in need for the past 36 years. In all that we do, the spirit of *aloha 'aina* (Love for the Land) and nonviolence guide us. But we know we can't do it alone. It takes a movement of people, power, commitment and donations to carry on. You have been an important part of this effort and we thank you for your solidarity on the journey.

The stakes couldn't be higher. We live on the most militarised group of islands in the world, with nuclear warships and warheads our constant companions. Besides our other solidarity work and the daily hospitality we offer, we have produce a weekly leaflet for our peace vigil for more than 800 consecutive weeks. That is 16 years of weekly vigils - unbroken!

Your support and solidarity keep us from being discouraged and remind us that we are stronger together. We pledge to you our commitment never to give up. If you feel willing, please post cheques made out to our center and post to the center's address above. A Pay Pal account (press 'donate' button) has been set up on our webpage: www.malu-aina.org.

Blessings during this holy season and with gratitude and aloha,

Jim Albertini.

Waiuku
South Auckland

Hi Jim

Your article on technology and the gospel in CG79 is a masterpiece and should be compulsory reading for our Government and business leaders.

It is a huge subject & makes me think of many things and my own working life in which workers are largely treated as an expense and not an asset. Under that regime and because they do not feel valued it is no wonder that many people do not work to their full potential. The boss feels that he is not getting a fair day's work and often he is not, little realizing that his attitude and lack of good management skills has created this situation. Hence the drive to get rid of the human element and replace it with a machine.

Another thing is the huge differential now between the wages of some CEO's and the average worker. Some forty years ago the differential was about twenty times but now it is two hundred times. You hear all the time that companies have to pay that money to attract the right person, but we still had profitable companies before and I dare say happier and more balanced ones at that.

This huge imbalance in wage levels could lead to simmering resentment, especially among the lowly paid. Little do the people at the top realize that in some cases this could lead to a lack of attention that could have ramifications for the company. I sometimes wonder if that is what happened when Fonterra had that contamination due to a dirty pipe a couple of years ago?

The really sad thing is that a worker's loyalty and interest in his job could be bought at so little

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

cost but from my experience most managers cannot see that. I was able to get my manager to set up a trial for one of the jobs at work with a small bonus attached as an incentive. We were able to sell the idea to the guys and the results after a month were amazing with several thousand dollars in savings.

The money was really a side issue, as the biggest benefit was that the guys starting talking to each other and sharing information on how they could make it work better. You basically had the guys in the palm of your hand and they were already talking about how they could make more savings. At the end of the month-long trial the guys got their \$100 bonus, achieving savings substantially more than had been targeted. The management in their wisdom decided that they were not going to carry it on and as you can imagine there was a pretty negative reaction to that and a great opportunity was lost. Dumb and such a waste.

Cheers,

Dave Gribble

The Nuclear Resister,
Tucson, AZ 85733

Dear New Zealand friends,

It was hard to imagine the election result we have all just experienced. Now with the reality of the situation unfolding before us, tens of thousands of people have already begun to challenge the repression promised by the President-elect, Donald Trump.

All who are targets of this repression, along with peace, justice, anti-nuclear, environmental and human rights activists, have a hard road ahead. We know we are stronger when we stand together and support one another. With less tolerance for protest on the horizon, there will be a growing need to support prisoners of conscience. We are grateful to move forward in this struggle with all of you. These words of Dorothy Day lift us up:

‘People say, what is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time. A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that. No-one has a right to sit down and feel helpless. There is too much work to do.’

Onwards friends,

Felice and Jack Cohen-Joppa

Cockle Bay
Manukau City,
Auckland 2014

Dear Jim,

Warmest regards. I write in haste to say how much I enjoyed receiving the latest edition of *The Common Good*. It reached me at the end of a pretty discouraging week, what with the political events in North America and the death of Leonard Cohen.

Nevertheless, I was hugely heartened by young Jack Leason’s essay, ‘He who clothes the flowers’. Wonderful testimony. So encouraging to see a new generation arising and throwing off the shackles and daring to live the Gospel. I hope to support them too in so far as my pensioner income will permit.

Thanks again Jim. All the very best.

Pax et Bonum.

Peter Robertson

Honolulu,
Hawaii 96816

November 2016

Dear Jim and all CWs in Aotearoa,

Greetings and peace from Hawaii. Enclosed is a small donation in response to your Advent appeal. I wish it could be more. I look forward to each issue of *The Common Good* and read it from beginning to end. Always good stuff!

Kay and I recall fondly your hospitality when we visited Christchurch a couple of years ago. Your island was still recovering from the earthquake... and it sounds like you are in recovery again. Blessings on you all.

Aloha,

Wally Inglis

www.catholicworker.org.nz
Leading articles from the first 20 years of
The Common Good
Alternative funerals
Restorative justice
Other theological issues

In this issuePage

| | |
|--|-------|
| Pope Francis: Nonviolence, the Way of Jesus..... | 1-2 |
| Jim Consedine wraps up the TPPA | 3 |
| NZ: Peacemaker or Arms Exporter? | 4 |
| Forrest Chambers reports from Rome | 5 |
| Honouring John Minto, Prophet | 6 |
| Around the Traps..... | 8 |
| John Miller obituary | 9 |
| Letters | 10-11 |

The Common Good

Te Wairua Maranga Trust
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Christchurch 8244
New Zealand

New Zealand
Permit No. 76935



9th National Catholic Worker Hui - Wellington

4.30pm Thursday 30 March 2017 until noon Sunday, 2 April 2017

Contact – Jack Leason, Berrigan House, 4 Kelburn Parade, Kelburn, Wellington 6012
japleason@gmail.com or 021 02528003

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

*What we do is very little, but it is like the little boy with a few loaves and fishes. God will do the rest.
Unless the seed fall into the earth and die, there is no harvest. Dorothy Day*