

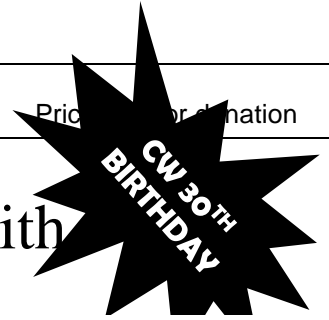
The Common Good

Taking a Preferential Option for the Poor

A newspaper of the Christchurch Catholic Worker

No 90, Spring 2019

Pride or devotion



Water, Climate Change and Christian Faith

Kathleen Gallagher

Many of our rivers and lakes are unfishable, undrinkable. Some are poisoned and poisoning the water that runs through them. Some are dried or drying up and others are fished out. The oceans are plastic rubbish dumps and fish species are migrating towards the poles in leaps and bounds. Some species, like all the large species in the Atlantic, are already fished out.



Genesis 1:9-13

Helen Siegl

effects of our actions benefitting the diversity of our peoples and our environment can be swift and fast because we are acting with nature not against her this time.

What we say matters. What we do matters. What we dream and what we think matters. Our dreams become tomorrow's reality.

'In the beginning was the Word... and the

The thoughts of the *taniwha* who lives in our aquifers of Otatahi/Christchurch on our predicament, are wilder and far more profound than anything we might engender ourselves. She can become albino and change her shape and colour. She has been working extremely hard to enlighten the peoples here of this city and island of Te Wai Pounamu to change our ways. She has been twisting and turning and twirling and performing dervish-like dancing and rock throwing and belching and farting and shaking us. What she is asking of us is a profound shift in our thinking, a change in our consciousness

Some progress

On 16 May, Environment Canterbury declared our region and Nelson City Council their city, to be in a state of climate and ecological emergency. On 23 May, the Christchurch City Council followed suit. This action has been replicated by Hutt City, Wellington City, Auckland City, Kapiti Coast District Council, Porirua City Council, Dunedin City, the Hawkes Bay Regional Council and the Queenstown Lakes District Council. Meantime, with hundreds of climate change protestors outside, Dunedin Mayor Dave Cull told the 300 attendees at the 2019 Minerals Forum in late May that fossil fuel exploration is at odds with his community and the council he represents. After that, the Prime Minister has promised the Government will consider the idea.

Our waka, Te Wai Pounamu, has been turned around. Our waka is now facing in the right direction. The

Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.' (John 1) Our God matters. Our *taniwha* matters. What happens to our water matters. We can declare that 50% of our NZ oceans out to the 200-mile fishing zone are to be protected as Marine Reserves. New Zealand has the fourth largest one in the world.

Let us stop using poisons on our gardens and on our farms, no Roundup, no pesticides, no sprays, no insecticides, so our soil and the fungi in our soil can do their job properly because the plants need them.

This way our fish numbers will increase again to the size and magnitude of the 17th century when Tupaia from Tahiti and Cook from Yorkshire first turned up here, and there will be plenty for everybody and we will not be fished out. We can declare breeding ground fish reserves in spots on all of our lakes and rivers, so they are never fished out.

Time for urgent action

Matthew 4.8 says, *'Some seed fell on good soil, grew up and increased and yielded grain, some provided 30 times as much, others 60 times as much and others one hundred times as much,'* and Jesus added, *'Listen, you who have ears to hear.'*

Let us stop using poisons on our gardens and on our farms, no Roundup, no pesticides, no sprays, no



insecticides, so our soil and the fungi in our soil can do their job properly because the plants need them. In February, a referendum in Switzerland aiming to ban the use of all synthetic pesticides was launched. The pesticides that would be banned include glyphosate (Roundup) and neonicotinoids, a group of chemicals known to kill bees.

We need to get out of our cars, off our screens, onto our bikes and into walking shoes, our gardens and water places. God knows totally what our taniwha is on about. In the ancient scriptures, Job writes, 'Ask the beasts to teach you. The birds of the air to tell you. The plants of the earth to instruct you. The fish of the waters to inform you.'
Job 12 7-10

The brilliant American biologist Lynn Margulis, in her book *Symbiotic Planet: A New Look at Evolution* (1998) totally contradicts Darwin's survival of the fittest theory on which our current economic system has been based. She says, 'The great expansion of land up and out of both the sea and fresh water was grounded in the intimacy of plant and fungi and still is.' It is the ability of plants and fungi to work together to absorb water and

Who are we?

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

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

We do not seek funding from traditional sources. We hope to receive enough to keep our houses of hospitality open and our various works going. Catholic Worker houses do not issue tax receipts since they are running neither a business nor a church social agency. We invite people to participate personally and unconditionally. Should you wish to make a regular contribution, you may do so through our Te Wairua Maranga Westpac Trust holding account (number 031703-0036346-02). Donations may also be made to **Te Wairua Maranga Trust, Box 33-135, Christchurch.** *The Common Good:* Editor: Jim Consedine, jim.conse@xtra.co.nz; Layout: Barbara Corcoran, burkesspass@gmail.com

www.catholicworker.org.nz

minerals. It is a relationship of love not war. Holding water in the soil adapts to wild weather and drought and mitigates climate change.

In the *wao*, the ancient forest of the Southern Alps, dwell an ancient lineage of liverworts. They are simple plants, close relations of the earliest land plant pioneers. Soil fungi helped our beech forests move inland. The symbiotic alliance between soil fungi and plants underpins the health of our forests, grasslands, and croplands worldwide

We need to get out of our cars, off our screens, onto our bikes and into walking shoes, our gardens and water places. God knows totally what our *taniwha* is on about. In the ancient scriptures, Job writes, 'Ask the beasts to teach you. The birds of the air to tell you. The plants of the earth to instruct you. The fish of the waters to inform you.'
Job 12 7-10

In *Water Whisperers Tangaroa*, Fred Litwark tells the story of Raglan Harbour. In 1990, it had the worst fish count in Aotearoa. It now has the highest fish count. They turned it around in 10 years, despite Environment Waikato telling them it would take 90 years!

Once you stop poisoning the soil and underground roots and fungi, once you start planting generous 10-20-metre wide riparian strips on every river, stream, lake, bank and beach, you create corridors for bird, insect, fish, fungi, trees and food forests and the health of the soil all around you returns. The Raglan farmers massively dropped their cow numbers and increased their productivity and the quality and quantity of their milk and grasses. Once we turn the waka in the right direction nature takes over and multiplies our efforts exponentially.

Otautahi – our Christchurch home

This place, Otautahi, where we live, was once an enormous forest wetland full of waterways, rich in fish and birds, harakeke and kahikatea, kowhai and ti koaka. We want our children to be able to fish and swim and paddle in all of the waters running through our city and rural areas. Putaringamotu/Deans Bush is the last *wao* - ancient forest - remaining wetland ngahere forest here in Otautahi.

Hence it is essential that we have large generous corridors - bird corridors, tree corridors and biodiversity corridors around water and walkways from the mountains to the sea. This way we magnify exponentially the effect of any planting. We can link up Harry Ell's old walkways on the Port Hills and Colin Meurk's new walkways from Cathedral Square all the way to Akaroa, so there are bird corridors from Hinewai to Arthurs Pass and the Southern Alps.

This will ensure that our waterways and the great aquifers that lie under our city are loved and protected. And this way, we will have a good clean fresh water supply and a happy *taniwha*.

Kathleen Gallagher is a published author, filmmaker and committed Christian ecologist, and gave an extended version of this talk to a Christchurch EcuAction forum in June.

Editorial 1 CW - Thirty Years On...

On 9th August 1989, the Catholic Worker signed a contract with our friend Kevin Campbell to lease a house in Addington, Christchurch as our first CW house of hospitality. The date was significant – it was the 44th anniversary of the dropping by the US of an atomic bomb which devastated Nagasaki, the most Catholic city in Japan. Peering through the cloud, the bomber had aimed at the spire of the Catholic cathedral!

That house became Cardijn House – named by Francis Simmonds to honour Joseph Cardijn, the famous Belgium priest-founder of the Young Christian Workers movement (YCW). Francis and Jacqui Amahanga moved in and we had our first CW community in NZ.

In the 30 years since then, we have continued to pursue ‘the aims and means’ of those early days – to live the Sermon on the Mount in its modern form, to offer hospitality to people in need, either on a temporary or more permanent basis, follow the nonviolent Jesus and promote nonviolence as a way of living, practise personalism by seeing the divine in everyone, promote ‘small is beautiful’ as an economic manageable model of economics, practise cooperative work and peacemaking, focus on issues of

justice, support prison ministry, support positive environmental care for our planet and try to practise voluntary poverty in a consumer society. We believe this way of living brings us closer to the life of Jesus in his time and provides a clear focus for Christians and the Church today.

In August 1996, we published the first edition of *The Common Good*, our quarterly 12-page newsletter. The leading article in that first edition was called ‘Opting for the Poor’ and was written by Sister Pauline O’Regan RSM, who died recently aged 96. In this 90th edition, we are republishing Pauline’s wonderful challenge to Christians and the Church to walk closer in the steps of Jesus and seek out the poor and minister to them as he did. This type of response necessarily involves action for justice, as the poor are structurally discriminated against at all levels in our society. Yet people of faith also know it is among them that so often we see the face of Christ more readily.

We welcome anyone interested in becoming part of this movement to contact us at the addresses given boxed on page 2. We guarantee a fulfilled life.

—Jim Consedine

Editorial 2 Access to Water

It is an unquestionable duty of states – regardless of political system and/or economic and technological capacity – to do their best for the entire population to truly enjoy the right of access to water. Governments and public administrations may decide to opt for services provided by private sector agencies or associations, to contribute to the universal access to drinking water. This, however, should in no way reduce the government’s responsibility towards society at large: public authorities have the task of settings norms and controls and overseeing the action of the actors involved in water management.

At the same time, the public authority should also guarantee the respectful use of water, avoiding pollution and waste, without forgetting that it is a resource essential to life in general, and to several biomes, and not only to human existence. In the light of the principle of subsidiarity, then, there is a need for local communities to be – wherever possible and relevant, and however always under due scrutiny of public authorities – able to manage their access to drinking water.

This implies assessing the needs, monitoring the quality of water available, and providing for the funding and maintenance of infrastructure. The initiatives taken by the Catholic Church in this direction are many-fold in several developing countries.

The appeal, ‘Leaving no one behind,’ implies a special care for the poor, the people living in rural or far-away mountain areas, those who are in situations of chaotic and dangerous migration, or who have found a shelter in refugee camps; for the population whose traditional sources of water supply have been polluted or depleted owing to excessive pumping; for prisoners,

orphans; for those who are stigmatized or marginalized for ethnic, cultural reasons, or due to sickness or diseases.

With reference to this, we consider access to drinking water in schools and healthcare centres (hospitals, clinics, outpatient dispensaries) to be a priority. We encourage monitoring actions in schools and in the aforementioned healthcare centres, to promote:

- Access to drinking water;
- Access to sanitation (taking into account the specific situations of people with physical disabilities);
- The state of relevant infrastructure;
- Hygiene procedures, as well as controlling and maintenance procedures for the infrastructure.

And this because the terrible statistics about thirst are not to be considered a fatality without remedies, whereas engineering and managerial knowledge is already there to allow for the supply of water even in the most remote areas, including on the high seas. And also because water management cannot depend upon a utilitarian criterion of efficiency and productivity for individual profit, because such a view would mean considering it as any other commodity, to be provided only to those who can pay, even though they would use it for secondary goals, and to build infrastructure only in areas able to reimburse the investment cost: such a view opposes the universal destination of water.

Access to drinking water as a common good is a precondition for the wellbeing of the entire human family. Access to water is not an end in itself, but a condition for life to flourish, in order to have life to the full.

—Pope Francis, *World Water Day 2019*

Tribute to CW from Central Africa

John Osmers

The Catholic Church in New Zealand may rightly give thanks for the witness of its Suzanne Aubert Catholic Worker house in Addington, Christchurch over the past 30 years. The house is a small yet significant part of the worldwide Catholic Worker movement and shares their goal of living the Works of Mercy.

The Suzanne Aubert CW in Christchurch, through its permanent residents Francis Simmonds and Tony Suddeby, has an open door seven days a week. Its purpose and vision for the church and community is especially seen in the Eucharistic gathering every Wednesday evening which is followed by a shared meal. Those present especially enjoy the fellowship and encouragement they may find from the Eucharist itself. It is a remarkable gathering which I am grateful to regularly attend as a bishop of the Anglican Church resident in Zambia but visiting my family in Christchurch each year.

Of the fifteen to twenty people who gather every week, a small number are committed members of the CW movement. Many who attend are unemployed or have only part-time jobs. Some are mentally challenged. A remand prisoner released on bail sits next to Sister Judith of the Sisters of Mercy. Kathleen Gallagher, a renowned Catholic film maker and dramatist, and her husband Mike Coughlan, often bring two exuberant grandchildren. It makes for a familial occasion – which has been going weekly for 30 years!

We begin the service with choruses led by Fr. Jim Consedine playing his guitar or perhaps a lay leader and move into scripture sharing. This is a friendly invitation for those who wish to do so to reflect on the bible passages of the day. Often Jim will invite us to consider a searching question which asks us to reflect on our own life experience in the light of gospel values. Frequent guests



Rawiti, Ranui and I hongi when we share the peace and some hug warmly. We share the Communion which brings God's grace and blessing to those of us who need healing and wholeness in many different ways.

We all enjoy the shared potluck meal brought by some of those present. Tony regularly provides a delicious hot soup, and I usually take two to three helpings, as the refugee Rwandan students I live with in Zambia don't have soup in their cooking experience! I enjoy the simplicity and informality of CW gatherings for which some travel over a long distance. The gatherings are gospel-centred and bring us close to the Spirit of the early Church.

The famous Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, wrote, 'the Christian Church is the only organisation which exists for those outside of itself.' The CW house in Addington, Christchurch has expressed this very well through its witness and mission over the past 30 years.

Christchurch-born, Rt Rev. John Osmers is the assistant Anglican Bishop of Lusaka in Zambia, Central Africa, with a special ministry to Rwandan refugees.



Opting for the Poor

Sister Pauline O'Regan RSM



It would be a mistake to believe that the 'option for the poor' is a new development in the life of the Church as a whole. The life of the early Church, the teachings of the Fathers, the evidence of the Middle Ages, and in the 19th century the founding of so many religious orders specifically to work among the poor, all testify to a clear tradition in this manner.

In 1547, for instance, Polanco, writing under the guidance of St Ignatius, as quoted in the interim documents of the Society of Jesus, has this to say: 'So great are the poor in the sight of God, that it was especially for them that Jesus Christ was sent into the world. Our Lord so preferred the poor to the rich, that he chose the entire college of his apostles from among the poor, to live and associate with them. Friendship with the poor makes us friends of the Eternal King.'

The call of the Gospel now became, not just a matter of service of the poor, but a responsibility on Christians to challenge those unjust and evil structures that kept some people permanently demeaned and oppressed in order that the greed of others might be satisfied and their wealth and privilege maintained.

Sure, we know the Church did not always remember its commitment to the poor, but it never quite forgot it either. Then, in the 1890s, it formulated a social teaching which had at its heart the protection of the marginalised and the poor. It was the European poor it had mostly in mind, the victims of nearly a century of industrial revolution. It could scarcely be considered to be in the vanguard of their defence, but when it did speak, it spoke clearly. In that era, the virtue that the Church saw as being at the heart of this service to the poor, was the virtue of charity. The system as such was not questioned, but the rich were called on to treat their workers well and to be generous to the less-privileged.

Justice and Charity

In the 1960s, however, a new perception of the Church's mission developed – a perception that very significantly went beyond the concept of charity, into the area of justice. The call of the Gospel now became, not just a matter of service of the poor, but a responsibility on Christians to challenge those unjust and evil structures that kept some people permanently demeaned and oppressed in order that the greed of others might be satisfied and their wealth and privilege maintained.

The new theology asked the question: how is it possible to preach the Gospel in the context of gross, institutionalised injustice to millions of God's children?

By the time of the 1971 Synod, the bishops were

telling the church that evangelisation, to be authentic, had to contain work for social justice as 'a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel.'

No matter what our problems with the Church might be, we all know that it is a necessary institution for the proclamation of the Gospel. Historically, the Jesus movement became Church. Communities of faith resulted from the proclamation of the Gospel, and these communities in their turn handed on that proclamation to others.

To survive, those communities needed a structure. Of course, at any given point in history the structure of the Church may be in need of urgent reform. But the point is that, reformed or not, there still has to be a structure – the community needs it in order to give continuity to its mission of passing on the Gospel. So we have Gospel, and we have Church, both inextricably woven together. We can't say, Gospel yes, Church, no. And even more incredibly, we can't say Church, yes, Gospel, no. But history shows, and our own experience painfully demonstrates, that there can be, and often is, a real tension between the two: Gospel and Church.

Modern Application

The reality seems to be that the Church can never do full justice to the Gospel – there's simply more to the Gospel than any human society, any community, any Church can ever cope with at any given time. People of the Gospel will always be disappointed to some degree with the Church. The Gospel in a real sense is God and we can never do full justice to God. There will always be something or someone calling us forward into ever stronger solidarity with God and with others.

It's imperative that we work for the best possible structures in the Church, but we have to realise, I think, that even with the best structures, the Church will still fall short of bringing the fullness of the Gospel to the world. Of course, the Church's mission is to do that – to bring the fullness of the Gospel to the world – but at any given time there will always be some aspects of the Word of God that we are failing to discern, that are in the shadow, as it were.

And because of that, we are often blinded to where injustice and oppression exist in our contemporary world, sometimes under our very noses. As one injustice is righted, another arises, born of a new environment; as one system is purified, another is corrupted; as one people is set free, another is enslaved in one way or another. It's to the Gospel, not the Church, that we must always look as our surest guide on how to counter each new injustice.

And the Church has to be constantly challenged and called forth to come more fully into line with the Gospel.

Sr Pauline O'Regan, a Sister of Mercy, lived in Aranui, Christchurch.. This article first appeared in The Common Good, No 1, Spring 1996. (Pauline died 29 April 2019, aged 96.)

Healing Justice – Expanding the Restorative System

Jim Consedine

Proposal: It is time to develop a fully resourced stand-alone restorative justice court system for adults to run parallel to the current retributive system and not simply be an adjunct to it.

By any standard, current imprisonment policy in New Zealand is an expensive social disaster. Our institutionalized correctional practices do not meet the requirement of true justice. Indeed, they compound the problem and guarantee more crime in the future. We need a paradigm shift in thinking about the way we deal with offending.

For most, prison provides the opportunity for inmates to mix and bond with like-minded people and develop further anti-social skills. They have little hope for their futures when they are sentenced. There is little real preparation for pro-social lives and engaging the inmate in meaningful employment upon release.

Most NZ prisons continue to have problems with violence, suicide, drugs and gangs. On average, prisoners have poorer mental and physical health than the general population. Most have problems with addiction, low educational achievement, lack of employment skills and dysfunctional family relationships. According to government statistics (2014), about 89% have a lifetime prevalence of substance abuse and 52% psychotic, mood or anxiety disorders. Prisons have become a dustbin for the poor, the mentally ill and the addicted.

Justice Review

The current Justice Review by the Government is a welcome move and long overdue. New Zealand is at a crossroads in relation to its criminal justice processes. We have developed a largely punitive rather than restorative public culture, fuelled by the corporate media and politicians amongst others. We have continued high imprisonment rates, second only to the US in OECD countries. Compared to community-based sentences, prisons are extremely expensive, with an average cost of \$100,000 per person each year. We have spawned a \$1 billion state apparatus which continues to guarantee high levels of crime and re-offending rates.

Back in May 2011, former Prime Minister Sir William English described the current system as ‘too expensive and a moral and fiscal failure.’ If that was the case then, how much more does his analysis apply now?

For every person sentenced to imprisonment, there are at least 10 family members badly affected by that sentence. In NZ, that is currently over 90 000 people. That includes thousands of children growing up victimized because they have a parent in prison. They are innocent parties. Their role model for life has been an imprisoned parent. Is it any wonder that many end up in prison themselves? New research by senior government advisor Dr Ian Lambie suggests a very high likelihood of children

being imprisoned in the future when their father is sentenced to even a period of imprisonment. (June 2018)

Expanding Restorative Justice

Restorative justice processes speak to the heart and soul. They are about accountability and healing. They offer incentives to change for the better. They are not just about law. Properly done, they can offer so much help to victims of crime, to their families and to willing offenders. They can better justice for all parties. However, among adults, they have yet to be fully tested in an imaginative way in New Zealand.

The original government pilot processes in the 1990s, while interesting, were strangled to a large degree by red tape. The legislated system currently operating faces similar problems. It is vastly under-resourced and over-bureaucratized. Is it any wonder that so few take part and delays in the process are prevalent?

Prisons victimise the poor and indigenous, do not provide proper justice and offend against the common good. On a global scale, according to Pope John Paul II (1988), prisons have become ‘structures of sin.’ Māori and Pacifica traditions, Christian teaching and the Sacred Scriptures, all offer constructive insights, values and guidelines for conducting more just and fairer restorative processes to help deal with most criminal offending. We ignore this wisdom at our peril.

A Political Rethink

Is an across-party political rethink of RJ necessary? Compelling evidence would suggest so. Only when we properly develop restorative justice processes on a wider scale, properly resourced, publicly funded, and using well trained facilitators at community level, will we seriously tackle crime and its causes, and offer real hope to victims and offenders alike.

The current RJ system is being killed by 1000 cuts! It has been bureaucratized. It lacks vision and freedom to be creative. It has lost sight of the focus of what ‘true justice’ tries to deliver. It is being badly short-changed through a lack of resources, especially trained facilitators. It has clogged up the courts to the point where it almost begs the question: has RJ been structured to eventually fail? There are no prospective government-sanctioned restorative pilot processes for post-sentence and post-release. We need to be more imaginative.

Of course, there is a small percentage of offenders for whom RJ is not appropriate initially, who need to be kept out of circulation for the safety of the community. They are too dangerous to let loose. In NZ they probably number a thousand or two. But not 9500-plus. As for most of the rest, do we really want to continue to create so many criminally ‘up-skilled’ graduates from our prisons? For that is what we currently do.

The 2015 law change, which requires all cases

where there is a guilty plea and which have an identifiable victim to be referred to an RJ conference, is clearly not working. The eight-week remand period is a major problem. In truth, it is unworkable. Restorative Justice was never meant to be a compulsory process. Many victims and offenders simply do not want to participate in such a meeting. Compulsory attendance guarantees a very high failure rate. The courts are clogged as a result. RJ is copping the blame, leading to the whole RJ philosophy and practice being unjustly discredited and undermined.

A Parallel RJ System

Restorative justice needs to be separated out from the retributive system, so it can live and breathe on its own. Like the specialized drug and alcohol courts (AODT) and other parallel systems, a restorative justice adult system could have its own protocols and kaupapa which offenders and victims could opt to be part of, provided they meet basic criteria.

In NZ, two trial alcohol and drug courts over six years have saved taxpayers \$28.7m prison costs. In addition to the healing that has occurred, they have reduced recidivism dramatically among offenders and will have obviously produced healthier outcomes for their families (*Newsroom*, 12 October 2018).

In a parallel restorative justice adult system, either victims or offenders could apply. Hopefully both. Offenders must engage openly and honestly, accept responsibility for their actions, and commit to implement agreed outcomes.

Victims would find understanding, acceptance, a chance to speak to the issues, and hopefully find some healing and closure. This would bring them into a central role in the process. This is true justice in action. The process could apply pre-sentence as well as post.

It is the community's role to create the conditions most favourable to the restoration of both offender and

victim. Restorative justice has the potential to aid the healing process by providing trained facilitators, recorders, venues, support personnel, judges and the like.

Such a system expanded and fully resourced would also provide real incentives for offenders who would be held much more accountable on a person-to-person basis. A process like this would bring us much closer to the teachings of Christ.

A stand-alone criminal justice centre could be purpose-built where courts could sit as well as restorative and panel processes and could deal with conferences that required a quick turnaround. Marae could be better funded to explore restorative processes in a tikanga setting.

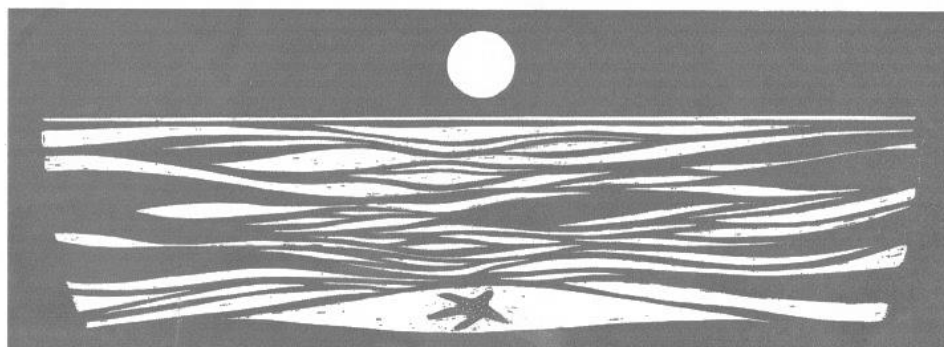
Conclusion

Overseas, evidence clearly shows that by using RJ processes, crime can be substantially reduced, more victims healed, and more offenders held accountable. Such expansion in NZ would keep many out of prison, saving substantial taxpayer money. Many families would not be broken up, fewer children left without a parent.

There is a strong case for creating a parallel RJ court system for adults. Because of our size and relative homogenous nature, New Zealand could lead the world with such adult RJ processes as we once did with juvenile justice. Other countries look to us as pioneers in this area. It is time we led again.

Submission to Te Uepu Hapai i te Ora – the Government's Justice Review, November 2018. Jim Considine was a prison chaplain for 23 years, the founding national coordinator of the Restorative Justice Network, and the author/co-editor of three books and many internationally published articles on restorative justice, prisons and spirituality..

<h2 style="margin: 0;">CW Website</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Leading articles from the first 23 years of <i>The Common Good</i> Alternative funerals Restorative Justice Other theological issues www.catholicworker.org.nz</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">FUNERAL CHOICE</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">A Catholic Worker Project</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Cheaper alternatives to consumer funerals</p> <p style="margin: 0;">www.funeralchoice.co.nz</p>
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Melrud Craighead

8th National CW hui – Otaki

Our 8th national hui took place at the CW farm in Otaki, 21-24 February 2019, attended by about 40 adults and 20 children. It was a wonderful gathering held in warm but overcast and sometimes drizzly conditions. It was mostly conducted in the barn which had been decked out with a banner for the occasion to celebrate our 30th Catholic Worker birthday. Many of those present had not even been born when we started in 1989! That is a very good sign.

From the extremes, Francis Simmonds, Jim Consedine and Tony Suddaby came up from Christchurch and the Catherine and Joseph Land whanau plus came in a deluge from the Far North. We all squeezed into the middle to celebrate one another's lives and commitment to the CW vision.

After introductions on Thursday night, we presented regional group reports from Whirinaki, Palmerston North, Otaki, Wellington and Christchurch and shared some reflection and discussion. On Friday morning, Jim presented a paper on 'Holistic Spirituality – seven items for the backpack' and Francis, Tony and Danielle gave an excellent session on hospitality.

After a lunch of fantastic farm-grown organic food, prepared lovingly by Shelley Leason and a team of top-notch chefs and their aides-de-camp, Adi and Sarah and the younger ones talked up direct action. Then local Archdiocesan Vicar-General Gerard Burns presided over a session on 'Whither the Church?', generously attempting to answer some impossible questions, and led our Eucharist in the afternoon. Later, we slogged through the mud to the new accommodation block for the homeless, which Jim blessed with water from the farm well.

Saturday followed a similar pattern. Ron Finlay, our kaumatua, gave a very moving talk about foster care and families based on his own experience.. The younger CWs took a session about them taking responsibility for the future direction of the CW, aided by Catherine and Joseph Land, who supported that kaupapa. Then Pania Newton shared her peoples' struggle at Ihumatao, South Auckland, a sacred piece of land for her people, which Fletchers Construction have 'bought' and want to develop. Pania and her whanau have moved onto the land and begun a three-year occupation that continues today. They have established a kaitiaki village of resistance that stands in defiance of the development plans.

In the evening, we had a celebration of our 30th CW birthday at which early CWs Tony, Francis and Jim spoke, sharing stories of our origins and some of our early history. That led to a cake being cut and banner unfolded to honour the occasion. And suddenly we were eating again, before the barn dance, held to conclude the day.

We concluded our hui with a wonderful Eucharist on Sunday attended by local Marist priests Phil Cody, Dave Gledhill and Peter Healy. In addition, retired Bishop Owen Dolan, who, at 90 years of age, drove down from Palmerston North, an hour's drive away, to celebrate with us for the occasion. We did so appreciate him making the

effort. He has been a welcome support for many years, and, because of his heart for justice, he has a knack of understanding where people are coming from and what they are on about. His missionary days in Latin America have stood him in good stead! *Ad multos annos*, Bishop Owen!



Tony Suddaby, Jim Consedine and Francis Simmonds cut the CW birthday cake.

hui '19

walking this desolate beach
soaking up soft drizzle
relishing the Cosmic Presence
Otaki, an hour post-hui
celebrating our 30th year
song, dance, liturgy

sharing home-spun veggies
curry to die for
with grannies and elders
gentle dads and mums
their littlies, dozens of them
it takes a village

the fruit ripening
young people excited
building bridges, city rural
korero aplenty, joy, laughter
the gospel as fresh
as lettuce after a shower

in the rain
celebrating the Reign

—Jim Consedine

Golden ordination celebration - The CW community joined with more than 200 other people on the weekend 29-30 June to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Fr Jim Consedine's ordination to the priesthood. Jim helped found the CW 30 years ago in Christchurch and has spent much of his time working with the poor and disadvantaged through his parish work, social justice action, prison chaplaincy and CW witness. A driving force behind the nation's acceptance of restorative justice as an alternative to 'retributive' justice, he has authored three books on spirituality and restorative justice. He celebrated his 50th anniversary by releasing his first book of poetry, *Syrian Boy and other poems* (reviewed p11).

At the special thanksgiving Mass and lunch, in response to the many toasts, Jim took the opportunity of acknowledging the social prophets who attended including Kate Dewes, Rob Green, John Minto, Bronwyn Summers, Adi Leason, Mary Kamo, Murray Horton, Liz Remmersvaal, Mary Wood RSM, Cathy Harrison, Susan Kooy, Sue McNabb, Rev Brian Turner, Michael Malloch, Patrick O'Connor, Anne McCormack and his own brother Robert.

He also honoured the community development prophets, Sisters of Mercy – Helen Goggin, Marie McCrea and the late Pauline O'Regan, Kevin Burns, Bryan Parish and Pat Crawford and their parish communities of Burwood, New Brighton and Aranui. As he wryly pointed out, 'If prophets and social activists with a heart for justice and development can't be acknowledged and honoured here, they won't be anywhere!'

—Tony Suddeby/Francis Simmonds

Dire water warning – The Canterbury Medical Officer of Health, Dr Alistair Humphrey, has issued a stark warning about the levels of nitrates infiltrating from dairy farms into the world-renowned drinking water under Canterbury. Christchurch's alpine-fed, aquifer-purified water system is unique in New Zealand and there are few systems like it in the world, but intensified dairying on the Canterbury plains has placed it under threat from nitrate pollution. The region already has 1.3 million dairy cattle grazing the Canterbury plains. 'Nitrogen is applied to improve poor quality soils. Cows excrete nitrogen onto the paddock and into our aquifers. Pollution could render it undrinkable in 100 years,' he warned. A Danish study found a link between nitrates in drinking water and bowel cancer. 'The study showed... that nitrates in drinking water are a considerable contributor to this debilitating and deadly disease.'

—The Press, 24 June 2019

New Zealand prison population rise forecast — New family violence laws, more serious crimes and uncertainty around police numbers are set to increase the prison population over the next decade, according to projections by the Ministry of Justice. Despite

a recent decline in prison numbers to a recent low of 9600 last year, numbers are expected to rise to past 11 000 in the foreseeable future as new family violence laws take effect.

—The Press, 18 May 2019

NZ has some of the highest reported rates of family violence in the developed world. Experts say a warped sense of masculinity is partly to blame. Between January 2004 and March 2019, 1068 men, women and children were killed according to *The Homicide Report*. Almost 400 cases or 35% involved family violence. Half of all homicide victims (an average of nine a year), were killed by a male partner or ex-partner. With 70 people killed each year, NZ's homicide rate of 1.6 per 100,000 is below the OECD average of 3.6 per 100,000. We consistently outrank other developed countries for rates of family violence.

—The Press, 15 May 2019

The lies of Donald Trump - CNN, a trustworthy mainstream news organization says this: 'In his first 869 days as president, Donald Trump said 10,796 things that were either misleading or outright false, according to *The Washington Post's* Fact Checker. Do the math and you get this: The President of the United States is saying 12 untrue things a day.'

Lying, spreading false information, making propaganda, writing fake news stories and manipulation of the media is so detrimental to a healthy society free from fear and oppression. When the freedom of the media and the truth is stifled and covered up, the way is open for runaway skulduggery, fascism, corruption and dictatorship. Clever politicians lie carefully, craftily and believably to gain people's trust, support, and votes. Others don't care and lie continually thinking that if they do it frequently enough, the tsunami of lies will be believed.

—Report from Fr Shay Cullen, Catholic missionary, the Philippines

Since 1970, more Americans have been killed by guns than Americans have been killed in all of the wars in all of the history of our country since 1776. That's an incredible number. More people in the USA, innocent people, have been killed by guns than all of those who have died in their wars since 1776. If we really listen to the Scriptures, God's word, to what Jesus tells us about listening to him and following him, perhaps we will get the determination to demand changes in public policies. Look how quickly in New Zealand the prime minister there, in less than a month, changed their laws to make it more difficult to get guns because they knew that was the source of the problem. Why don't we?

—Homily – Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Detroit, 4th Sunday of Easter

Whither Rocket Lab?

Jim Consedine

Auckland-based Rocket Lab has executed its first launch of the year from New Zealand sending an experimental satellite into orbit for the Pentagon's Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

The company's Electron launch vehicle lifted off from Mahia Peninsula on 28 March. About 50 minutes after launch, the Electron kick stage successfully deployed DARPA's satellite into a 264-mile-high orbit. The 330-pound satellite is designed to unfurl a 7-foot-wide antenna to demonstrate how large structures can be packed within small satellite-size packages.

Aerospace global transnational Northrup Grumman was the satellite's prime constructor, MMA design built the antenna, Trident Systems provided the software-defined radio and Blue Canyon Technologies, based in Boulder, Colorado, provided the spacecraft bus.

Investment partners in Rocket Lab includes military and aerospace giant Lockheed Martin, Bessemer Venture Partners (BVP) and shareholder Sir Stephen Tindall, and Silicon Valley investor Khosla Ventures. The series B funding round also included ACC, which has an ethical investment policy.

According to Lockheed Martin's chief scientist, Ned Allen, 'Rocket Lab's work could have application in a number of aerospace domains, and we look forward to working with them to complement our overall efforts in small-lift capabilities and hypersonic (Mach 5 and above) flight technologies.'

Rocket Lab was formed in 2007, and in 2009 launched New Zealand's first rocket, Atea 1, from Sir Michael Fay's property on Mercury Island. That launch attracted the attention of Lockheed Martin, US defence agency DARPA and Silicon Valley venture capitalist, Vinod Khlosa. According to Crunch Base, Khlosa has raised \$US2.8 billion and made 329 investments.

Speaking to the *New Zealand Herald*, after this recent launch, Rocket Lab CEO Peter Beck acknowledged that the antenna had a military communication application, but said that 'there is equal amount of interest in it being used for commercial purposes as well'.

Antenna aside, the Ministerial briefing for the launch – provided under the Official Information Act in a redacted and summarised form – states another purpose: 'For the (US Department of Defence) to test its ability to rapidly develop and launch a spacecraft.'

This is revealing. Space infrastructure is critical to military operations on the ground, but the US military considers this infrastructure vulnerable in an increasingly contested space environment. In response, US military leaders have called for more rapid launch capabilities so that disabled space assets can be swiftly replaced during conflict. Through this latest launch, Rocket Lab has shown the US military that it can provide this capability.

In reality, Rocket Lab is a privately owned American facility which spies on New Zealand soil and is

a corporate contractor to the US military and its intelligence empire. It is the New Zealand subsidiary of a giant American corporation.

Our mandate

Peacemaking was a mandate given us by the nonviolent Jesus and sits at the heart of our lives as Christians. It should form an essential part of our spiritual DNA. This dimension of NZ life was recently reinforced by the national grief and outrage expressed over the mosque shootings in Christchurch. It lies at the heart of our national identity as an independent nuclear-free country.

As the nation grieved, the Muslim community gave us a heartfelt lesson in forgiveness, mercy, openness and compassion. These are all aspects of nonviolence and peace and help reinforce our newfound international status as a peace-loving country.

New Zealand is treading on very dangerous grounds in allowing the US Military to use NZ resources and territory for its military space programme. How aware is the NZ Government of this application? Or are we being conned again by big players that this is evidence of a great entrepreneurial leap forward for our little nation?

Let us not let Rocket Lab, through its very professional PR machine, undermine this through further expansion.

Christchurch
NZ

26 May 2019

Dear Prime Minister,

I am distressed to see that the NZDF is to purchase robots to be used for military purposes from an Israeli company based in Tel Aviv. I campaigned the 1970s to dismantle apartheid by economic sanctions on the South African regime by squeezing its economy. It proved to be a very successful tool in the fight against apartheid.

Israel has an ideology not dissimilar to that of the apartheid regime, with occupied Palestine being the victims of its military. Gaza is a virtual prison – with more than 1 million people trapped and hopeless. Why are we economically supporting this racist regime through defence contracts?

Please, instruct the NZDF to find its robots somewhere else.

Yours faithfully,

Rev. Jim Consedine

Book Review

Syrian Boy and other poems – Jim Consedine, Ploughshares Publications, PO Box 33135, Christchurch 8244. Price \$20 (includes postage). Available from the publisher. Reviewer: Elizabeth Gordon.

In 1981, when people were invited to write about their experiences of the Springbok tour, what was unexpected was that a number of contributions were written as poems. It was as if the depth of feeling could not be expressed by prose.

Jim Consedine says he originally started writing poetry as a therapeutic outlet. In this small book, his poems have become the vehicle for his observations, and for his feelings and spiritual insights.

Syrian Boy and other poems is named for and dedicated to the young refugee child Aylan Kurdi, who in 2015 we saw in terrible photos being carried lifeless out of the water, drowned on the shores of the Mediterranean.

*A rag doll, red t-shirt, blue pants
his tiny body a universal symbol
innocence – and evil*

This is a book of 50 poems, released to celebrate Jim's 50 years of Catholic priesthood. Though the book is divided into four sections - social justice, spiritual, personal and nature - all form part of 'a single *korowai*, an overall cloak of spirituality'. Among many interconnected themes, we are introduced to a street beggar, a single dahlia lying on the ground, a moth trapped in a bowl. Among other topics, he shares insights into poverty, war, clericalism, capitalism, racism and the Canterbury earthquakes. We are also able to share some personal family experiences and the more public horror of the massacres at the Christchurch mosques.

As Jim says in his introduction, 'I am privileged to experience the Divine all around me in everyday life.' This is the connecting thread in these poems. His simple images carry deeper meanings and his everyday language makes them easily accessible. This is a stimulating first book of his poetry.

Letters

Glynn County Detention Center,
100 Sulphur Springs Road,
Brunswick, GA

Dear Padre Jim and Barbara Corcoran,

Greetings to *The Common Good* staff and Catholic Workers. May the peace of Jesus who is our Resurrection and our Life be with you and with all for whom you care and serve and include in such peace. I hope you are all very well, thriving. In any event, I pray so joining my prayers with thine, gladly, gratefully.

The Common Good newsletter made it into the jail. The bosses allow it provided no personal messages are in it or attached. And I am so appreciative. Good topics and themes. Still grateful from hearing from you decades ago on restorative justice. Your CG Spring '18 edition on 'usury' matched a recent analysis of Sunday's *New York Times* on predatory lending and Trump's appointment of the new attorney-general, William Barr - a fox to guard the hen house! I enjoyed John Dear's article on 'the meek, the nonviolent will inherit the earth.' I just wrote to him to tell him so. May God bless you all,

In solidarity with Christ the Peacemaker,

Stephen Kelly SJ

Jesuit priest Steven Kelly SJ is one of the seven Kings Bay Ploughshares witnesses who attempted to nonviolently disarm a nuclear submarine at Kings Bay nuclear base in Georgia. He has been in custody for 18 months awaiting trial under the tightest security. His government believes nonviolence is the greatest security threat it faces!!

We sent cards...

A tragic, ludicrous picture sits on my desk in front of me. The CW in Christchurch recently sent individually addressed plain (no envelope) post-cards to the three imprisoned Kings Bay Ploughshares remandees, Elizabeth McAllister (79), Mark Colville (56) and Jesuit priest Stephen Kelly SJ (69). (Steve got our *Common Good* apparently!) Each contained simple greetings and salutations as content. The writing constituted about five handwritten lines followed by a signature. Pretty heavy stuff!!

These were sent from our kitchen table here in Christchurch via the post box outside the local corner dairy, flew halfway around the world, landed on the reception desk at Glynn County Detention Centre in Brunswick, in the State of Georgia, USA, less than 100 metres from where the three prisoners were being held. The cards were rejected by the authorities as containing 'unauthorized content', and then flown three thousand miles back to our kitchen table – where they still lie! They have done a 'round-the-world' trip for NZ\$3!

These three active peace-loving mature Christians, showing through their nonviolent patriotism 'love thy neighbour' by rejecting nuclear weapons as a means of defence, while not yet convicted of any crime, are being treated in prison as hardened criminals, so threatened are the authorities by their peaceful nonviolent protest.

This rejection of simple postcards sent by friends offering greetings and telling them they were being prayed for, is symptomatic of much of what has gone wrong in America. It seems even postcards can be a threat to the State and the prison-industrial complex!

—Jim Consedine

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The Common Good

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



Revolutionary change does not come as one cataclysmic moment...but as an endless succession of surprises, moving zigzag toward a more decent society. We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.

Peace prophet, Howard Zinn, 1968