



Launch Out Letter (LOL)

March 2020

Building Theological Muscles

by MARGARET BEARSLEY
Launch Out Candidate

Theological reflection is like an exercise regime; it's theological 'body-building'. To grow those 'muscles' the exercise must be done. The muscles don't just grow by themselves, and we aren't born with an innate 'muscular' form. It can be painful, as old ways of thinking are torn down, but it can lead to ecstasy, as we develop our understanding of the grandeur and the weakness of God.

Although I haven't the slightest interest in body building, the metaphor came to mind, I think, because of the way people with beautiful bodies want and need to be looked at by others. There may be a certain amount of vanity in that. But like Jeremiah, we who study to deepen our knowledge of God have a fire that burns inside us, and we must share our discoveries of God in some way. We want and need people to look at what we see.

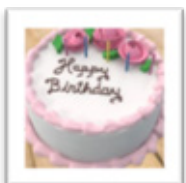
As the Spiritual Advisor for the Wellington Area Council of St Vinnies, I have the perfect outlet for this. The main part of my role is to provide a reflection each month for the Council meeting. I regularly delve into my growing personal library of theology and biblical study books, and then I write.

I've discovered that the best way to inspire others is to be inspired oneself, and so I satisfy my own theological and scriptural desires, and then share my learning with the Council. Which usually works very well Except for the time it spectacularly didn't, resulting in fairly angry denials of my proposal, and a bit of a bruised ego.

I had proposed that the Scriptures are ancient writings that should be read with the aid of sound expert commentary, and that it is important to avoid fundamentalism, at one extreme, and classical liberal philosophical interpretations at the other. Otherwise, we will be led, respectively, to a rigid, immature understanding of God, or to an ego-centric 'theology' of self-absorption and ultimately to emptiness. Some of the Council members retorted that it's the academics who are self-absorbed, and that everyone is perfectly capable of reading and understanding the Scriptures for themselves, thank you very much!

What did I learn from my spectacular fail? I'm just as vain as a body-builder—I love the 'oohs and aahs' of a delighted audience, and it's painful to get 'boos and tisks'. But also that I must balance the 'how to inspire others' formula with a recognition of their needs and interests: people who are at the coal-face of dealing with the poor and disadvantaged don't really care about the arguments of high academia. They do care very much about being the hands and heart of Jesus in the world.

My task as Spiritual Adviser means I had to get over myself and keep going. And in any event, a fire burns in my bones and I simply must share my theological reflections with others.



Happy Birthday!

We don't have a Launch Out Candidate celebrating a birthday in March, but I missed greeting *Bernadette Patelesio* who celebrated her birthday last 26 February.

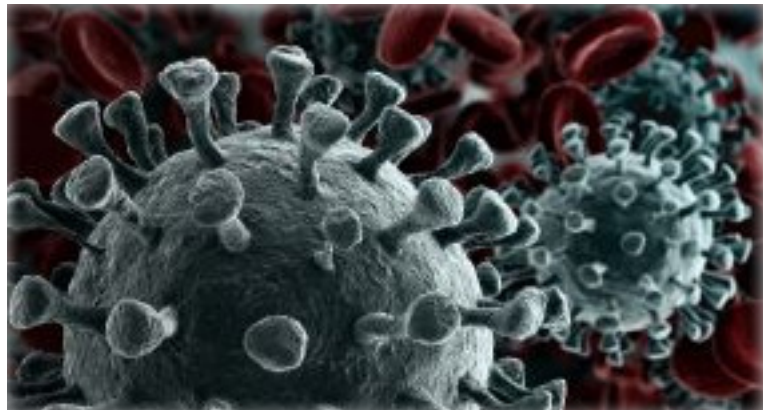
Updates

- I assume you are starting your studies, please email me the courses you are enrolled for this year
- Thank you for those who have met with their mentors and spiritual directors, if you haven't please do so as soon as you can
- Mission Expo 2020 at Viard College on 14 March. Please come and promote Launch Out.
- We thank the LPLs and Parish Priests who met with us to discuss this year's Pastoral Projects. Below is the profile for our Pastoral Projects 2020

PARISH	LPL & PARISH PRIEST	LO CANDIDATE	MENTOR
Our Lady of Hope Parish	Fr. Rico de la Torre	Telesia Alaimoana	Susan Apathy
Holy Trinity Parish	Fr. Ephrem Tigga	Margaret Bearsley	Susan Apathy
Holy Trinity Parish	Fr. Ephrem Tigga	Patricia Lynch	Cecily McNeill
St. Theresa's Plimmerton	Fr. Maurice Carmody	Jude McKee	Sr Mary Jackson Kay, rc
Wellington South Parish	Joe Green & Fr Doug Shepherd	Mely Kartawidjaya	Sr Sue Cosgrove, DOLC
Te Wairua Tapu Parish	Fr Marlon Maylon, SVD	Lisa Beech	Mary Margaret Schuck
Te Wairua Tapu Parish	Fr Marlon Maylon, SVD	Bernadette Patelesio	Bridget Taumoepeau
Te Whetu o Te Moana- Star of the Sea Parish	Fr Mathias Giltus (to be arranged when he arrives)	Vicky Raw	Kevin Crighton

Signs of the Times

In view of your Pastoral Projects it would be good to underpin certain concerns that have recently emerged or have escalated to emergency levels that we need to consider in our ministries immediately. This calls for a shift in the way we do our Pastoral Projects. Admittedly, we are still wobbling but there's no time for hesitation. We need to act SOON !



CORONA VIRUS- Look into the possibility of cancellation and if it pushes through what can you do to keep your participants and yourself safe? Do you have access to toilets with soap? Hand sanitizer (if there are any available?) How much touching or contact will your activity require?



CLIMATE CHANGE—What is the impact of your projects to the environment? How much rubbish will your project create? What type of rubbish? And how much carbon footprint will it cost when people have to attend your activities? Read the article of Catherine Gibbs to know more about this.

Eco friendly steps for pastoral projects

by CATHERINE GIBBS

LO Mentor/Supporter/Laudato Si' Advocate,
Administrator, National Liturgy Office. Lecturer, Te Kupenga

Bringing people physically together such as a Parish meeting face to face/gatherings

Appliances are energy efficient.

Cooking facilities on hand, including reusable utensils, cups, glasses and plates to avoid waste from bought.

Coffee, tea, sugar and cocoa are all Fair-Trade items

There are big bins for separating paper, plastic and glass recycling

Food scraps are collected in a compost or bokashi bin or for the worm farm (no meat/dairy)

Dishwashing supplies and soap are non-toxic and cleaning products are non-toxic

Encourage people to carpool, cycle or use public transport.

Natural light whenever possible. Eco friendly light bulbs.

Bringing people together electronically

Do the people meeting need to be physically present in the room?

If not organise a video conference. Be clear with those attending about timing and expectations.

Picking a venue

Does the venue operate an environmentally sustainable policy?

Is the venue conveniently located for public transport? Can you provide that information for attendees?

Is the venue accessible for disabled people?

Are there childcare facilities?

Reduce waste

Use glasses, cutlery and crockery for supper. These are reusable. Avoid plastic.

Avoid food wrapped in individual wrappers.

Use cloth wraps instead of plastic film. Take containers with lids for leftovers.

Only provide handouts on request.

Try to limit handouts and if you do need to use them, make sure they're printed double side.

If using name tags make sure they are re-usable. Ask participants to return any plastic holders as they leave.

If providing 'freebies' offer people sustainable and reusable ones.

If offering a koha consider an eco-conversion mind-set and give away eco friendly things such as plants, seeds, plant vouchers, an 'experience' rather than just 'stuff'. If wine is appropriate then organically grown wine is best. (Easy to locate in supermarkets as they usually have a green label by the price ticket.)

Printed materials

How to make sure those essential printed materials have as little environmental impact as possible?

All printed materials on recycled or naturally derived materials. Paper and card should be 100% post consumer recycled.

Designs should aim to conserve paper resources, by keeping them lightweight, double sided printing and minimising offcuts.

Include the enviro info messaging on the materials to manage this idea.

Carbon Offsetting

Decorations for the space/ for the liturgy...

Avoid shopping for decorations as most are not recyclable. Consider natural materials such as wood, plants, bamboo, cloths, beeswax candles etc. Keeping things simple sends a strong message about caring for the earth and caring for the poor.

SUMMARY

Water – how might we save water?

Plastic – how might we consciously remove plastic as much as possible?

Travel – how might we limit our carbon footprint to attend an event?

Shopping – Is this necessary or can we manage fine without something/s??

Food and drink – did we take our own bags for the fruit and vegies? Did we take our own containers for deli food? Did I choose glass bottles over plastic? Were the goods like serviettes eco friendly?

Waste – what plans have we made about the leftovers?



Theological Reflection and Christian Leadership

by MAYA BERNARDO
Formator and Manager, Launch Out Programme

Note: This is a condensed version of a paper on the nexus of 'theological reflection and critical thinking', for a paper I am doing for University of Otago.

The concept of 'Christian Leadership' assumes that its source, nature and outcomes are essentially theological. Thus, theological reflection (TR) is inherently necessary for any person who takes on leadership in the church, whether clergy or lay leaders. In fact, any formation for leadership within church includes learning how to do theological reflection.

Good TR is a product of good theology. What that means is subject to debate but what is critical to note here is the importance of study. Hence, here is where your Theological Formation from your academic studies are necessary, along with Spiritual Formation which you get from spiritual direction and the prayer days. The public and outward fruits of your theological reflection translates into your Pastoral Formation.

Theology is commonly defined in Religious Education as "faith seeking understanding" taking its cue from St. Anselm (d.1109). As a journey of seeking, doing theology is a reflective exercise. What is then theological reflection? Theologians have varied definitions, but they mostly converge to bring into dialogue scripture, religious tradition and experience, through a systematic and prayerful process. The purpose of theological reflection is to discover the presence of God and how the awareness of this presence leads to the discovery of what God is inviting us (or the people) to do.

In terms of practice, we do know that one of the key responsibilities LPLs do is to write the reflection for the Sunday mass at the Parish bulletin, at times deliver the homily and lead reflection for various types of liturgies. All these public roles where the LPLs' insights about theology, spirituality, Church teachings and scriptures are used to illuminate people's awareness of God's presence and movement in their lives. Hence, TR is integral in your role not just as LPLs but as lay ministers.

We also need to distinguish written work presented as TR as good journalistic writing or an impressive public presentation. The evidence most of the time is not obvious but we can pick up, for example from a homily, regardless of the eloquence (or lack thereof) of the preacher, if what is said is a properly crafted speech or an echoing to what was heard in the intimacy of prayer.

I believe that the evidence of TR is not just what is written or publicly shared. Its fruits can be gleaned more prominently in our lives and the unseen ministries we do---private conversations, a loving presence, and a listening ear.

Within the formation of a Christian Leader, TR serves to clarify and deepen *Ministerial Identity*. Its secular equivalent is professional identity, a self-concept based on our qualifications, the jobs we held and the competencies and reputation we developed along the way that define what it is we can competitively offer in the job market. However, the prophetic nature of the Christian Leadership may involve the same elements in professional identity, but these are viewed from the lens of mission and calling—what is God calling you to be? This is where your theology, spirituality and ministry intersect. The integration of these elements' melds in the process of theological reflection.

I will try to unpack some of the concepts I have raised in this article in succeeding LOL issues. In 09 August we will be learning more how to do theological reflection through Anne Powell, rc. You can also look into reading books on how to go about it. A recommended book is "The Art of Theological Reflection" by Killen and de Beer (1994) and from a Kiwi theologian standpoint its "Doing Theology" by Neil Darragh which you can download for free from Accent Publications.

Leading Children's Liturgy

by JUDE MCKEE
Launch Out Candidate

A few weeks ago I attended the Children's Liturgy seminar workshop led by Fr Patrick Bridgman, Michael Mangan and Fr James Lyons last 11 February at Sts Peter & Paul Parish in Lower Hutt. I was with Ange Cole, the DRS at St Theresa's Catholic School Plimmerton. Ange and I had been discussing the Children's Weekly Liturgy held at St Theresa's Catholic Church for one class from the school – on a Thursday morning – each week.

Ange and I, along with our Parish Priest, Fr Maurice Carmody, are of a strong mind that it is important we can offer something specifically for the children each week. The teachers from the school, and their principal, are most supportive. This year we needed to find a new leader for these liturgies.

The workshop we attended could not have fallen at a better time for us. Not only had I just committed myself to stepping into the role of leading these special liturgies, but my first Liturgy, with 5- & 6-year olds, was to take place just 2 days later.

To add to the celebration Michael Mangan was “in the house”, and we, along with the children, raised the roof with our singing and actions to the music.

What I have been able to share, and what I have experienced thus far with the special children's liturgies at St Theresa's, have all come directly from the workshop. There have been no surprises – only affirmations that what I heard is true!

- Children love catchy songs with choruses
- Children love doing actions to songs
- There are bibles that are written in easy language for children to understand – use one of these versions
- Choose songs that fit with the theme of the day, to make the message of the Gospel more understandable
- If you ask questions – expect the unexpected!
- Have a liturgy prepared for the age group attending – nothing is too simple in God's eyes!
- Keep the liturgy moving along by swapping prayer and song to keep children interested

Some personal observations I have are

- Try and unpack a piece of the Gospel by using an example that the children can relate to.
- Use visuals and imageries and not just text in your song sheets
- Remember that not all of the children are Baptised – so make everyone feel welcome and special
- Close with a personal final prayer to thank God for the gift of prayer and gathering

Tackle children's liturgy! They're great!



Priesthood and Leadership in the Catholic Church--What Francis really said !

by JOE GREEN

Lay Pastoral Leader, Wellington South Parish

On 12 February 2020 Pope Francis released *Querida Amazonia* – his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation following the Synod on the Amazon, held during 2019. Rich in ecological and sociological material, much of it drawing on *Laudato Si*, it is how Francis addresses the shortage of priests that has drawn much media attention. In addressing the shortage of priests Francis does not take the simplistic path of ‘ordain more priests’, ‘ordain married men to the priesthood’, or ‘ordain more deacons, including female deacons’. Instead he espouses a far more dynamic approach that draws on scripture, Vatican II and a growing body of theology on the priesthood. It is this last aspect that form part of the ‘larger concerns’ (QA, #2) that Francis has reflected on. In what follows I explore what this might mean.

In his book *The Priesthood of the Faithful – key to a living church*, Dominican priest Paul Philibert (2005) argues that ‘if we call believers “Christians” by virtue of their baptismal anointing by the Holy Spirit, so we call all the baptized “priests” because, by virtue of that same anointing, they are all members of the only priesthood there is – the priesthood of Jesus Christ’ (p. 54). While Catholic discourse has come to apply the words ‘other Christs’ to the ordained, this is not how St Paul used the term – he assigned it to all the baptized (Philibert, p. 18).

Philibert, citing the great theologian Yves Congar points out that the clergy ‘could not be ordained if they had not been previously baptised. The most fundamental ecclesiological reality is the unity of the baptized in the one Body of Christ’ (p. 19). Congar argues that ‘the clergy need to be defined in relation to the laity, who are quite simply the people of God animated by the Spirit’. Philibert suggests that ‘for everyone’s sake, it will be important for bishops and priests to internalize clearly that they are not a second “People” apart from the People of God’ (ibid). Ordained priests are not the only priests in the church (p. 75).

In terms of *Querida Amazonia* the media focus, and hierarchal church comment has been on the point that Pope Francis did not directly approve the ordaining of married men to the priesthood. Rather, what Pope Francis did was make a positive statement in line with the theology of priesthood espoused by St Paul, Vatican II, and theologians such as Yves Congar and Paul Philibert.

In short, Francis makes a statement challenging us to draw away from clericalism: from the hierarchical, patriarchal, male dominated model of priesthood that so endures.

The perpetuation of that clerical model almost totally excludes laity, and particularly women from ecclesial leadership. So what did Francis really say in *Querida Amazonia*?

Firstly, his comments on meeting the pastoral needs of the Amazon are set firmly within the ecological, sociological and cultural context of the Amazon (#85). But much can be applied to us (#2).

Noting the importance of the Eucharist, Francis posits it is important ‘to determine what is specific to a priest, what can be delegated’.



Continuation on Priesthood and Leadership...by Joe Green

In short, everything other than these can be done most adequately by well-formed lay men and women. What are those roles that can only be done by the ordained? Philibert (p. 71) lists them: Eucharist, confirmation, penance, anointing and holy orders.

Francis (#88) identifies Eucharist and penance as being 'at the heart of the priest's exclusive identity'. 'The laity can proclaim God's word, teach, organize communities, celebrate certain sacraments, seek different ways to express popular devotion and develop the multitude of gifts that the Spirit pour out in their midst' (#89). At the same time Francis suggests that to focus on ordaining more priests would be 'a very narrow aim' (#93). Francis thinks we need to 'strive to awaken new life in communities' (ibid). He envisages this new life as coming out of 'various kinds of lay service that call for a process of education – biblical, doctrinal, spiritual and practical – and a variety of programmes for ongoing formation' (#93).

Francis calls on the church 'to be open to the Spirit's boldness, to trust in, and concretely permit, the growth of a specific ecclesial culture that is distinctly lay' (#94). In addressing the strength and gifts of women Francis specifically challenges that in a lay led Church, which includes women, leadership would 'entail stability, public recognition and a commission from the bishop' (#103).

Querida Amazonia is a challenge to whole church, and what Francis proposes resonates with many. It is indeed what must underpin the development of leadership in the Catholic Church into the 21st Century.

Addendum: a note about the development of lay leadership in the Archdiocese of Wellington.

The Archdiocese of Wellington has implemented that which Pope Francis outlines in Querida Amazonia.

Lay Pastoral Leaders are qualified lay people who have been called and formed for Lay Pastoral Leadership Ministry, once they have completed the academic, spiritual and pastoral formation components of the Archdiocesan Launch Out programme (or its equivalent), they may then be endorsed by Cardinal John Dew, after which they can apply for appointment to a parish.

A Lay Pastoral Leader becomes responsible, as part of a collaborative Pastoral Team, for the leadership of a parish. The Lay Pastoral Leader exercises those functions in a parish which would normally be the responsibility of a Parish Priest, with the exception of those acts which require an ordained priest. Cardinal John Dew is very clear that Lay Pastoral Leaders do not work for 'Father' but rather minister alongside him.

Seeing lay ministry as an expression of mission arising from baptism and History of Launch Out

1988 – Archdiocesan Synod

1998 – Archdiocesan-wide consultation

1998 – Archdiocesan Synod mandates introduction of Launch Out Formation Programme and Lay Pastoral Leaders

1999-2001 – Formation programme for Lay Pastoral Leaders established

2002 – Appointment of Launch Out Formator/Manager and acceptance of first candidates

2006 – First Lay Pastoral Leader appointed to a Parish within a Pastoral Area

2008 – Appointment of the first Launch Out graduates to Prison and Hospital Chaplaincies

“The laity can proclaim God's word, teach, organize communities, celebrate certain sacraments, seek different ways to express popular devotion and develop the multitude of gifts that the Spirit pour out in their midst” (#89)