



LAUNCH OUT LETTERS (LOL)

February 2021

When he had finished eating, he said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch". Luke 5: 4

Welcome to the first issue of LOL for 2021!

This year, the Candidates will be contributing two articles each. One will be a reflection on the Gospel of the last Sunday of the month, and the second article will tackle a particular topic of interest to them. I have also asked Bridget Taumoepeau to write up a series on Lay Pastoral Leadership. Her section will be succinct and more descriptive than theological. This is aimed at helping us build up our knowledge about Lay Leadership. We will also include a quiz and you can find the answers at the end of the newsletter.

For this issue we have Jude McKee sharing the "Wow" of the Transfiguration from Mk 9:2-10. Bridget started the Lay Leadership series by answering the question, "Who is a Lay Pastoral Leader?" Joe Green reflects on Pope Francis' Motu Proprio, on 'Spiritus Domini' which revises the provision from Canon Law, regarding access of women to the ministries of lector and acolyte. Finally, Lucienne Hensel shares her reflection on what a spirituality of embracing change means.

Many thanks to the contributors and I hope you all enjoy this month's issue.

Maya Bernardo
Launch Out Formator and Manager

THE WOW MOMENT: REFLECTING ON THE TRANSFIGURATION

By Jude McKee
Launch Out Candidate



Aoraki Mt Cook – caught in a moment in time. Creation on display and captured in this picture during one of my visits. God revealed in all His glory!

Have you ever experienced one of those moments when you are driving? One of those moments when you come around a corner and the vision before you just makes you say – often out loud – WOW! That is a moment of transfiguration. A moment in time for you when you see God in creation and the true wonder, the mystery of it. It hits you so profoundly that all your senses, at that moment in time, can hardly take in the beauty of it. This is a 'turning point' in your life. And there would be many other examples of such 'transfiguration' moments: the birth of a child and the many 'firsts' that parents experience, or seeing a young bride meeting her husband-to-be on their wedding day. These are moments we want to hold on to – we want to stay in that moment that emotionally 'wows' us!

When I spend time with young people preparing to proclaim the Word of the Lord during our Masses, I often suggest to them that they imagine the scene they are reading. Place themselves in it. Feel the heat, the dust. Notice what is around them. See the people, hear them. It is also good to know the events that led to the scripture passage they are reading. By doing this, their proclamation can bring the story of the Gospel to life. They would then find themselves reading slower and more passionately, because they are reading the words as if it were actually happening. Thus, in effect, leading the congregation to enter fully into the Gospel story.

Looking at the Gospel for the last Sunday of February, which is the Second Sunday of Lent, we are about to experience a WOW moment through the eyes of three of Jesus' disciples. Jesus takes Peter, James and

John to the top of a mountain and there they experience a sight that both makes them want to stay in the moment, but also a sight that terrifies them. What they have seen is the presence of Jesus alongside Moses and Elijah. Moses and Elijah are prophets from long ago. They are two of the most important prophets in the Bible. Moses was the giver of the Law, and Elijah was considered the greatest of the prophets. And here they are now before the disciples with Jesus. And Peter, as always, is the outspoken disciple once again. This time he is SO taken by what he is experiencing that he suggests they could stay in the moment forever – build tents – stay here longer. Keep this 'wow' moment alive! This revelation moment telling them who Jesus really is. God speaks on this mountain and His words are for each one of us – “This is my Son. Listen to Him”.

Jesus knows they cannot stay on this mountain. As in all our lives any transfiguration moment is just that. We have to return to the 'bottom of the mountain', return to our daily lives. But return to our daily lives with renewed faith in a God who loves us.

Enter this Gospel with imagination! See God revealed to you in your daily life. Be overwhelmed in that moment and “ ... listen to Him”.

WHO IS A LAY PASTORAL LEADER?

By Bridget Taumoepeau
Launch Out Mentor



*Lay Pastoral Leaders
Sharon Penny and Mika Teofilo*

During this year we will look at the unique vocation that is Lay Pastoral Leadership. We will consider some scriptural references; the historical aspects of laity within the Church; significant documents that relate to the laity; different models of lay leadership; some cultural examples; the current Pope's view and hopefully much more. All of you, as Launch Out candidates, will have pondered this topic and have wisdom to contribute.

So, what, or who, is a lay pastoral leader? We need to look at the three parts of the title.

Lay – a lay person, in the church, is a member of the church who is not clergy. Strictly speaking the laity includes members of religious orders who are not ordained. The Code of Canon Law, in the Catholic Church, defines clerics and lay people. The latter it describes as 'although not belonging to the hierarchical structure of the Church, it nevertheless belongs to its life and business.'

Pastoral – defined as giving care, including emotional, social, and spiritual care. Pastoral care is a recognition of systems of belief, and supports a person's sense of self, their inner resources, resilience, and capacity to cope. Pastoral ministry is a Christian concept, broadly seen as 'helping others', providing care and guidance based on Christian beliefs. In the Catholic tradition, pastoral ministry is considered to be a responsibility of all the baptised. Many lay people undertake different pastoral roles such as extraordinary ministers of communion; visiting the sick; organising groups within the parish; preparing parishioners for baptism or marriage; assisting the bereaved etc.

Leadership – strictly speaking, leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. This could include guiding individuals or a group. There are many styles of leadership such as being a coach; being visionary; democratic; authoritarian; bureaucratic; visionary; transformational etc.

While those notes might give a definition, they do not address the idea of vocation, specifically the uniqueness of the vocation of lay pastoral leadership. We are able to say what it is not – not a clerical vocation; not a monastic vocation; not a vocation to a religious community.

A reflective question for us all:

What is the vocation of lay pastoral leadership?

In the succeeding issues we will continue to dig deeper on the concept of lay pastoral leadership.

QUIZ

(Answers on the last page)

1. What are the origins of the words 'lay' and 'pastoral'?
2. What style of leadership does Pope Francis promote and demonstrate?
(Hint - one of his official titles describes this.)
3. What department in the Vatican has responsibility for the laity?

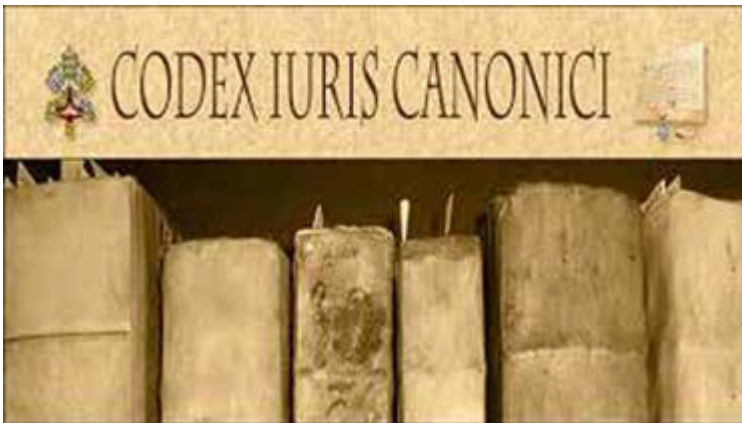


Image copied from <https://www.digitalspy.com/tv/reality-tv/a858280/the-chasequestions-fix-claims-50k-loss/>

Imagine the Chase asking these questions or shown on an Air New Zealand flight screen. I reckon there would be a ruckus! Bridget will put together a short quiz every issue. We thought it would be fun but then we would not blame you if you don't find our sense of fun, funny. Bear with us.

SPIRITUS DOMINI - A PERSONAL REFLECTION

By Joe Green
Lay Pastoral Leader,
Wellington South Parish



In Spiritus Domini Pope Francis is going as far as he is able, within the existing framework to enable lay women to participate in the liturgical life of the Church by virtue of their baptism. Spiritus Domini is the modification of Canon 230#1 of the Code of Canon Law regarding access of women to the ministries of lector and acolyte. In practical terms, in Aotearoa New Zealand, women already carry out the roles of lector and acolyte. However, the Apostolic Letter issued "motu proprio" changes the practice of the Church that has structurally seen women 'barred from ministry at the altar'

(Zagano, loc. 924). Females can now, officially, proclaim the Word and be altar servers! As Cardinal John Dew points out (28 February 2021), this change is important in that it is 'highly symbolic'. How so?

The two ministries, acolyte and lector were until relatively recently Minor Orders and have generally only been bestowed on seminarians as they progress through their training for the priesthood. As ministries they have, until now, been reserved to lay men.

Spiritus Domini might be seen as another step toward addressing the very basic philosophical and sociological underpinnings of Catholic theology as it relates to the ministry of women in the Church.

In Greek philosophy, on which the school men, including (and perhaps especially) Aquinas, based their theology, women are incomplete and imperfect. Men are complete and perfect. The Church's theology is underpinned by a fear of female sexuality (Cerrato, loc. 2371 and Torjesen, p. 197). Female sexuality was, and arguably still is seen as having a 'dangerous' power' (Torjesen, p. 230-233). Not that the current justification for exclusion of women from ordination is worded in this way. Rather: "Jesus only selected men as apostles", "the deacon/priest stands in place of Christ, Christ was a man, therefore the deacon/priest has to be male", "Jesus was a man, therefore only men can image Christ".

This philosophical and theological approach totally ignores that we are all made in the image and likeness of God. But Jesus of Nazareth knew!

The Gospel shows that Jesus behaved in a very counter cultural way with women, and had women among his close followers, and it is almost certain women were at the last supper, because women and children were usually at that sort of dinner (the point of Geraghty's work)!

Zagano and Torjesen argue that women almost certainly led, hosted, and presided at what was the eucharistic liturgy in the primitive church. Zagano demonstrates almost conclusively that from the earliest of times and through the 1st millennium women were ordained as deacons: during the same liturgy, by the same Bishop, using the same words as ordaining men (Zagano, loc. 1707).

Very soon after the death and resurrection of Jesus the primitive Church began to behave sociologically in the same way as the rest of Greco-Roman society, marginalising women to the domestic domain. However, the way Jesus had treated women was so strong in the story, the men could not write it out, well, not completely. One example is the use of the term 'apostle': unknown as a word to Jesus, the gospel writers are faithful in that they do not put the word into his mouth, they use the term in their text – a text written after reflection on the life of Jesus (Cerrato, loc. 3079), and applied only to the men in Jesus' inner circle.

Once the church became the official state religion and moved from the domestic domain to the public, the leadership role of women was doomed. Because society in that time could not accept women in that public and presiding role.



It took but three words to be changed in Canon 230#1 for women to be included in the ministries of lector and acolyte. It would take only one word, 'presbyter', to be inserted "motu proprio" into Canon 1024, along with certain pronoun changes, to enable women to be ordained as deacon (Zagano, loc. 1731).

With Spiritus Domini, as with Querida Amazonia and the designation of Mary Magdalene as 'Apostle' Pope Francis opens the door a crack. But cracks let the light shine through, and once the light is allowed in, who knows what the Holy Spirit will do!

Image copied from <https://www.famigliacristiana.it/articolo/pia-spazio-laici-anche-le-donne-acedono-ai-ministeri-minori.aspx>

References

Cerrato, Deacon Dominic (2014). In the person of Christ the servant – In persona Christi Servi. A theology of the diaconate based on the personalist thought of Pope John Paul II. St Ephraem Press. (Kindle edition).

Geraghty, Chris (2018). Jesus, the forgotten feminist. Garratt Publishing.

Torjesen, Karen Jo (1995). When Women were Priests – women's leadership in the early church and the scandal of their subordination in the rise of Christianity. Harper Collins.

Zagano, Phyllis (2020). Women: Icons of Christ. Paulist Press (Kindle edition).

Birthdays

January

8th Margaret
22nd Bridget
27th Telesia

February

12th Joan McFetridge
23rd Joe Green
27th Bernadette



Photo by Logan Ellzey on Unsplash.com

UPDATES

- See you all on the 27th of February at the Home of Compassion, the session runs from 10:00-3:30. You can come before that time to enjoy the prayerful space. We are in the Crombie Room. This is the first of two Learning Days and the topic is on Theological Reflection to be facilitated by Anne Powell.
- At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I hope you have pencilled in 20 March which is your first Prayer Day for the year.
- I hope you have all enrolled for this year. Get in touch with Te Kupenga Catholic Leadership Institute as soon as you can.
- The Mentors and I had our first gathering on 27 January at the Cenacle's home in Waikanae. We had a good time-sharing insights on how best to support the Candidates. If you know Bridget, Cecily, Susan, Catherine, and Mary, you would have guessed it was a jolly lively, intellectually, and spiritually enriching experience. We thank Mary for the wonderful hospitality. This is something we think would be good to do regularly.
- As you well know the former PLM staff: Mary-Ann, Christine, Mika, and I are now part of the Church Mission Team along with the former staff of Marriage, Family and Young Church. Hence, within February or March, except for Mika, the three of us will be joining Chris Duthie-Jung (our new director) Felicity Giltrap, Marian Lima and Lucienne Hensel in the ground floor office.
- Sharon Penny, Lay Pastoral Leader of the Wairarapa Parish has retired. She has served as a LPL for nearly 10 years, starting with a role in Eastbourne working alongside Msgr. Charles Cooper. The Wairarapa celebrated her years of service on 13 February at St. Patrick's Masterton. We hope to learn more about Sharon's amazing journey as a LPL in a future issue of LOL.

“THOUGH THE SEASONS CHANGE, YOUR LOVE REMAINS...”

By Lucienne Hensel
Launch Out Graduate,
Consultant - Family Ministry
Church Mission Team

These words from a song by United Pursuit really struck me while I was on holiday at the start of last year. I was facing what I then thought were some big changes ahead and battling to accept some new realities. The words of the song were a reminder that no matter what life threw at me, God's love would hold me together and see me through...

Little did I know that change, as we had never imagined it before, was in fact just round the corner for all of us! If there has been one recurring theme in conversations the past year, it is change – a change that continues to affect us by its repercussions. No-one saw it coming, and certainly no-one asked for it!

Change – especially when uninvited – can throw us into chaos. It has a way of unsettling us so that we find ourselves feeling uncertain even of the little things that we had been so sure of. The ground is shaky. Things are not the way they used to be, and we are not yet sure how things will be in the future. We feel we are in limbo... Joyce Rupp calls it liminal space, describing it as a frequently disorienting experience.

Change – whether wanted or unwanted – requires us to adapt, and it's the adaptation or transition that is the hard work. As William Bridges states, *“It isn't the changes that do you in, it's the transitions.”*



When the change is not of my choosing, I find that the time of transition can feel like a grief process. It requires me to come to terms with the loss of what was, to face my pain and, by God's grace, to eventually let go. Only by letting go can I make space for the new – a different perspective perhaps ... a chance to dig deeper and discover new possibilities. I was recently really challenged by the words of Margaret Silf, who says that *"for Christians, to refuse to let things die when their time has come is tantamount to saying that we don't believe in the resurrection"*. As nature shows us and Jesus taught us, unless a seed falls to the ground and dies, there really can be no new life (John 12:24).

When I am faced with a 'death' of sorts, feeling the pain and disappointment, do I believe that the Lord can truly give birth to something new and beautiful in me or for me? I often remind myself of the passage from St Paul's letter to the Romans which assures us that *"for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."* (Rom 8:28).

Ultimately, my anchor in the stormy times of change is the truth that though the seasons change, God's love remains. God is unchanging, steadfast, dependable – my strength, my rock, my hiding place in every season. God is the same yesterday, today, forever... yet at the same time He moves with me, meets me where I am today... not where I was yesterday, nor where I might be tomorrow. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus stated, many centuries ago, that *"the only constant in life is change"*. While there is a lot of truth in that, we need not fear change nor be overwhelmed by it because the one Constant in our lives will never leave us or forsake us. Though the seasons and other things in life may change, indeed God's love remains...

".. So abide in my love" (John 15:9)

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ

1. Lay – the word is derived from the Greek 'laikos' referring to the people at large. 'Lay' is used in various professions etc but is particularly related to the vast majority of faithful within the church.

Pastoral - relates to shepherds and their role in caring for sheep. There are many references to shepherds and sheep in the New Testament, so pastoral ministry involves shepherding the flock, e.g., a parish, through protection, tending to the needs, encouraging, comforting, and leading by example.

2. Pope Francis is a proponent of servant leadership. One of his titles is 'Servant of the servants of God.'

3. The Dicastery for the Laity, Family, and Life was established in 2016. (Previously there were Pontifical Councils for the Laity and for the Family.) The Dicastery (which just means a Department in the Roman Curia, or administration of the Vatican) is headed by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, but the sections on life and on laity are headed by lay women – the highest ranking in the Vatican.

WISDOM FROM POPE FRANCIS



Image copied from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/earth/surface-of-the-earth/caves/>

GET OUT OF YOUR CAVES

When Pope Francis was travelling to Cuba, a journalist on the flight asked him what the laity could do for the Church. The question came from Noel Diaz, the son of a single mother who remembers when his mother could not afford to buy clothes for his First Communion. He is now a successful journalist in Los Angeles. Pope Francis replied to Noel 'Continue working...I need you to get out of the caves'. 'Getting out of the cave' is a phrase used in Spanish to ask someone to leave a comfortable position in pursuit of something greater.

Excerpted from Dipping into Lent by Allan Hillard (p.9). This text was copied from Sacred Space Daily Reading <https://www.sacredspace.ie/>