



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

LAUNCH OUT LETTERS (LOL)

October 2021

Kia ora koutou. Welcome to the October issue.

This month we have **Margaret Bearsley** leading us in the reflection for the last Sunday Gospel. Her compelling reflection about Bartimaeus leads me to reflect on blindness and all its forms. We are all afflicted with some form of blindness, individually and collectively. The call to be missionary disciples calls us to confront and address this blindness. Incidentally, the month of October is the month of Mission and I realised I have a Kiwi missionary right in front of me (literally). Thanks to **Frank Doherty** for sharing with us his experience as a missionary with the ICPE. The real challenge is recognising our own blindness and our participation in the blinding of others. Collaboration in ministry is our way forward, as **Bridget Taumoepeau's** article suggest. We are better together than alone. We have previous issues when this concept has been tackled; collaborative ministry is one of the core principles of lay pastoral leadership. In the same breath, **Lucienne Hensel** shares about Ignatian Spirituality and how it could be a good spirituality for lay people in ministry. After all Ignatius' spiritual exercise of the examen is a time-tested way to be aware of our blindness. Finally, we have a Launch Out graduate, **Malia Vito-Tupai** who shared her memory of how she got into the Launch Out Programme. Her story reveals, that although we cannot see or fail to see, Jesus sees us clearly. And leads us to see God's vision for us and the rest of the world. I think this is where Pope Francis gets it right in our present Synod on the Synodal Church. It's coming to terms with our own Bartimaeus story as a Church and humbly seeking the healing power of God to make us see.

—Maya Bernardo, Launch Out Formator & Manager

What do you want me to do for you? 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

By Margaret Bearsley
Launch Out Candidate

There is a line of commercial thinking called 'from good to great'. According to 'good to great' thinking, being a success - being 'good' - is a significant hurdle that prevents businesses from being 'great'. The problem is that being successful enough to achieve the three Bs: the Batch, the Boat and the Beemer, destroys the drive to keep pushing, to keep taking risks, and to keep making sacrifices in order to get to the fourth B: Billionaire. In business, you have to really *want* greatness.



<https://medium.com/sosv/why-not-challenge-yourself-to-greatness-2f8442a7e0f9>

Just before the Bartimaeus story in Mark, two of the Twelve, James and John, have asked Jesus to give them whatever they ask—what they really want is greatness. Jesus responds to their request with: *What is it you want me to do for you?* They ask him for places of honour. He

tells them to pull their heads in and they all continue towards Jerusalem and the impending Passion. There is nothing even vaguely similar to the four Bs in Jesus' plans!

Continues on Page 2



<https://thechurchnextdoor.org/blind-bartimaeus/>

Now, less than half a day's walk from their destination, Bartimaeus, who is a beggar and is blind, is sitting in his status quo: he is begging. Today, he hears the crowds around Jesus. He might have been thinking his luck would be in, with rich pickings likely from the pilgrims headed to Jerusalem for Passover.

But the beggar is attuned to something out of the ordinary in this particular crowd. He might be blind but he is not deaf, and he has heard about Jesus; heard the rumours that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah and a wonder-worker.

So the blind beggar yells out for attention. He begs the famous man of the messianic line, not for money, not for greatness, but for mercy: *Jesus, son of David, have pity on me!*

Throughout Mark's Gospel, when Jesus confronts evil, the spirits name him as the Son of God, but Jesus tells them to be quiet. Here in Mark's Gospel, a pitiful human being names Jesus as the Messiah, and the surrounding people tell him to be quiet. But Jesus contradicts the crowd and tells them to call the man to him. Bartimaeus needs no further encouragement; he leaps forward. And Jesus responds to him: *What is it you want me to do for you?*

Unlike James and John who, thinking they could see power and glory ahead for themselves when the Messiah enters Jerusalem, and ask for personal greatness, Bartimaeus simply asks to be freed from his status quo. *Dear Teacher*, he says, *I want to see.*

Jesus grants him that and even more: *Your faith has saved you!*

Blindness is a symbol in the Bible and in the Tradition of the Church for a lack of faith. When we are trapped in our cultural milieu of having to be successful or getting to great, faith in the Christ of God restores our sight. What do we want Jesus to do for us?

“When we are trapped in our cultural milieu of having to be successful or getting to great, faith in the Christ of God restores our sight.”

Called to launch into the deep– Looking back at the beginning of my Launch Out journey

By Malia Vito-Tupai
Launch Out Graduate

After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.” Luke 5: 4

If I can think back to the year 2002, how one’s life quickly changes and how one’s decision impacts on one’s journey. That is how it was for me when in 2002, I think it was, when my eye caught an article in the WelCom where the Launch Out Programme was being advertised and was calling for Catholic men and women who felt called, to “launch into the deep” by considering applying for the formation programme. It also gave a description of what the programme entails and asking for expression of interest or words to that effect.

Funny, I had read the notice and that was it. I did not give it another thought and just went about my usual routine. However, little did I know that I was going to be talking to a friend and that chat, was going to have an influence on my decision afterwards.

It all started with this friend showing me the article and I recognised it straight away. She said to me, “as soon as I read this, I thought of you! Innocently I said, what do you mean? She said, “do you not feel you have something to offer just by reading this advertisement? They are calling for lay men and women.” My friend’s parting words to me were, “go away and have a think about it and whatever decision you make, I will not hold it against you, if it is no”.

I have quoted the lines from Luke 5 at the top, as that was the scripture passage I looked up when I got home after the meeting with my friend. I was trying to match scriptures to give meaning to this “launch into the deep” phrase that caught my eye. I pondered over it for quite some time and questions started popping up in my head. One of the questions was, what is my purpose in life? I thought about my parents as they were “Catechists”, that was my father’s title. Is this what they envisaged that may be one day, one of their children may follow in their footsteps? I wondered why my parents felt called.

It then dawned on me, that my parents chose this ministry as their way of trying to live the life of Jesus when he was on earth. God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. That is when I made up my mind that I will respond just like my parents did. Launch into the deep as symbolism of our actions by way of spreading the good news of God, be it in ministry or being amongst community. What a paradigm shift for me!

Looking back at the beginning of my Launch Out journey made me appreciate more deeply God’s faithfulness in my life. The call to “Launch into the deep” didn’t end in Launch Out but continued on in my life years after I have finished Launch Out. Only this time, I am more aware of the call and better equipped to serve Church in whatever ministry I am called to do in the church through my parish.

Malia is a Parishioner of St Anne’s Church Community in Newtown. She currently works for the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment as a Tenancy Mediator. She is a Mother of 3 boys and a grandmother of six grand daughters.



Malia in the far left, with her family during her son’s wedding

Kiwi Missionary— Can Do

By Frank Doherty
Administration Assistant, Church Mission

There is an expression in English, that hindsight is always 20/20, so looking back on my experiences I can see a sort of thread or theme. Where we go and what we do with those experiences is a whole different matter. From the first recollections of discovering I was adopted, to my first job after leaving school, selling cemetery plots to families who had recently lost a loved one. These things set me up for an "interesting" journey. From driving Road Trains in the Northern Territory of Australia to being a Traffic Cop in Wellington, let us throw in working as Noise Control and Fire Safety Officer into the mix. A bit of a "fruit salad" well that is me in a nutshell.



My wife, Ruth and I served in the ICPE as a missionary couple

When we take a step back and look at some of our experiences through Christian glasses, we can recognise these threads being interwoven in our lives, however it was not until I had the opportunity to step out from secular jobs into full time voluntary ministry that the pieces started to come together. "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." *Saint Augustine* .

After years in secular jobs I was given the opportunity to join the ICPE Mission (an international association of the faithful of Pontifical Right) in 1997. That was where I met my beautiful Maltese wife, Ruth. For almost 15 years Ruth and I served with the ICPE Mission both locally around New Zealand and in many different mission fields in Europe, Asia, and the Pacific Islands. The call to be missionary disciples, as we all know, is not a job but a commission, a lifestyle, and a sacrifice. Sacrificial love and servant leadership go hand in hand. Putting the needs of the other first. This is something that we are called to embrace and commanded to do by virtue of our baptism and the great commission.



Running a children's liturgy for orphans in Albania. I was doing a mime.

Taking the step and allowing myself to be out of my comfort zone on my first cross-cultural missionary experience with my wife, was well exactly that, an "experience"! Spending several months in Manila, Philippines was both amazing and terrifying.

Now here is the key, working with the Holy Spirit. How many times have I tried to do something under my own steam and fallen flat on my face? More times than I care to remember, I must say. Whilst painful, it is not the

falling down so much as the getting up that counts. The forgiving of self. The "can do!"

It is true that no one person can do everything, this is why teamwork is so important, consultation, communication, and accountability. I spent much of my first few days in Manila feeling very home sick, however once I stopped expecting people to operate in ways, I was familiar with and embraced their culture I actually started to enjoy myself and learn from these opportunities.

Continues on Page 5

Sometimes it is a matter of "jumping in", trying something new. For me this came about when I was asked to shepherd a team of volunteers to minister to inmates in Rimutaka Prison. Coordinating this ministry was a great growth opportunity for me personally as well as a privilege to be part of such a rewarding ministry. Every Wednesday for about 10 years we would gather in the carpark at the prison to pray and prepare for a 90-minute session in 5 units. At first, one might think you are taking Christ into the prison, not true! Jesus is already there. This again was a place of encounter, just as much for us as for the inmates. If you come with open hands and an open-heart God will fill them to overflowing. That is often part of ministry, filling a gap, providing a bridge, shining a light on a path for others to traverse and grow.

Another thing I learnt, is to never underestimate your ability to contribute. There were times when I felt my sack of talents was quite empty and of little value. It may not seem valuable by worldly standards but thank goodness this is not the standard that God uses. Traveling to Albania I thought, 'what can I offer here?', but again it was the simple things that were the most useful.

Being able to show love in its simplest of forms. Offering an orphan, a smile, or a hug, sharing a bag of sweets or an ice cream. For some that is a very new experience, but in the right circumstances it can make an enormous difference. Again, it is bridge building, relationship building, reaching out to those who are on the peripheries. Any relationship involves an element of risk, making yourself vulnerable. Be authentic, be real, be yourself, that is what makes you relatable. We took the orphans out for drives to the ice cream store and to the beach. Unfortunately, there were but a few Missionary Sisters of Charity at this Albanian Orphanage so going to the beach was out of the question normally, however with all of our team we were able to provide the one-on-one necessary to enable a safe and secure outing. Even some of the sisters were seen splashing in their habits as the children did like them. Just seeing those young ones, who came from backgrounds of divided families and deep-seated feuds due to protracted civil war, having fun, laughing, smiling, jumping, playing, being children, is something I am never going to forget. There was nothing special in what I did, well nothing by my standards but for these kids it was fresh air in a life stifled by division and conflict.

We are in a very exciting time for our Church, a time when we are called to leave no one out, leave no one behind, to listen not just hear, to see not just look and to love not just to sit in the pews. Any relationship challenges us to make ourselves vulnerable, to take a risk to reach out. This will flow naturally from our ever-deepening relationship with Jesus Christ. It is not just "knowing about" Jesus, but actually knowing Him. That encounter with Jesus, "wasting time" with Him, involving Him in every aspect of your life, letting Him love you as you get to know and love Him more. I could say, "I know about Pope Francis", "I know he usually wears white; he lives in the Vatican, he speaks many languages", however if you were to ask me what his favourite breakfast is, I would have no idea. If I were to spend a lot of time with the Papa, I probably would get to know him on a deeper level, even maybe his favourite breakfast. So it is with Jesus, the more we choose to invite Him in, the more we get to really know Him and what He is asking of us and equipping us to do.

God takes the simple and makes it extraordinary, so allow yourself to simply be in God's hands. The opportunities are there for each of us to make a difference right where we are. Just allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. *Friendship Evangelisation*. I know Jesus and I would like you to know Him too. Let's know Him together.



With one of my friends in the Albanian orphanage who "adopted" me



The word collaboration often has rather unpleasant connotations. We associate it with stories of people working with oppressive regimes, and there is a sometimes a presumption that this is done in secret or against the wishes of the majority. When I read that Francis has produced something with his ‘collaborators’ it still grates a little and I wish they would use the word colleagues instead.

Hopefully the use of the phrase ‘collaborative ministry’ will help us to see this term in a positive light. Loughlan Sofield writes about this very topic, based on his work in Ireland. Interestingly his book, entitled *Collaborative Ministry: Skills and Guidelines* was published in 1987, so he was ahead of his time.

He describes workshops with both lay and clergy attendees and how constructive they can be. These workshops have addressed the question, “Where is God calling us?” Such a question is a great way to look to the future, be inclusive in one’s approach and value the skills and gifts of everyone – lay and clergy. This is a recognition that the task of evangelisation is something for the whole of God’s people. We must take this positive approach rather than thinking that this movement towards an increase in lay involvement is only due to priest shortage. We all bring gifts to the task and a skill of leadership, in both lay and clergy, may be one of those gifts.

Sofield points out that up until now there has often been an unrealistic expectation that priests can, and should, be all things to all people. This can contribute to burnout in the clergy. With a collaborative approach, where the tasks are shared according to people’s gifts and skills, there can be a much healthier distribution of work and a mutually supportive work environment.

In order to have a successful collaborative approach all have to work on their attitudes to the gifts of themselves and the others with whom they work. Sofield lists the obstacles to collaboration, but this can also be put in positive terms, namely what will facilitate collaboration. Some of these qualities would be: maturity; good self-esteem without arrogance; the ability to deal with anger and hostility; the ability to forgive; acceptance of change; recognition of one’s own and other’s gifts and skills; willingness to share one’s faith; good listening skills; and hopefully some past positive experiences with a collaborative approach.

He outlines a practical model for collaboration, symbolised by clarification (being clear about what this collaboration will mean), conviction (being convinced of the value of this approach), commitment (being prepared to work hard and address any difficulties), and capability (having the appropriate skills, spirituality, process and maturity to achieve the goal).

While lay formation programmes aim to develop the ability for lay people to contribute to evangelisation and take leadership roles, it is often the clergy who may most benefit from this approach. No longer do they have to be all things to all people, as they can be freed to follow the path of priesthood for which they were ordained.

Finally, Sofield points out that collaboration must begin at local level – in our case in the parishes. This very much follows the Catholic Social Teaching principle of subsidiarity, as well as fitting very well with the thoughts that we will be having about our contribution to the upcoming Synod on Synodality.



The quiz this month is in a rather different format

- Think of personal qualities that you feel are essential in following a collaborative approach.
- Can you recall situations where you have been involved in problem-solving discussions that have been positive, or negative? Can you identify what went well or what went badly?

UPDATES

Thank you to Clare O' Connor for leading us in our last **Prayer Day for 2021 last 09 Oct, at the Home of Compassion**. It was a special time for us to spend some time together. It was a much needed respite for our weary spirits. Grateful to spend the day with the loving and quite presence of Susan Apathy.

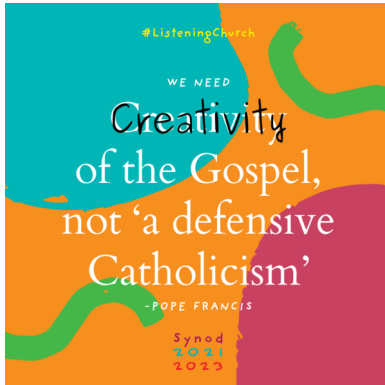
Jude, Bonita and Bernadette attended the **Ministry Formation Day last 12 October 2021**, on the End of Life Legislation held at St. Theresa's Plimmerton. This bill which will be implemented and come into force by 07 November 2021. This law will have serious implications on the bereavement ministry. The Gospel of the Good Samaritan is the focal point of our reflection, to guide our way into this challenging terrain. At the heart of it is to be the loving presence of God in people's most vulnerable moment.



All systems go for the **Project Presentation Day on 20 November 2021**. This would be a good time start inviting your Parish Priest, head of Parish Pastoral Council and your family to come during that day. Assuming, we will be in Level 1. I'll send out the invitation nearer the time.

The Vicar for Maori, Danny Karatea-Goddard has given us six names to choose from for the **Te Reo name of Launch Out**. We will start the discernment process most likely by next year.

ONLINE RESOURCES



- Church-Mission-ADW Resource Page the Synod <https://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/about/archdiocesan-synod/>. It contains access to softcopy of the Synod Booklet and the online survey.
 - Visit the Food for Faith website for daily Gospel readings and reflection for Sunday Gospel. It also has a page on Rosary devotion. <https://foodforfaith.org.nz/>
 - Visit the Nathaniel Centre website for resources on bio-ethical issues such as abortion and euthanasia. The Nathaniel Centre is an organisation under the NZCBC <http://www.nathaniel.org.nz/>
- Lucienne explained the Ignatian Spirituality in her article (see pages 8-9). If you are interested to know more, check this website from Loyola Press <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/>



BIRTHDAYS

October

20 Lisa Beech

A spirituality for the lay person involved in pastoral ministry

By Lucienne Hensel
Launch Out Graduate
Consultant, Family Ministries
Church Mission

Someone recently asked me: What would you say is an ideal spirituality for the lay leader? Without hesitation, I said Ignatian Spirituality, and here's my reason why...

God in all things...

Ignatian spirituality can be defined as reflective, imaginative, and personal. It is a sacramental spirituality that finds the presence of God in all things, in the ordinary moments of our lives. It is about noticing God's grace at work in us, helping us develop discerning hearts as we go about our family life, work, and ministry. It emphasises personal interior freedom and responsibility and appeals to the whole person - encouraging the use of the intellect, imagination, emotions, and senses to contemplate God at work.

Contemplatives in Action...

At a time when there was still a great divide between the 'sacred' and the 'secular', Ignatius introduced a spirituality for "contemplatives in action". Whether we are at work or at prayer, we are able to find, love and serve our God. As we bring our action – our service - to contemplation, this in turn will encourage and deepen our action in the world. The fruit of Ignatian Spirituality is ultimately a life lived in service of others.

Continues on Page 9

The Ignatian Examen...

The Examen is a perfect prayer for the lay person involved in pastoral ministry. Ignatius insisted on it when his newly formed band of brothers - the Jesuits – were finding that they were so busy with ministry they couldn't find time to pray! It is a short, simple prayer that helps us become aware of God's action in our life and ministry – effectively a method of Theological Reflection that allows us to reflect on what is going on within us in response to what goes on around us – our encounters, our joys and disappointments, the big things and little things that come our way. It is a beautiful yet simple way to find God in all things, understand ourselves better and develop a discerning heart.

A Discerning Heart...

We all have to make important decisions in life. Ignatian Spirituality helps us to develop the tools we need to make life-giving choices, to become attuned to the voice of the Spirit of God and recognise the voice of the 'false spirit'. Ignatius' Rules for Discernment of Spirits have helped countless Christians in times of decision-making. They have guided me at crucial moments in my journey as I continue to explore God's call in my life, and were incredibly helpful when my husband and I were faced with big decisions as a family.

Group Discernment and the Synod...

Here in the Archdiocese, we know a thing or two about Ignatian group discernment. Our Synod process in 2017 was based on it, and so is the global Synod that has just begun. It is a spiritual conversation that encourages us to listen with the heart to the voice of the Spirit in the voice of the other. It is the way that Pope Francis is calling us to be a synodal Church, journeying together!

Spiritual Exercises

One of Ignatius' greatest contributions to Christian spirituality is undoubtedly his "Spiritual Exercises". Ignatius intended these to help people to grow in intimacy with God. Traditionally, they are known as the 30-day Retreat. Nowadays they are more commonly experienced as a 30-week "Retreat in Daily Life". I had initially assumed that this was a modern adaptation, but in fact it was Ignatius himself who made provision for the person "*who is engaged in public affairs or necessary business.*" (19th Ann, SpEx) It seems to me that the 'revolutionary' thinking of Vatican II and the 'Universal Call to Holiness' was at the very heart of Ignatius' call and ministry 500 years ago!

What I find most remarkable is that Ignatius wrote the Exercises long before he was ordained to the priesthood or founded the Jesuits. He was a layman (former soldier, playboy and gambler with a police record!) who had recently experienced a deep conversion. As he grew closer to God, he started noting down his interior experiences so that he could help others to grow in intimacy with God. He started to offer retreats and spiritual direction to people he encountered on his pilgrimage. Thus, his ministry began...

I like to think of Ignatian Spirituality as a journey of discovery. It helps me not only to find where God is present, but to understand my own desires in the light of God's love and the unfolding of His call for me. The Ignatian Examen and Rules of Discernment have helped me to become attuned to the work of the Spirit within me. They have given me both the freedom and the confidence to be myself, to trust in God and to serve in pastoral ministry with gratitude and joy, wherever I am placed. I keep these words from Ignatius' Principle and Foundation always before me: ***"Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want, and I choose what better leads to God's deepening his life in me"***. (Contemporary translation by David J Fleming SJ)