



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)

March 2022

Kia ora koutou. Welcome to the March issue and the first in 2022. We will continue to feature articles that explore the role of the laity in the Church. I have been sounding like a broken record for saying the goal of LOL is a way to capture the DNA of lay leadership by growing its literature. It is also a platform for the Candidates to develop their skills in expressing their theological reflections.

The Candidates will be writing their reflection for the first Sunday mass of each month from March to December, and one article on a topic of special interest. I'll kick off the reflection for March. We will have three regular sections, two of which we will present in this issue. One is with **Bridget Taumoepeau** as she continues to offer insights on the theology of the laity. Bridget has done her dissertation from the University of Otago on Launch Out and Vatican II. She will share her investigation in parts over the coming months. For this issue, she begins with the historical context that brought about the Synod decision that created the Lay Pastoral Leaders of ADW. Little is said about the movements that happened before the 1998 Synod, such as the Catholic action movement and similar ripples of reforms that are going around the church and the world. One church historian claims that the genesis of Vatican II may well be the French revolution. Every great reform started from smaller and even other disparate reforms.

In the second of the regular section, we will feature the charisms of the different religious orders in the ADW and the lessons on lay leadership we can learn from their founders. The inspiration for this came from the book "Called and chosen: Towards a spirituality for lay leaders" by Zeni Fox and Regina Bechtle, S.C. They suggest that the biggest gap in the lay leaders' formation and spirituality is having a community. I am hoping that the stories of the founders will give us an idea of the different communities we can be part of (as lay) or simply learn and be nourished by their charisms. We are fortunate to have Sr. **Elizabeth Julian, rsm** to reflect on the life of Catherine McAuley of the Mercy Sisters. A provocative line from Elizabeth's article that speaks of Catherine's unique mission— "to find our place in the world of men, in a patriarchal world order and in a patriarchal Church".

Reform seems to be the theme of this month's issue and we unpack it as we are confronted by the crisis happening on the parliament grounds. It brings us to ask—what kind of reformers are we? What would our way of bringing about change say about who we are as followers of Christ? The LPL journey of ADW and Catherine McAuley are stories can show us, the kind of change that ultimately endures.

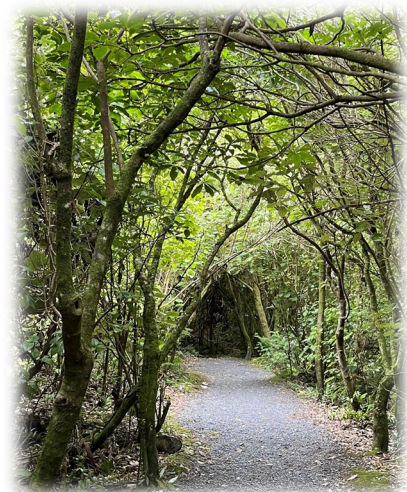
—Maya Bernardo, Launch Out Formator & Manager

Into the wilderness

First Sunday of Lent

Luke 4: 1-13

By Maya Bernardo
Launch Out Formator and Manager



The closest I could get to a wilderness experience is doing a bushwalk. In New Zealand, we are blessed to have access to many walking trails. I live near the gum-loop tracks in Wainuiomata, a trail I easily finish in less than an hour. What fascinates me is that in this rather short and predictable trail, the scenes change as I move along. Among these are a narrow path winding beside a slope, one meandering under a canopy of trees, and another one paving across a sea of wild grass. No walk is the same. Each walk is different, even if it leads to the same destination.

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In every walk, there seem to be new plants that grew, trees change leaves, or old branches that have fallen, and a shoot is never far away. The river can either be calm or gushing. The sounds of the wind, the birds, the cicadas, the rustling leaves coming together in a rhythmic melody. There is something in the wilderness that opens my soul to the touch of God.

I could understand why Jesus often goes to the wilderness to pray. In Mk 6: 31-32, it was called a 'lonely place'. In Mathew 17: 1-11, the transfiguration happened in the mountains. John the Baptist was the 'voice' that cried out in the wilderness (John 1: 23). In the Old Testament, the Exodus was a journey into the wilderness by the people of Israel for 40 years, in which I find a parallel with Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. In Exodus, it is in the wilderness where the Israelites grew in a greater understanding of their identity as God's people and first hand knowledge of the ways of God.

The wilderness is a metaphorical place for encountering God. It is where we leave the world behind for a moment to be fully present to God and to listen to God. However, the wilderness is as much a place of struggle as it is for comfort. It is a place where the hard questions holler more loudly, as well as, where earthly rumination can run loose. In the Gospel, the wilderness was a place of temptation. The hard questions that confronted Jesus were around survival and security, vulnerability, and identity. For us, these questions could be posed as— *what do we need to live or survive? Who has our backs? Or who will protect us in times of trouble? And who are we? Or to whom do we matter?* The devil offered the following answers to these questions —turning stones into bread (unlimited provision), bestowing on Jesus massive wealth, and immeasurable power, in exchange for worshipping the devil, which is tantamount to the abandonment of His mission.

This Gospel passage provides those for us, who wish to follow Jesus in a life of discipleship, with guidance on how to respond to these temptations— the source of our nourishment ("we don't live on bread alone"), who it is we live for and whom we worship ("worship the Lord your God and serve only God") and who we are (Here Jesus revealed himself as God who shouldn't be tested. Hence, it is also a revelation of our true nature as children of God). We will be tested or tempted many times in our lives. Some of these present themselves in various forms, even masquerading within the aspects of what we deem as 'holy' such as Church and ministry. In other words, the wilderness is a metaphor for our spiritual lives.

There are bushwalks where interiorly I have journeyed a thousand miles and comes out nourished. There are walks where I sprinted my way to finish and get on with what I have to do. The human heart is fickle, but one thing that is for certain—that in every walk, Jesus, who is the 'Way, the Truth and the Light' (John 14:6) walks with me. The river, the birds, the wind, and all of nature assure me so. It does not matter if the devil is never too far behind, waiting for the chance to give another go at me.

How it all began

By Bridget Taumoepeau
Launch Out Mentor



https://paintingandframe.com/prints/michelangelo_buonarroti_creation_of_adam_detail_hands-27262.html

Most of us associate the beginning of Lay Pastoral Leadership in the Archdiocese, and hence the Launch Out Programme, with the Wellington Synod of 1998. However, we have to look back to the first half of the 20th Century and the emerging lay movements, as well as to the Second Vatican Council (VCI), to understand the context.

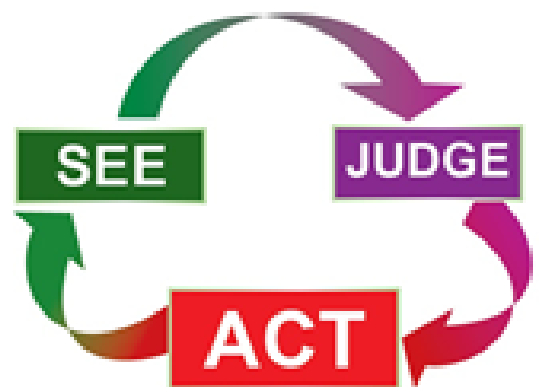
Looking at the culture of the Church at the end of the 19th Century and beginning of the 20th Century, the influence of the First Vatican Council (VCI) was important. VCI was held at the time of the loss of the Papal States. The Pope no longer had temporal power, meaning that relatively speaking his spiritual authority increased in importance, influencing the declaration of the doctrine of papal infallibility. The priesthood was considered sacral, a clerical elite, who alone were responsible for the teaching and ministry of the church. The bishops of that time considered that they only had responsibility upwards to the Pope, and not downwards to the people of their dioceses.

Laity had a very passive role, but Lay Movements were beginning to emerge. St John Henry Newman (1801-1890) was a member of the Oratorians, a religious order founded in the 16th century, which promoted prayer and reflection in mixed groups of laity and clergy. This tradition influenced him to promote Lay Movements during his lifetime.

The Catholic Action movement started in the late 19th century and expanded in the early 20th century. It promoted Catholic Social Teaching (CST), especially Cardinal Cardijn's 'See Judge Act' philosophy and consisted of lay groups such as Young Christian Workers, founded by the Cardinal in the 1920's. Other movements included Young Christian Students, Cursillo movement, RENEW International, Legion of Mary, Sodalties, and the Christian Family Movement.

But still, by the end of the 19th century the Church was still markedly papo-centric and hierocratic. The Popes responded in rather different ways to lay movements. Pius X (1903-1914) gave mixed messages. He stated "the one duty of the multitude (i.e. the laity) is to allow themselves to be led and, like a docile flock, to follow the pastors". On the other hand, he addressed Catholic Action with praise and asked that obstacles to its progress be removed. However, later, he condemned the Modernist view that "a share in ecclesiastical government should be given to the lower ranks of the clergy and even to the laity."

Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), promulgated the Code of Canon Law in 1917, which 'enhanced overcentralisation and emphasised the juridical and legal aspects of the Latin church.' He supported the development of clergy, including local clergy in missionary areas.



<http://www.heraldmalaysia.com/news/the-training-module-called-see-judge-act/42053/5>

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Pius XI (1922-1939) also had mixed views. He believed that Lay Movements should be 'firmly under the control of the hierarchy'. But he promoted the Catholic Action Movement, which encouraged lay men and women to be involved in the social teaching of the church, albeit under the supervision of their bishops.

Pope Pius XII (1939-1958), looked at the obligation of the laity to the church's total mission. During his pontificate, Yves Congar OP wrote a book in 1957, entitled "Lay People in the Church". It was described as "a study of the laity in the light of theology, natural and sacred, in order to determine their position and function in the Church". Congar felt that, for the "full accomplishment of God's plan", the church must have laity involved in its work. Two International Congresses for the Lay Apostolate were held, one in 1951, and a second on 1957. Pius XII addressed these congresses in a very positive and encouraging way, as well as addressing various meetings of Catholic Action Youth. He emphasised cooperation, which he identifies with "the Church's earliest days." He indicates, however, that lay teachers would be "more dependent on the Hierarchy, which is alone responsible before God for the government of the Church."

In the wider world, Cardinal Joseph Bernadin, of Chicago, was advocating for the laity to have a greater appreciation of the significance of the liturgy, just before Vatican II was called by John XXIII. Dominicans and Jesuits, influenced by the World Wars when priests often served with armies and were imprisoned, started to look for a relevant theology. This involved researching the sources throughout the ages, which was known as *ressourcement*, described as a return to "the sources of deeper tradition", which became an important part of the VCII discussions.

It can be seen , therefore, that in the period between the First and Second Vatican Councils, the hierarchical structure of the church was firmly established and the laity was little mentioned, other than in a role subservient to the clergy. While most writings both from the Popes and the theologians of that time, promoted this view, there were inklings of new thinking and promotion of the laity as a more important sector of the people of God, more than had previously been understood.



On the whole, Rome tried to suppress the changing views on laity, although this quote from Pius XI is interesting - "The Church, the mystical body of Christ, has become a monstrosity. The head is very large, but the body is shrunken. The only way to rebuild the Church is to mobilize the lay people. You must call upon the lay people to become the witnesses of Christ."

In 1958 Cardinal Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was elected as Pope John XXIII. Much to everyone's surprise he announced, less than three months after his election, that he would call an ecumenical council (VCII), which would be very different in nature from its predecessors. John XXIII was said to have been greatly influenced by Yves Congar's thoughts about the centre (hierarchical leadership) and the periphery (local churches and their gifts), which included the idea of the importance of the laity.

In preparation for the council, bishops were asked to contribute topics for discussion. Many raised doctrinal issues, but some wanted to discuss the laity.

We will unpack this more in succeeding articles. Watch this space.

BIRTHDAYS



January

22 Bridget Taumoepeau
27 Telesia Alaimoana

February

12 Joan McFetridge
21 Kaisa Beech
22 Bonita Tasale
23 Joe Green
26 Bernadette Patelesio

March

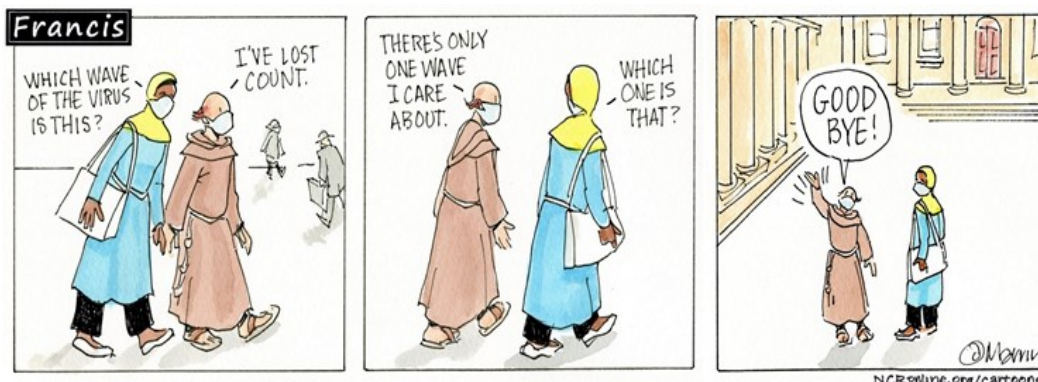
20 Debbie Matheson
31 Catherine Gibbs

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Recently, **Pope Francis reflected on Luke 5:1-4**, that's the Gospel inspiration of Launch Out. Using contemplative imagination, Francis reflects on the intricacies of this Gospel, giving us fresh insights. Thank you Bridget for sharing <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2022/documents/20220206-angelus.html>
- A good friend shared with me this interesting article on the **global ethnic make-up of the Church** and where the trajectories are. This may very well speak of our situation here in ADW <https://cruxnow.com/news-analysis/2022/02/in-new-catholic-numbers-an-imponderable-movement-shaping-history>
- The **Mercy Sisters** have a lot of resources on liturgy and ministry . Here's the website Mercy NZ <https://www.sistersofmercy.org.nz/> and Mercy world <https://www.mercyworld.org/spirituality/>
- If you are interested to have a fresh look at the New Testament grab **Thomas Stegman, S.J "Opening the Doors of Faith: Encountering Jesus and His call for discipleship"**. Available in e-book for \$6.54USD. It was a reference book from a course I took in Boston College.



Copied from <http://beamcountyprimaryschool.org/online-subjects>



<https://www.ncronline.org/news/coronavirus/francis-chronicles/francis-comic-strip-3>

UPDATES



15 January 2022– Start-of-Year Gathering

Synod Discernment

Our Start-of-the Year Gathering was kicked off by a Synod Reflection Session with Lucienne Hensel and Christine Walkerdine, of Church Mission and Launch Out Graduates. This was meant for us to do the discernment process as Launch Out and as way for us to prepare when we have to run this to our parishes. Some of us have begun running the discernment process in our parishes and communities. We look forward to hearing about it in upcoming LOL issues.

Review of 2021 and Looking forward to 2022

We then sat down and reflected on the past year and gave our feedback and suggestion how we can do things better. We shared our challenges and what we learned. It was a good time to learn from each other as well. One of our interesting discussion is trying to understand what makes a “pastoral project” and how important it is to be in tune to where the Holy Spirit is leading us. We also looked at the plans for 2022. We closed it with drinks at Frankie’s Bar .



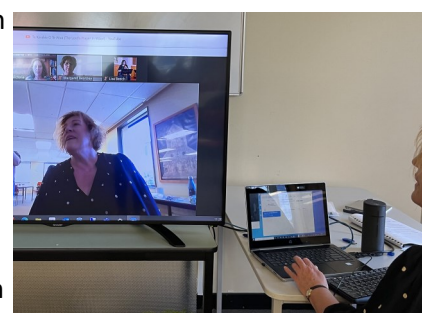
19 February—Prayer Day

We held our first Prayer Day for the year. This time we have Bernadette and Jude facilitating. These amazing wahines designed a Prayer Day that can be done as a combination of face-to-face and online. It was an even split of Margaret, Lisa, Vicky and Bonita attending online and Frank, Jude, Bernadette, Telesia and Maya attending face-to-face at the Catholic Centre. Online



participants were sent a ‘care pack’ with a materials for a prayer focus and a booklet they can follow. We met together via zoom for community prayers and sharing. We were all able to get into a prayerful experience albeit the raucous at the parliament and technological hiccups. We would like to share the design to parishes

and other lay ministers who would be interested to run a similar Prayer Day in their parishes and communities.



New Office (again)

Launch Out has moved office (again). This time we have bigger space. We have swapped offices with the Samoan Chaplaincy. Since December of last year. We are at the back of the Church Mission Office , Ground Floor and across the Cathedral Office. This place has a prayer corner and a table for a meeting. We have books on leadership, lay leadership and ministry and other theological books.



Go and do likewise: Reflecting on the Good Samaritan through the lens of Catherine McAuley

By Elizabeth Julian, rsm
Mercy Sister

(This is drawn from a homily Sr Elizabeth preached at a Eucharist to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of the Sisters of Mercy by Catherine McAuley in Dublin, Ireland at St. Anne's Church, Newtown, 9 Oct 2006)

A man is robbed, stripped, beaten, and left half-dead at the side of the road. Two men see the victim and pass by on the other side. A third man travelling on the same road is moved with compassion by what he sees (*Luke 10:25-37*).



<https://www.mercyworld.org/spirituality/the-family-and-catherine-mcauley/>

The first part of the story is similar to an article in the *Dominion Post* (Sept 18) The headline says, 'Man beaten and left for dead'. It's a story of men. There are no women at all in either story. What is described is male experience. So it's difficult for women as women to enter fully into the parable that Jesus told. There are no women we can identify with, they're just not there. We have to imagine our way into the story to find our place. An Irish woman, Catherine McAuley, did so, in Dublin

175 years ago. That's our challenge today. It has always been our challenge and will continue to be so – to find our place in the world of men, in a patriarchal world order and in a patriarchal Church – in order to be about the reign of God, to be about God's mercy and justice.

Catherine McAuley struggled to find her place in the Irish Church. She wanted to establish a group of lay women who would devote themselves to helping the poor, the sick, the marginalised, the victimised, the powerless of Dublin, in particular women and girls. She didn't want to become a religious, she had no intention of taking vows. She was about 50 years old and living with fourteen women companions in the House of Mercy she had opened in Baggot St in 1827. It was both a school for poor young girls and a residence for homeless girls and women. By 1829 she was the adoptive mother of nine children as well: five nieces and nephews, two young cousins and two orphans. Eventually the Archbishop of Dublin, Daniel Murray, told her to either stop her charitable work or become a religious. (Perhaps he and his clergy were afraid of a group of women over whom they had no control. Catherine was called an upstart and accused of meddling in the work of the clergy.) So for the sake of the countless poor of Dublin, Catherine chose the latter option. One hundred and seventy-five years ago on 12 December 1831, she founded the Sisters of Mercy, an unenclosed religious congregation of women dedicated to the service of the poor, sick and uneducated.

What did the story of the Good Samaritan mean to Catherine? Who did she identify with? If women today find themselves beaten and on the side of the road, it's usually because they have been raped, not robbed. But the parable is not about rape. As women, we can't identify with the priest or the Levite, both representatives of the religious ruling class; we're not part of the clergy, it's not within our experience as yet. We can't identify with the power or authority that comes with being a male. To enter the parable then, we have to use our imagination.

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I think Catherine McAuley spent the ten years of her religious life doing exactly that. She took up Jesus' challenge to the lawyer at the end of the story to 'Go and do likewise' and fed and clothed and sheltered and visited and nursed and taught the poor of Ireland. What is the 'likewise' for us today?

Towards the beginning of the story the lawyer, another man in the story, asks, 'Who is my neighbour?' The question seems to be one of boundaries: 'How far must my love extend? Who can I exclude from my love but still keep the law?' If Jesus had asked, 'Who is my neighbour?' at the end of the story, the lawyer would have been able to answer, 'The man who fell among robbers.' But this is not the question Jesus asks. Instead he turns the question round and asks, 'Who acted as neighbour?' The lawyer then rightly answers, 'The one who showed mercy,' a word that Luke uses earlier in his Gospel to describe God's mercy, 'God's womb love'. But just giving the right answer is not enough. Jesus tells the lawyer: 'Go and do likewise'. That is, take as your model the Samaritan, your detested enemy, and show mercy, show God's womb love, without limit.

Catherine McAuley didn't ask the lawyer's question, 'Who is my neighbour?' She didn't need to. Her life was spent fulfilling Jesus' command 'Go and do likewise'. Unlike the priest and the Levite she didn't pass by on the other side. What she saw among the poor of Dublin moved her to cross the road time and time again in her efforts to relieve suffering and distress wherever she found it.

So how do we 'Go and do likewise' today? What is the role of the Sisters of Mercy in Aotearoa New Zealand? The presence and ministry of approximately 500 mercy women in the Archdiocese since 1861 has warranted ten brief sentences, scattered throughout the official history of the Archdiocese published in 2003. But, as Paul reminds us in the first reading, it is God's approval we seek, not human approval. This is our place and this is where we, as Sisters of Mercy, together with all the baptised, must preach as Paul did. We, like Paul are called to proclaim, to witness to, the death and resurrection of Jesus wherever we are. We are called to offer hope in word and in deed as the Samaritan did, as Catherine did.

In his homily during the Mass in Dublin in May to celebrate the 175th anniversary in 2006 of the founding of the Sisters of Mercy by Catherine McAuley, then Archbishop of Dublin, Diarmuid Martin, said, 'You are called to re-imagine her vision in our time, to re-evaluate structures and to reconfigure yourselves in light of changing realities. Through being authentic towards her charism, you are called to change and purify the Church in our time.'

Catherine McAuley was a woman of wild and daring imaginings. She entered God's timeless 'circle of mercy' 175 years ago. She danced new steps to 'Go and do likewise'. We can do no less.

*"Let charity be our badge of honour...so
that it may be truly said, there is in us
one heart and one soul in God"*

- Catherine McAuley