

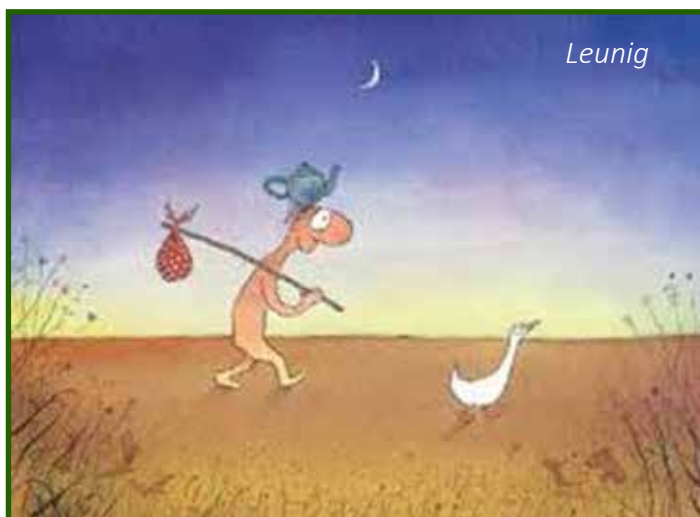
# Falling Upwards



## St Mary's Matters

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## From the Editor

While listening to Terry's homily on Falling Upwards, with its emphasis on the second half of life, I could see parallels in relation to the development of our community. I have been seeing evidence of huge growth in recent times. We had our mid-life crisis and we do now seem to be maturing as a group of thinking believers. Our organisation and governance is also developing. We have always had the St Mary's Board to see to matters pertaining to our legal identity and our finances. We have a fledgling Faith Council who have been working on articulating in their Terms of Reference how they can help make real the aspirations of the community. Their work is in leadership and in liaison. The community has a voice and it is the Faith Council's role to allow it to be heard.

On the cover of this magazine is a picture of Annie and Chris co-celebrating Eucharist for the 9am congregation. They were invited to do this after the overwhelmingly positive response to the homily Peter gave on lay presidency of the Eucharist. You will find this homily on page six. The vote was 126 for and 6 against the change. There is still plenty of opportunity for discussion about this and we hope the six who voted 'no' might join in the conversation. In the meantime we have had a trial run which was quite lovely. However we expect Peter and Terry will be presiding at most liturgies for the time being.

# Falling Upward

In the days when churches were left open all day and half the night, an old man could be seen sitting right at the back of an old church in the corner, in semi-darkness.

As the priest would be in and out of the church several times a day, he would often see this old man sitting alone in silence. As he passed he would smile and the old man would smile back. Then one day the priest sat next to the old man and they began to talk. The priest asked what he did when he came so frequently to the church. Did he have a set amount of prayers to pray every day? The old man laughed, “No” he said simply, *“sometimes I sits and thinks about God and sometimes I just sits.”*

When I finished my formal studies at the seminary, and was waiting to be ordained as a deacon, I and another classmate, Stephen,



went to the Cistercian Monastery 60km north-east of Melbourne, in the heart of the Yarra Valley, Tarrawarra Abbey – some of you may have been there.

We did a semi-silent 14 day retreat, silence and prayers with the monks during the day and talk around the dinner table with the other retreatants at night. On some of these nights we would retire to the fireplace in another room where an old monk

(probably in his nineties) would be tending to the fire – stoking and staring into the flames. On one of those nights, Stephen and I engaged him in conversation. We asked him a number of questions about being a monk and his answers were always brief and profound. Among the questions I remember asking was what books he was reading? He sat staring into the fire, and after giving it another stoke, he replied *“I no longer feel the need to read any more books to be inspired in my journey into God; I just sit and look at the fire.”*

Our journey throughout life could be likened to the Camino Walk, the Way of St James, The pilgrimage to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in north western Spain, which Phil Stanton and Ingerid Meagher spoke about at the TLC last year. Kathy Hedemann and Kerry Lawrence have recently done the walk and Noleen Rosenberg has driven it. Many of you may have seen the



film *The Way* which depicted such a journey that a reluctant father (played by Martin Sheen) made in honour of his son who died attempting the walk.

I have not done the walk but seasoned campaigners tell me that many people who first set out on the walk take too much stuff, which they gradually, if they have any sense, dispense of on the journey as it becomes too heavy to carry. By the end of the walk, they are carrying significantly less stuff than when they started- a metaphor for our lives if we have any sense.

It is what the old monk who stoked the fire discovered. It is what the old man who frequently sat in silence at the back of the church

discovered. It is what the tax collector who stood at the back of the temple discovered and what the Pharisee in the front of the temple had missed.

Franciscan Priest Richard Rohr says in his book *Falling Upward*, the task of the first half of life is to create a proper container for one's life and answer the first essential questions:

*"What makes me significant?"*

*"How can I support myself?"*

And *"Who will go with me?"*

The task of the second half of life is, quite simply, to find the actual contents that this container was meant to hold and deliver. In other

words, the container is not an end in itself, but exists for the sake of your deeper and fullest life.

In the first half of life, success, security and containment – “looking good” to ourselves and others – are almost the only questions.

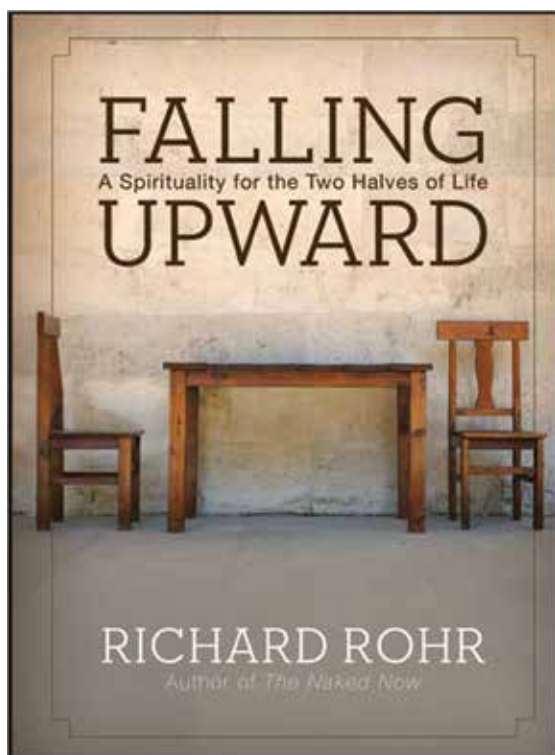
But hopefully as we transition through life we discover that human life is about more than building boundaries, protecting identities, accumulating wealth and creating tribes.

As Jesus said, *"Why do you ask what am I to eat? What am I to wear?"* And to that he says, *"Is life not so much more than food? Is life not so much more than clothing?"* (Luke 12:23) *"What will it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your very soul?"* (Matthew 16:26)

And it is the discovery that your very soul is the soul of the universe, the formless ONE life; we do not lose it, we cannot lose it.

But we may never find it if it is constantly clouded by many of the first half of life's concerns – success, security, containment and looking good.

Much of the clouding can be erased in the hardships and struggles that life presents us with. They present themselves as



opportunities to evoke the latent courage, patience and imagination that can move us into the second stage of our life's journey. For most of us some falling apart of the first journey is necessary, to move into the second; so we waste time lamenting experiences like poor parenting, lost job, failed relationship, physical handicap, gender identity or economic poverty.

They all can be opportunities to be let go of and emptied in order to be filled with something greater—to allow ourselves to fall into the hands of God, the ground of our being. Most of us tend to think of the second half of life as largely getting old, dealing with health issues, and letting go of our

physical life, but it is exactly the opposite. What looks like falling can largely be experienced as falling upward and onward, into a broader and deeper world, where the soul has found its fullness, is finally connected to the whole, and lives inside the Big Picture.

Money cannot buy this connection; it is only forged in the furnace of life's mystery.

And once obtained, it is the Pearl of great price which one is prepared to sell all that one has to possess it.

Allow me to finish with some words from Rainer Maria Rilke in his book *Book of Hours*.

*"How surely gravity's law, strong as an ocean current, takes hold of even the smallest thing and pulls it toward the HEART OF THE WORLD..."*

*This is what the things can teach us:*

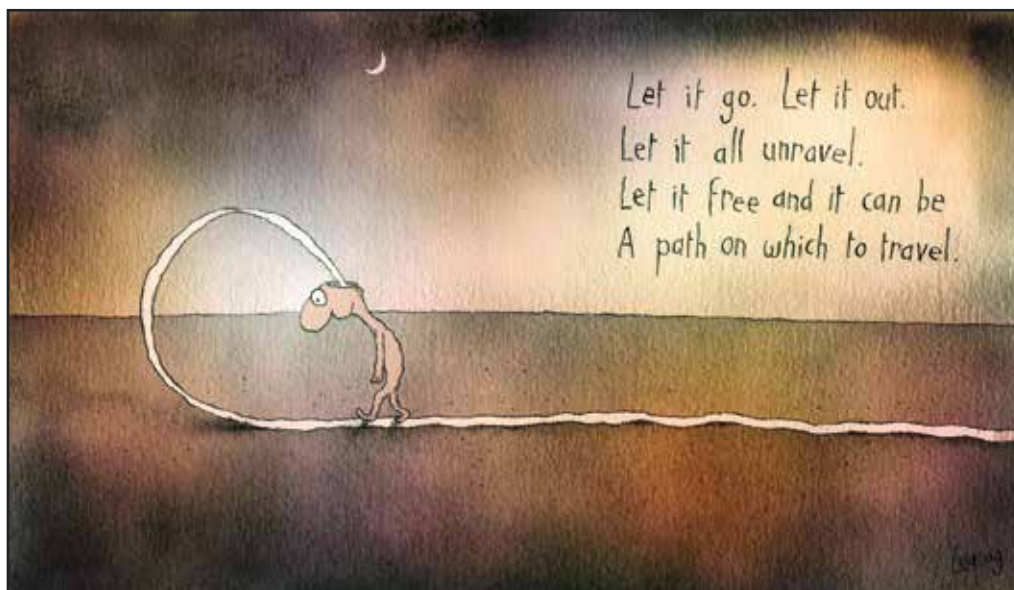
*"TO FALL,*

*Patiently*

*To trust our heaviness.*

*To trust and fall."*

*Terry Fitzpatrick  
Homily 26th and 27th October*



# ‘ do this as a memorial of me’

**M**y friends, Michael Morwood is not unknown to most of us. His book *From Sand to Solid Ground* has been pivotal in our understanding of the development of theology. Michael Morwood is one of those theologians who is no longer recognised by the Catholic Church - like Hans Kung. The readings provide the context for what I want to speak about. This includes what Kung had to say at the Second Vatican Council.

What happened at the time of Constantine was that the essence of the Christian message was blurred almost beyond recognition. We have had 1600 years of Constantinian hierarchy and clericalism. This was never there in the first three hundred years.

What I am saying is taken from Chapter ten of Michael Morwood's book *It's time - Challenges to the Doctrine of the Faith*. This chapter is about Holy Thursday night. Remember of course, that while there was an historical Jesus, we don't follow this Jesus. We follow, as Robert Crotty, Professor of Biblical Studies says, the literary Jesus. The Gospel is story. In fact the Last Supper may never have happened.

When we read the Gospel stories, so often we find Jesus having meals with people.

He was always sharing meals with the outsiders and mentally ill. He said 'do not invite your friends or neighbours; invite the outsiders, the poor, the homeless'. I think that this is the sort of meal that people would have had as Eucharist in the first three centuries. It was like the one Paul speaks of in the reading, rather than what happened in the 5th and 6th centuries where we saw introduced the catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, according to which the bread became literally the body of Christ and the wine became the blood of Christ.

Michael Morwood says that when Jesus took bread and broke it, as we do here, **he identified himself** with this gesture of breaking the bread. The point of the gesture was not to raise questions about how the bread was Jesus or became Jesus. Rather it is Jesus' powerful way, says Morwood, of expressing his message

symbolically, not literally. And this is what he was expressing on that night before he was betrayed. *'This is what it is like to be me. This is what it is like to be me – broken and given for the world, for humanity, for my dream, for my ministry'*. What Jesus wanted his friends to see in this gesture was his willingness to give his all, that is, his life, for what he believed. Someone broken and given.

Jesus wanted his friends to remember him this way. *'Do this in memory of me'*. He wanted his friends to remember him broken and given.

More than that he asked them to eat the bread. It is important when we eat the bread to remember what we are doing. The point in eating the bread was not to raise questions about what they were actually eating. That question would not have arisen,



*Annie and Chris co-celebrate Eucharist for the SMX community.*

says Morwood, in the minds of the Jews, of whom Jesus was one. It was a Passover meal that they were sharing. It was permeated with the power of symbol. No, the obvious question is, to what were those present committing themselves if they took the bread from Jesus and ate it? They would have realised that Jesus was symbolically asking for their commitment to carry on his dream and his ministry. He was asking if they too were willing to be broken and given for the world, for humanity, for his dream –the dream of Jesus.

It was Jesus' experience, as it is our experience, of pain, of loss, of dreaming, of longing, of friendship and commitment, where we can find what Eucharist is really about. It is not about transubstantiation, it is not about a priestly class. That came much later, unfortunately. It is not about receiving something. Eucharist, insofar as it connected with Jesus' action that night before the betrayal, before he died, was not intended to be about the priest with special powers to bring a Presence that was not already with the people. It was not to be about who can do this and who cannot. Not about how it works. Not to be dependent on a clerical middle management for the celebration of the Eucharist. It was and always should be about serious commitment on our part to the dream of Jesus.

The question I want to ask is this. Is it now time for this community to be prepared to

celebrate Eucharist without an ordained person present? It is nearly five years since we left the church. Since that time so much has changed. One of the things we did immediately was to invite women to be principal co-celebrant of Eucharist. This has been received with ease by the community. But there was always Terry or myself present as well. And on occasions we have had an ex-priest celebrate and also a minister of another denomination. We wondered if there would be some negative reaction to this amongst the community but there was only one person. She remarked that she felt uncomfortable and then she added *'But that is simply my Catholic upbringing!'*

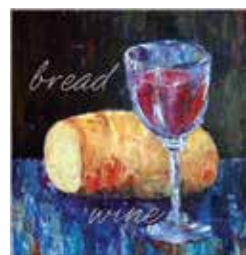
Since we came to the TLC we have been slowly changing. Perhaps the time has come for us to bring about this further change. Perhaps it is time for you, the people, of whom Terry and myself are a part, to lead the celebration of the Eucharist. Change will not come overnight, but over time we could move into this way of celebrating our Eucharist. We need to move back to what it was like in the early church. At the Second Vatican Council Hans Kung, who was there to advise the German bishops, asked this question to the council fathers. *'What happened at Corinth, when there was no Presbyter and there was no Bishop there? Who was responsible for the Eucharist? If the people celebrated the Eucharist then why can they not celebrate it now?'* A Cardinal

was heard to say *'This will never happen in the Catholic Church'*. But if this doesn't happen we will see the church declining. It is already declining. Bishops bring in priests from overseas, who come from a totally different culture to our own. They make mega-parishes, destroying whole communities. This is based on the 'fiction' that only an ordained man can celebrate a 'valid' eucharist - whatever that means.

You will find a straw poll at the back of the church where you can vote for whether you want this change to occur in our community. If you say 'yes', we will do it, but slowly and we will have a variety of combinations of people to preside at our Eucharist – gay couples, single people, married couples. So now it is up to you, the community, to decide.

*Peter Kennedy*

*Editor's note: The straw poll was in favour of the change at a twenty to one ratio. We have already had one couple celebrate for us. It is their picture that is featured on our front cover.*



# *Falling Upwards*

*If I could just  
fall upwards  
and float into space  
and out of time  
and look down  
upon my life*

*maybe I could rightly see  
and comprehend  
how small and short and exquisite  
it is*

*and how vast and complex and magnificent  
all is*

*and how broad and long and high and deep  
is the love  
that is in all*

*then maybe I could just  
fall down  
into my life  
into the fullness  
of this love.*

*Margaret Clifford  
November, 2013*



# Liturgical Action Mirroring Our Theological Understandings

Garry Willis in his book *Why Priests* examines the history of the priesthood within the Catholic tradition. He takes particular interest in the history and development of the Eucharist. His thesis challenges the concept of a last supper where Jesus initiated the ritual of consecrating the bread and wine into his body and blood.

Willis writes, *“So to summarize, though there were many charisms of service in the early Jesus movement- many functions, some inchoate offices-there were no priests and no priestly services; no male presider at the agape meal, no re-enactment of Jesus’ Last Supper, no ‘sacrifice of the Mass’, no consecrations of bread and wine; nothing that resembled what priests now claim to do. In fact, pagan critics of the Jesus movement said that it could not be a religion at all, since it had no priests, no altars, no designated places of worship”* (p.17).

Whilst Willis’s book is perhaps pitched more to the theological

student given its heavily laden references to scriptural texts and scholars, I believe his main thesis is relevant to the community of St Mary’s in Exile.

In particular it raises questions about the manner in which we perform the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The text which we read from the Gathering sheet is biased toward a consecration and sacrifice understanding of the Eucharist. The words we use as a community are:

*“He took the bread and blessed you, God of all creation; he broke the bread among his disciples and said: Take this, all of you and eat it. This is my body which will be given up for you”.*

In a similar vein we pray over the wine.

The Eucharistic theology that lies behind these words is incongruent with not only the thesis that Willis put forward but also with the spirituality that is practised

at St Mary’s in Exile community. This spirituality refutes the sacrificial understanding of the Eucharist and the pre-eminence of the presider. As a consequence our liturgical action does not truly mirror our theological understandings. I wonder therefore if as a community we need to re-examine and perhaps experiment with the way we pray in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, so that it does reflect our theological beliefs.

Perhaps the current words could be replaced with something that is in more keeping with our local theological understandings and focus on the real meaning of Eucharist, namely - thanksgiving.

An example could be: -

*“As we gather around this table of thanksgiving we remember the Jesus story, we remember his life and teachings that were based on the values of love, justice and compassion. As we hold this bread and this wine we give thanks for this life, these teachings and these values. In eating this bread and in drinking this wine we commit ourselves to living lives based on the Jesus message”.*

I offer these comments not as a criticism of what we are currently doing or on the authors of our current Eucharist prayer, but as a way to open a discussion on the way we pray together and remember the Jesus story.

*Andrew Kennelly*



# Is Your Time Running Out?

Geppetto fell in love with his creation when he made Pinocchio. So too, did the old couple with the Gingerbread Man. We humans constructed time and fell in love with it, too. Time has now become part of everyday life for most of us. We've learnt to borrow it, waste it, spend it, find it, take it, and sometimes even charge for it. You have found the time to read this, others can give us a hard time, we hurry to get to the shop before closing time arriving in the nick of time, and daylight-saving time is the only form of time travel most of us will experience. And, the demands of everyday life can be so time-consuming, that there's no time left to do the things that we'd really like to do; we run out of time to enjoy time.



*"They're baby boomers—like, you know, really old."*

Time also seems capable of speeding up and slowing down. Time travelling someplace seems to go much slower than time spent when we arrive at the destination. Boring meetings and dull conversations seem to go on forever. And office clock-watches wish time would go even faster and put an end to their misery. We're even prepared to pay significantly different prices for the same thing in different circumstances; timing is everything.

There's even debate about time speeding up as we age. Annual events seem to come around more quickly as we age. Charles Schultz told us that, *'Once you're over the hill, you begin to pick up speed'*.

Gandhi observed that, *'...as we grow older the clock runs faster and we slower'*. English novelist, J. B. Priestly, reckoned that time accelerated with age because a year is a much smaller fraction of an older person's life than it is of a child's. (I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but when it comes to clock time, the years go by at exactly the same speed as they always have.)

One of the fascinating things about chronological time and ageing is that it's usually others who determine what 'old' is. When it comes to ageing, objectivity rules: when you've reached a certain age (a number determined by

someone else) you're old. You may not think that you're old. You may not feel old. You might even insist that you're only as old as you feel, but the fact is that if others say you're old, you're old.

Governments dish out Seniors and Pension Cards to those who've reached a certain age, workplaces enforce use-by-dates, service-providers target age-related groups, and advertisers and employers continue to pay homage to the youth-beauty archetype that has become entrenched within our society. Simone de Beauvoir did not like the thought of someone else deciding whether or not she was old, describing the

practice as, '...a shameful secret that is unseemly to mention'. Brigit Bardot put a positive spin about growing old when she said, 'It's sad to grow old, but great to ripen'.

In *Travels with Epicurus*, Daniel Klein (he's in his 70s) resolved not to dwell on something, like growing older. He acknowledged that that was beyond his control. Instead, he says, 'I would rather try to figure out how to spend my time in the best possible way'. Klein, it seems, was aware of a different type of time; a kind of spiritual time, perhaps?

Spiritual time is not as easy to come to grips with as time of the chronological type; we don't know much about it – it may not even exist. Unlike chronological time, most of us must explore it (spiritual time) for ourselves, at our own speed. While there's plenty of help along the way, ultimately we're on our own, and there's no going back. ('We can never bathe twice in the same river', according to Heraclitus.) For most people, however, the road less travelled is too tough; the easy way out is a much better alternative. As a result, spiritual time isn't recognised or pursued by everyone.

I recently had lunch with a Peter-Pan character. Despite his (chronological) age, there seems little chance that he'll be exploring any new territory in the near future. Falling upwards, as Richard Rohr called it, is likely

to be something that he won't relate to. He's not alone, of course. According to Rohr, '... 90 percent of people seem to live 90 percent of their lives on cruise control...'. Few people are prepared to let go in order to achieve their true potential.

It will come as no surprise to SMXers that Peter and Terry demonstrated an awareness of this spiritual element when they introduced the practice of having people tell their life stories as homilies. It became pretty clear that most people's stories had a sameness about them. (Joseph Campbell found similarly in his exploration of myths.) As Richard Rohr says in *Falling Upwards*, 'Unless you let the truth of life teach you on its own terms,

*unless you develop some concrete practices for recognizing and overcoming your dualistic mind, you will remain in the first half of life forever...'*

Those of us lucky to be aware that we're in the second half of our lives may find relief and support in Richard Rohr's words of wisdom: 'God comes to us disguised as our life'. Or, if you prefer Irish comedian Dave Allen's wrap-up at the end his shows, 'May your God go with you'.

*Neil Flanagan*

*Dr Neil Flanagan is an active participant in the ageing process. For him, the good news about falling upwards is that it sure beats the alternative of not only falling down but also staying there.*



# The Gift of Cancer

I can still remember that night in hospital. During the hours of darkness I worked my way through all of the possible outcomes of a diagnosis of breast cancer. I am of that personality type which must envisage all of the possibilities, emotionally engage with these and then move on to coping with the day to day realities. It was on this night after imagining my own death and my family without me that I picked up a pen and wrote the words which would become the book *What is happening to my Mummy?*

At the time of my diagnosis, my younger son James was 8 and younger daughter Kate was 6 and my greatest concern was helping them cope with the cancer journey which was just beginning for us all. Those words scribbled during the night were turned into a one-off children's book by a dear friend Teresa Jordan who later illustrated the published version. She created drawings which gave life to my words so that my



*Kate and her Mum at her 60th birthday lunch in October 2013*

children then had a beautiful and simple explanation of what was happening to their mother. Years later, when the Queensland Cancer Council published this little book, I asked that it be produced in black and white so that children reading it could colour it in and make it personal and cheerful, just as Kate had done with the original copy.

While it seems strange, everyone who has journeyed with cancer

will know that this disease also brings great gifts and the most precious of these is a deep appreciation of every moment of life. I am not sure that without cancer I would have celebrated each milestone such as birthdays, graduations, Christmas celebrations and holidays with quite the same vigour and enthusiasm. I look at photos of the six of us at a local beach all wearing huge sun hats in solidarity with hairless me and I can actually feel the joy of that carefree day. I insisted that we get a puppy because I felt that if I were to lose the battle with cancer James and Kate would need an extra creature to love and to be loved by. So Pepper the black cocker spaniel joined our family and through her life brought only joy to us all. I suspect we would have remained dogless had I not had cancer and what a loss that would have been. And then there was our campervan holiday in New Zealand. To this day any mention of New Zealand will cause them to recall whale watching, swimming with seals, caving, exploring



*The whole family: Liz, Kate, James, Ben, Noela and Albert*

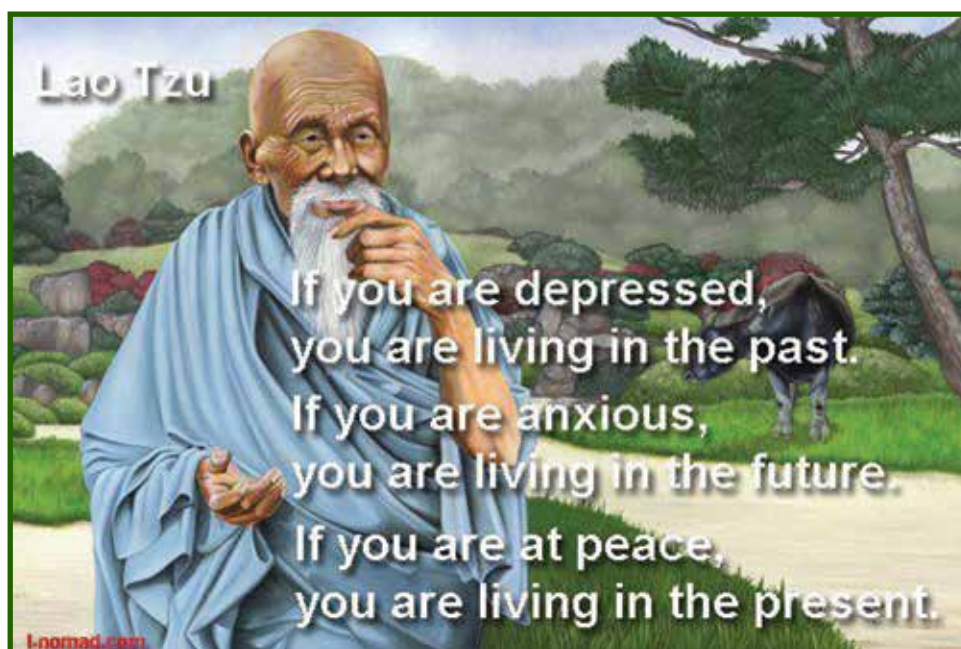
Milford Sound, visiting the Maori village and sitting on our campervan bed at night listening to Bill Bryson on the radio. Journeying with cancer makes you create lots of precious memories and that is what childhood is all about.

My two younger children are now grown up, both solicitors and beautiful young adults. When I had a subsequent (and less serious)

breast cancer 5 years ago, I had no deep concerns about them. I looked at them and felt that they had the emotional resilience to cope with the future. Twelve months after that surgery Kate and I had a wonderful month's holiday in Germany over Christmas. We shared a magical time together, making memories which will sustain us forever. A year after that trip Kate presented me with a book filled with photos and special

memories. In this book she writes that “ *without you I couldn't have grown into the person I am. They say that every girl grows into her mother. I hope this is true. If one day I am even half the person you are, I would consider myself lucky*” .....and that is indeed a great gift.

*Noela Moran*



# Some Thoughts on the Excommunication of Fr Greg Reynolds

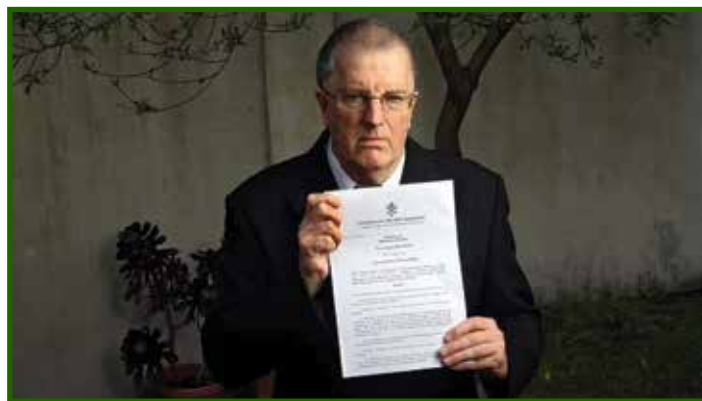
Mary McKillop springs to mind when the word 'excommunication' is mentioned in an Australian context. By 1871 the pioneering pastoral work in which she and her fellow sisters were engaged had attracted enough displeasure to the local Church authority, Bishop Shiel, that he decided to take the grave step of excommunicating her, (excommunicate: to put out of the community – here, the community of the Catholic Church). The bishop withdrew this black ban only when on his death bed a year later.

Now nearly a century and a half later Fr Greg Reynolds has become the second in this country to be sentenced to excommunication.

The irritant to the Church authorities in his case was his stated beliefs on the right of women to be priests, the right of homosexuals to full participation in the Church and of de facto relationships to be recognized, and for the full inclusion of all in the Sacraments.

As has been well documented, these rights have been strongly supported and promulgated for many years by large numbers within and outside the Catholic Church, warnings and bannings by the hierarchy notwithstanding.

In May this year the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a Decree of the Excommunication and Laicization of Fr. Reynolds. For some reason



known only to a person or persons in the CDF this document (written wholly in Latin which the priest does not understand) was presented to him by the Dean of the Melbourne Cathedral on 18 September.

The Decree is dated 31 May 2013. So much mystery and question surrounds this extraordinary measure taken under the auspices of the Vatican.

Not one person yet knows or is likely to be told who is the originator of the final complaint file on Fr Reynolds sent to the Vatican. From what has been gleaned, it was neither the Melbourne Archbishop, Denis Hart nor the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Paul Gallagher. While Arch. Hart had threatened Fr. Reynolds with laicization, an action which the priest expected would be carried out, the actual excommunication itself took the archbishop by surprise also.

There has been no consultation or contact with Fr. Reynolds at any

stage either by the Vatican or by its Australian representatives, no right of reply or even a request/order for a personal meeting with the CDF. The Catholic Church is an autonomous body with its own laws; its power is from within and civil civilities are not followed - the normal legal right of 'due process' is irrelevant to the Church.

The main issue, somewhat obliquely referred to among all the canonical phrases and numberings in the document, seems to be that of 'desecration'. Apparently, the person(s) who secretly sent the report on Fr. Reynolds included in the dossier an article published in Melbourne's *The Age* in August 2012. It is an account by that newspaper's religious reporter Barney Zwartz of the Mass for Fr. Reynolds' Inclusive Catholics group in which one of the participants, present for the first time, gave part of his Host to his dog. Of all the crowd participating in the ceremony, only two people happened to see this action but Zwartz included a photo of the happy hound in his article; being a journalist he probably thought

that everyone loves a good dog story and that his mentioning of it would attract a wider audience! It did so; the story went wild and to a much wider audience than mere pet lovers.

None of the follow-up media appearances or letters explaining that Fr. Reynolds had no knowledge of this incident would expiate the outrage of the hierarchy and many Catholics. Dog given Host sticks in the mind and is there to stay. All the way to Rome this went and the Canon 1367 (... desecration...) and 1369 (.....gravely harms public morals.....) were brought into play.

This extraordinary Decree has underscored the deeply serious issue of personal conscience vs conscience authorised by the Catholic Church. Fr. Reynold's first dangerous step was his decision to talk publicly about his carefully considered beliefs and concerns.

He has gone ahead bravely and has been acting on them; his public Masses are inclusive and welcoming to all. It is little wonder that so many marginalised and saddened or maddened Catholics and former Catholics are attracted to these celebrations where they can feel free and wholesome.

Being excommunicated from the Church he loves and believes in is an enormous blow for a man of great faith and purpose to follow and further Christ's teaching. Fr. Reynolds has himself initiated

meetings with some canon lawyers; their analyses of the document vary.

On Sunday 6 October, the usual Inclusive Catholics fortnightly Eucharist was named a Mass of Support for Fr. Reynolds and some 170 people participated: a wonderful diverse crowd of enthusiastic Catholics, the ministers and parishioners of both a Uniting and an Anglican Church, many others of a long-gone, faded faith and some with none. No photos were taken, there being some concern that there could be a malevolent note-taker or two among the crowd who just might be ready to send more myopic evidence to Rome about the group.

Most people stayed for a long time after the beautiful Mass was over, talking about the significance of Fr. Reynolds' excommunication and laicization and how much disquiet it had fomented. There were constant remarks also about the outstanding, meaningful and reverent aspects of the Mass and the awareness of the dignity of each person there and the welcomed participation of all.

The question of how high this decree went inside the Vatican and whether Pope Francis was privy to it was and is a constant and disquieting thought. The Pope has been speaking out so much



*Author of this piece - Jan Coleman, with her son Justin, a member of our community.*

about reforming ourselves and opening up to, listening to people of different views within the Church. His message seems to be for 'Risorgimento' - experiencing a rebirth - to the needs of the modern Church, the Italian word used sometimes to describe Pope John XXIII's exhortations during the Second Vatican Council.

This excommunication flies in the face of Pope Francis' remarks so one hopes the Decree somehow slipped under his radar. So now we have Mary McKillop and Greg Reynolds – two Australians joined in notoriety, joined in bravery and in dedication to their Christ-journey. It is to be hoped that the Pope will address this blatant action by his CDF, will cleanse the Curia, take note of the thousands of petitions being sent to him on the poor state of the Church and look into the many suggestions by Church people for reform.

*Risorgimento!  
Jan Coleman*

# Trust and Oneness

Science shows more and more that our physical bodies and all that we regard as material is 'just' another form of energy. I am not my physical body or rather I am more (and less) than my physical body. I AM. I am an expression of that ENERGY - that *'Love that makes the world go round'* as my grandmother used to say.

But I am not in isolation. I am part of (ONE WITH) that vast energy that has drawn our world to an ever more intricate whole. In us today there is the drive to understand who we are but this can only be truly achieved when we accept our part in evolution and recognise that we do not see the full picture. In the microcosm of our lives we make choices without knowing all that is involved. We usually make the decisions because of the effect we think they will have on us and our descendants.

**'we need to be open to the big picture in order to make right decisions even in our own lives ,**

What can we do? We may not be able to change the laws that have a complete disregard for others who have already suffered so much and should be given the chance to share some of our bounty. We might not be able to influence the attitude to our environment that poses a danger to our country, our world and the life on it. But we need to be open to the big picture in order to make right decisions even in our own lives.

I am, though, just one person and I need a community (and my husband) to test my theories, to point out where I have not fully embraced Being, Love and Truth. What I have done in my life and what I could still do may not seem important on the grand scale but if I can move just one pebble I just may help to start the landslide that we need to make things possible. And if you move one too.....!!

Our world has shown remarkable resilience in the millions of years it has taken to enable self awareness to open the possibilities for this new and different awareness, the awareness of our oneness with all that is. Are we willing to recognise our limited understanding, the blinkers we need to discard, the all embracing Love that is at one with all Truth and all Being. In 1970 , I found that I had to step out of my comfort zone and *"Pray as if my prayer had already been answered."* For me this meant putting absolute trust in someone I wanted to know – God. And it changed my whole perception!

Evolution did not need our help to form a world filled with plants and animals that aid each other in the struggle to survive and develop. Animals and plants have produced a planet where every niche seems to have been filled; where animals have found the foods to survive and the plants appear to change



and grow to satisfy the needs of those creatures that depend on them. And then we come along and risk losing our habitat to satisfy our greed rather than our need! Without a thought for the danger to ourselves, our descendants, and indeed all life on earth, we continue to pollute the oceans and turn vast tracts of land into barren deserts. Life on earth may survive as it has in the past but this could mean millions of years and perhaps the extinction of our species to rebuild the living planet we now occupy and where we are now being offered the chance to cooperate in a transformation whose scope we cannot even begin to imagine.

Our televisions bring us the evidence of one natural disaster after another. The devastation of the typhoon in the Philippines is but the latest! We seem to be approaching another period of more than usually violent upheavals in the world. Whether or not climate change is caused by our refusal to realise we are at one with all that is, will make little difference if the effects are as catastrophic as in the period when all the large reptiles became extinct. Can we accept/embrace this idea of oneness? Do we welcome this unity and accept even the extinction of our human race if that is necessary for the



success of this wonderful glorious cosmic experiment of which we are part?

Humanity has been offered the opportunity to co operate with the Divine but we are a stubborn race and find it very difficult to put our complete trust in a God who knows and loves us in a way that we cannot fully comprehend. It is this complete trust in God that is vital if we as a species are to thrive.

### **‘Let us listen to that voice within ,**

Let us listen to that voice within, then let us make our own small decisions - like casting our votes, writing to the media, opening our hearts to those we meet - and we just may be able to look back on our lives with satisfaction from the perspective of that Universal Being with whom, in whom, we live and have our being. When pictures of the latest disaster hit our screens I had just written a piece that suggested that the earth will survive the worst we can do to it. Yes I do believe that - BUT it may take millions of years to return to a stage where self awareness again has a chance to accept or reject the awareness (the reality) of the oneness of all things.

We are one with all that is. We are one with this wonderful experiment where the attraction of the particles in space finally came to form this glorious planet; where life first appeared in the sea; where this life took on an almost infinite variety. All this development can surely not be

passed off as an accident! Plants and animals appear to cooperate in the development of attributes that help the survival of other species. This ability to hear the guidance of the spirit is something that we lost when we first became aware that we could think things through for ourselves. (For me there is no Original SIN but it has certainly taken us a long time to relearn that we are one with all that is.) We lost this awareness of the force/being that is drawing all things to itself and imagined that we needed only our own reason to rule the world.

If indeed the effects are going to be catastrophic we will be forced to recognise our oneness - the typhoon/tsunami/earthquake/ volcano/drought/fires/floods kill the bad AND the good.

We are one with every other human being– how can we accept the treatment of refugees in our own country? We are one with every other human being – how can wars still be part of our agenda? We are one with every other human being - how can we still treat Aboriginals as second class citizens? We are one with every other human being – how can so many make their aim in life to amass a fortune when others are unable to earn a living? We are one with every other human being – how can we exploit poorer countries? How can we condemn those who find it necessary to limit their family size! How can we treat women as second class citizens - especially in

a church supposedly dedicated to the love of God and neighbour? The list goes on and on.

I HOPE and TRUST but feel as Jesus must have felt in his agony in the garden when, before fully accepting that he had to die, he must surely have asked, ‘*Why did it come to this?*’ Have we left our conversion too late? I do not know. But I am certain that it is vitally necessary for us to recognise and fully accept the oneness we have with all that is, with the Spirit that has inspired and underpins this wonderful universe. Our acceptance of whatever may happen can, like the death of Jesus, play an important part. There will be a resurrection even if we as a race have to die, but even then our willingness to die may be as powerful as was the willingness that Jesus had when he accepted his own death. The biblical Kingdom of God will come but if humans are to be a part in it we have to accept that the death of our race may be what is necessary. Can we truly say, “*Thy will be done*” ?

*Shar Ryan*



*‘how can we accept the treatment of refugees in our own country ‘*

# Falling Upwards

Being Eucharist - oozing thanksgiving

Falling: Suffering & Well-being

Upwards: Exposes Spirit's Breath

Being Eucharist

Falling: death

Upwards: Exposes Eternal Life

Being Eucharist

Falling: Nothingness

Upwards: Exposes Everything

Being Eucharist

Falling: Separation Belief

Upwards: Exposes indestructible Love

Bring Eucharist

Falling: Ridicule - abuse

Upwards: Exposes indestructible Love

Being Eucharist

Falling: The Word  
Upwards: Exposes Brilliant Stillness  
Being Eucharist

Falling: Bread of Life  
Upwards: Exposes fulfilment  
Being Eucharist

Falling: Seeming absence  
Upwards: Exposes Omnipresence  
Being Eucharist

Awakened Blessedness  
Full of Light  
Oozing thanksgiving  
Being Eucharist

One Will, One Life  
One Being Is- ing  
Falling Upwards  
Being Wholeness

*Barbara Fingleton*

# What People are Reading



## It's Time - Challenges to the Doctrine of the Faith

Michael Morwood

Kelmore Publications 2013



It seems to me that the more I read about the history of Christianity and the Catholic Church, the more unlikely it is that it has managed to survive for about a thousand years. Not only has it survived but over the centuries it has spawned extraordinary people who have created sublime music, exquisite painting, majestic architecture and great philosophers.

My latest reading in this genre has been Michael Morwood's latest book 'It's Time -Challenges to the Doctrine of the Faith'. This is a very worthwhile book for all thinking Christians to read. It answers the question of how the people of 'The Way' - the first followers of Jesus, had their simple and practical message of love,

compassion and caring for the outsiders changed so radically. And not only their message but also their way of operating as a group of people who wanted to get together to remember Jesus and try to make his vision of the new Realm of God a reality in their world.

Morwood tells us how Paul's interpretation of who Jesus was changed the direction of the burgeoning Christian communities. It tells of how his desire to make his story one that would resonate with his Greek and Roman listeners moved the emphasis away from the man Jesus to the Christ figure.

This is such an intriguing book, of which I have just given a taste. Do read it. It is very accessible and hugely interesting.

*Margaret Ortiz*

## The Smallest Carbon Footprint in the Land & other eco-tales

by Anne Morgan & Gay McKinnon

Publisher : P Kidz

*The Smallest Carbon Footprint in the Land* is a book written and illustrated by two Australian women, retelling old familiar stories in a humorous way. The stories are clever, amusing, but not preachy.

Some of the stories in this collection of organically-grown eco-tales include: a prince who wants to marry the girl with the smallest carbon footprint in the land; Space Cadet Lox who finds out why a planet is like a bowl of porridge; a girl in a little green hoodie who tries to save an endangered wolf; and Chicken Licken who warns the sea is rising. Times have changed in Fairy-tale Land!

Details re purchase - <http://ipoz.biz/Titles/SCF.htm>

*Maureen Kanowski*

# Illusion and Reality

## Reprising non-duality

### Reading:

*The Art of Original Thinking* by Jan Phillips.

*“Humanity is being taken to a place where it will have to choose between suicide and adoration”, wrote the Jesuit priest and paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin. “The fate of the world, of every child in the world, is in the hands of those of us who populate it, and we are each at that choice point, each responsible every day for actions that move the tipping point one way or another. The matter of original thinking now is an urgent one, as it is time to think anew, to weave the findings of Myths: Dispelling the Old, Defining the New science—of our true interconnectedness, our profound and universal indivisibility—into new myths and stories that feed our souls and inspire acts of adoration.”*

One of the most revered scientists of all time, Albert Einstein, believed likewise. He wrote:

*“A human being is part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. We experience ourselves, our thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest. A kind of optical delusion of consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature*

*in its beauty. The true value of a human being is determined by the measure and the sense in which they have obtained liberation from the self. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive.”*

The reading speaks of a new way of thinking that has been emerging in the world, one that is more universal and reflecting of the connectedness of the entire human and non-human family. This new way of thinking, as I understand, is an integrated approach to spirituality and it rests on the ancient wisdom teachings of non-duality.

At the outset I would like to say that whilst many enquire into this mystery that we all are, nobody to date really knows what it really is.

Rumi says *“There are three ways to approach the mystery of the divine, the first is through prayer, the second is through meditation and the third and most important is via conversations”*. I am very grateful to be part of this amazing community that provides this container for us all to explore the true meaning of our lives from wherever we are on that journey. So thank you.

Today I am going to attempt to give you a glimpse into the concept of non-duality as I understand it and how it has helped me to experience moments of freedom and thereby live a happier, fuller



and more enlivened life in the last few years.

Then I will discuss non-dual consciousness and put it into an evolutionary context with the hope of making some sense of the crisis situations on so many fronts that we face as a global family.

So firstly what is non-duality? It simply means, just that.. non-dual – not two. It comes from the ancient Indian Vedic teachings of the Advaita Vedanta where *“Advaita”* is a Sanskrit word that means “not two”. In other words *“Oneness”*.

So in a nutshell, non-duality is simply Oneness, one with “god”, the mystery, universal intelligence, love, source... whatever you want to call it. One with each other.

I first came across non-duality seven years ago when I was facing a very challenging time in my own life. I remember sitting on my verandah in a state of total frustration, having tried everything my limited mind could, to improve my situation. I felt as though I was hitting my head against a wall. I broke down, cried profusely, actually sobbed for a good hour or so and then finally at the end

of it put my hands up in the air and shouted out loudly, *"I give up, I surrender. Take me and do whatever you want with me."* Luckily there were no neighbours around!!!

I truly surrendered to the divine in that moment of helplessness. For the rest of the day and from then on I would often experience moments of bliss . A feeling of just being carried. That all would be well. In fact I had this sense that all was already well despite the seemingly opposite circumstances that surrounded me at the time.

Soon after that, I came across a book written by an Indian philosopher , Jiddu Krishnamurti who writes on non-duality. When asked once how he would sum up his entire teachings he replied, *'I don't care whatever happens'*.

He meant that he was OK with whatever happened . He did not judge it as good or bad, happy or sad. He just saw it as it was. He experienced the feelings that the incident evoked in him and then had this ability to just drop them, thus freeing him to look at his situation from a bird's eye perspective and therefore giving him the ability to deal it with much more clarity and maturity than if he was emotionally caught in it.

So how do we start to experience

this way of being when from the time we were young we have been taught to do otherwise? The need to be right, to be apologized to, holding onto anger, resentment, feeling rejection, jealousy, I'm not good enough, not capable enough, and so on and so forth and slowly letting these fixed ways of being rob us of other truly magical experiences that pass us by in the meanwhile.

I'd like to share with you all a couple of exercises that have helped me grasp the understanding of non-duality.

The first exercise helped me understand who, or rather what, I was, which I believe is the key to experiencing non-duality, so if you would like to engage in it that would be good and if not that's good too.

Close your eyes and watch out for the next thought .Imagine that it is coming from the outside of your right temple going across your forehead and out the left temple.

I am going to wait a few moments while you do that. You might notice that no thought is coming while you are watching out for it. And if your eyes are closed, what is it that is doing the watching . For me it feels like it is somewhere behind me or to the side . I'm not sure. It feels as

though it has no boundaries and is definitely not tangible. It's what we call awareness, spaciousness. That which is always there, indestructible and always free.

I realized that I was simply that spaciousness which had no boundaries , also referred to as consciousness . And if I am that spaciousness and you are that spaciousness, that spaciousness is what pervades everything in the entire cosmos; we are therefore all connected. And whatever affects one directly or indirectly affects all. Therefore every action and reaction of everyone of us counts.

Continue to breathe gently and feel that spaciousness available to us in every moment through the eloquent silence of our breath.

So my very first insight was that I was simply that spaciousness, in which all of my life was arising.

Of course I very often catch myself thinking that I am my body and my mind and the rest of it but then as soon as I feel any sense of fear, emotional pain, sorrow, I immediately know that I am identifying with the self, this physical body 'Carolyn'. And all I do is just stay with it.

Integrating non-duality into my life has really helped me live my life in a way that allows me to fully participate in it more and more without worrying about the outcome or being concerned about what anyone thinks of me. It has allowed me to be authentic in my relationships and this has been the most rewarding of them all.

Jiddu Krishnamurti

We are talking of something entirely different, not of self-improvement, but of the cessation of the self.





*This intriguing diagram is Wilber's summary of some resources that he thought he'd like to share.*

My most recent insight into the mystery has come from modern day mystic and philosopher Ken Wilber's Integral Theory where he suggests that all of life is there to be experienced in all of its fullness. In fact whatever it is we are afraid of or tend to avoid is exactly what we need to go towards. This is also known as shadow work.

Ken Wilber's Integral Theory suggests that spirituality is an integration of all aspects of our lives and in a nutshell it is not about transcending the body but rather embodying the transcendent. In other words realizing and experiencing our "Godness" here in this physical plane especially in the midst of our trials. For what could our world look like if every one of us felt whole, complete and interconnected?

Being activists from a place of love is what is needed at this time of crisis. We need transformational change. And that can only happen when we start to recognize that every one of us however we may appear, good or bad, is nothing else but love, that spaciousness, indestructible and always free.

Studies have shown that crisis precedes transformation to a higher order. Eminent futurists believe that the crisis situations we are all facing today on so many fronts as a global family could be heralding the death of a separated way of being and moving into a resurrection, a spiritual renaissance, a sense of Oneness, which will lead us towards a more sustainable and compassionate future. Many scientists believe we are evolving as a species. The only difference is that this time

we, human consciousness, not Darwinian natural selection, is in the driving seat. Tasting non-duality and understanding our interconnectedness at a profound level leads to the realization that the thoughts and actions of everyone, everyday, counts in this time of transition.

*Carolyn Vincent*

AWAKE!  
by Rumi

*The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.  
Don't go back to sleep.*

*You must ask for what you really want.  
Don't go back to sleep.*

*People are going back and forth across the doorsill where the two worlds touch.  
The door is round and open.  
Don't go back to sleep.*

# Falling Forwards

I can think of several instances that might contribute to the “*Falling Upwards*” theme. I have called them Falling Forwards, to be used in my ongoing life.

I am an extrovert and often came away from encounters dissatisfied that I had talked too much about me and my concerns. I knew this was partly nervousness and a deep desire not to appear boring. (Those who are fellow fours on the Enneagram will understand this!) Also, in my job I listened to other peoples’ lives, so I was allowing myself some me-time. I could understand why I did it. Now I make a conscious effort not to do this e.g. at coffee after Mass. I always come away enriched and happier. I have heard something really interesting or important (to them) from someone I know, or met someone new, or just waited and accepted what was happening and realised this was the right thing to do. By clearing away some of my own stuff, I have made room for other people’s. Sometimes I need that time for me. However when I don’t and I haven’t listened I realise I have gone back into the old trap.

I am by nature competitive. I have recently retired. For some years as I grew to be one of the older and more experienced work colleagues in my organisation I was always aware of that. I used to need to show my experience or “instruct” others. A few years ago I realised I wasn’t needing to



do this anymore! The transition just happened and only later did I become aware of it. I wasn’t consciously working on this. I know I had been working on my spiritual life and was praying, reading, and thinking. I began to realise I wasn’t automatically thinking, when listening to a colleague, “*you are younger/less experienced/I need to say something wise etc.*” I learnt from them and I am sure I enjoyed their company more, losing this facet of competitiveness – and they probably enjoyed my company more too! (I still compete at times but, I hope, at more worthwhile things and not where someone else is put down.)

I follow Richard Rohr’s work. I find it really helpful. However, he seems to talk about the ego only in negative terms. I was psychodynamically trained and have realised a “healthy” ego is important for people. I am meaning it in the sense of having an individual autonomous identity and an idea of self worth. I

have encountered many deeply damaged people who haven’t developed their own sense of self: they may be completely dependent on another person. They may also think they are themselves worthless so do not believe they have a right to a life, make safe decisions for themselves and their children, and others can do whatever they want with them. I think this is an unformed or damaged ego. I think Rohr means us to be vigilant and not have a dominant, self regarding ego but that we are to be thinking adults who care for ourselves and each other.

*Pippa Bonner U.K.*



# Letters,

# Emails,

# Comments



I compliment the Faith Community Council on the Draft Terms of Reference. I attended many of the preliminary meetings and listened intently as participants commented on what they wanted. There was a lot of divergence of opinion about details, but almost universal approval of the idea of having a Council. The Terms of Reference capture almost all the ideas expressed and that is a great accomplishment.

I think that one idea I heard expressed many times at the meetings and which is absent from the Terms of Reference is that SMX should continue as a Christian community. This could be accomplished quite simply by adding the words “AND ENSURE ITS CONTINUATION AS A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY” – or something similar to this – to the existing first line headed 1. Role/Purpose.

SMX came out of a Christian community and my conversations with many members of SMX revealed almost universal approval of the concept of being a Christian community. I regard this as a vital issue, much more important than what name we are called. If the issue of a name is important enough to be put to a vote, surely the vital issue of whether we are a Christian community is even more worthy of being voted on by those attending SMX if the Council’s opinion on this point is not unanimous.

My straw polls of SMX members revealed not universal agreement with the concept of its being a Christian community. Those opposed usually were afraid that calling it a Christian community would be against the idea of inclusivity (which is justifiably included in the Draft Terms under “j”). I regard this objection as being baseless as, in my many years of attending SMX, I have not once seen an example of the exclusion of someone because they were not a believer in Christ. After all, we are a community of orthopraxis and not of orthodoxy (to quote Peter Kennedy). Our liturgy is Christian and anyone objecting to this has probably voted with their feet and stopped attending.

As I have said so often that it has become boring to anyone listening, I believe that SMX attracts those who try to live a life as each understands Jesus wants her or him to act and I hope that acknowledging its Christian heritage would help to continue that tradition.

*David Pincus*



Just wanted to say thank you for the wonderful Luang Prabang edition of the magazine.

We had a great time there and the spirit of what we did and who we are was captured in the stories in the magazine.

The pix were magnificent. - what a beautiful place it is. Thanks to the writers and to the editor who put it together with such love.

*Happy Traveller*

The Luang Prabang issue was very attractive but I missed the meaty stuff we expect from this magazine.

Certainly it was more than just a travelogue, and some of the stories were actually very good indeed. But now for some real theology, or spirituality.

*George Tomlinson*

The recent issue of the St Mary’s in Exile magazine is particularly interesting to me because I am, somewhat late in life, discovering the notion of non-duality. The question posed on the front cover with its fascinating illusion graphic caught my attention at once. The material in the magazine was not a disappointment.

I look forward to more on this topic. I only wish I lived in Brisbane so that I could attend your service.

*Mary-Ann Blakemore  
Glen Iris*

# *At the Depths*

*To fully live  
die  
every day  
allow  
the falling  
down  
down*

*into the depths  
of the dark unknown  
total surrender*

*into the humility  
of not knowing  
not controlling*

*into the tenderness  
of not judging  
compassionate responding*

*into the spirit's longing  
for consuming love  
receiving, giving*

*into the full experience  
of whatever is  
pain, joy, peace*

*and there  
at the depths  
at the deaths  
is the gift  
of grace  
of goodness  
of god.*

*Margaret Clifford  
Easter 2013*

# Community Celebration at Andelaine

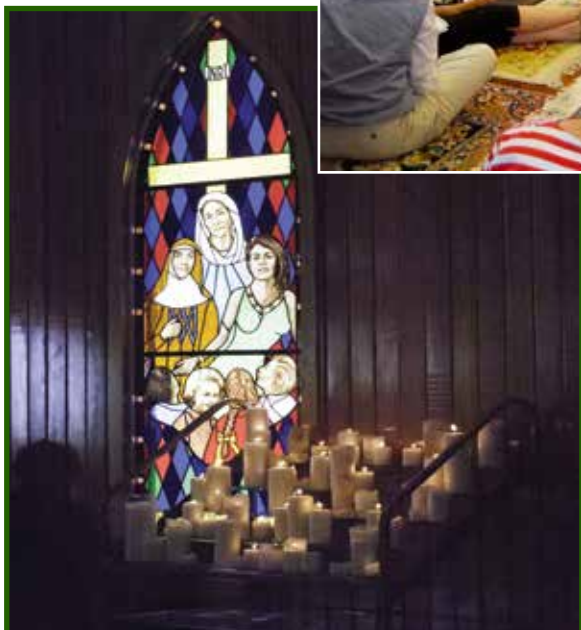


*Doc gets ready  
the wine*



*Thanks to Peter,  
Lorraine and Ian  
for these pictures*

*Peter and Annie  
co-celebrate  
Eucharist with  
the people at  
Andelaine*



## St Mary's Matters - Edition 35

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Joan Mooney

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# God

*A voice asked,  
‘Who or what is God?’  
The pine trees sighed softly, ‘I am.’  
Deep in the jungle of grass and weeds,  
a tiny ant paused and declared, ‘I am.’  
From a million light-years away,  
the burning answer of a star came, ‘I am.’  
A turtle poked his head out of his shell and said,  
‘I didn’t understand the question.’  
‘Who or what is God?’ the voice repeated.  
‘Oh,’ said the turtle,  
tucking his head back into his shell, ‘I am.’  
A voice asked, ‘Who is God?’  
The ocean roared, ‘I am.’  
The trees softly swayed, ‘I am.’  
A little newborn child cried, ‘I am.’  
A yogi high in the Himalayan caves chanted, ‘I am.’  
Then a voice said,  
‘Will the real God please stand up?’  
And the entire universe quietly stood up.*

-Hilda Charlton