

# CTC Net #work

A fortnightly newsletter of Te Kupenga Catholic Theological College

## IMPORTANT DATE

Auckland remains in Alert Level 4 and the rest of Aotearoa in Level 2.

All events are cancelled at Level 4.

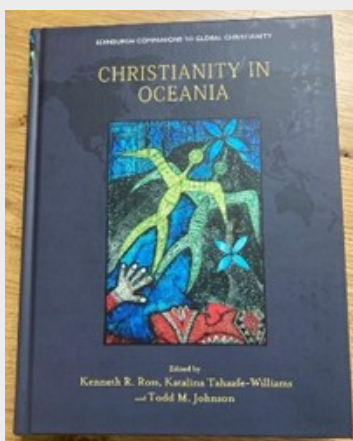
## ANNOUNCEMENT / PANUI

### New Date for Diaconate Ordination

Due to the Covid lockdown, the diaconate ordination has been moved to Saturday, October 2, 2021 (11:00 AM 12:30 PM) at 44 Vermont St, Ponsonby.

Join the Catholic Diocese of Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch as we celebrate Seminarians Adam Kirkeby, Alfred Tong and Monty Bamford's Ordination to the Holy Order of Deacons. Archbishop of Wellington Paul Martin will be presiding.

Note: Due to the Covid lockdown, date has changed and location may change. Changes will be updated on this event.



Edinburg University Press published the book 'Christianity in Oceania'. CTC Lecturer, Dr Rocio Figueroa co-authored the chapter on 'Catholicism in Oceania' with Dr Philip Gibs. Congratulations Rocio!

<https://edinburghuniversitypress.com/book-christianity-in-oceania.html#product.info.bio>

## Message from the Dean

Dr John Evangelista



### To Jesus Through Mary

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of September we commemorated the Holy Name of Mary, the titular feast of the Society of Mary. The Marist family continues to be a very important part of the lives of New Zealanders. In particular they have been instrumental in the establishment of the Good Shepherd College which is the

precursor of CTC. We take this opportunity to thank the Marist family for their commitment and love for the people of God especially here in Aotearoa New Zealand. May Mary, our Mother, continue to always show us how to be Christ-like in our lives.

### 2022 Strategic Activities

CTC faculty and staff spent time the past month to determine the appropriate strategic activities for the College in 2022. We started with an organisational assessment allowing us to pause for a while to recognise what we have done so far and what the current situation is both internally and externally. Following the organizational self-reflection exercise and mapping of our stakeholders, the team considered possible strategic activities for 2022. Thank you for all the hard work everyone has put into this activity.



New Zealand has its very own language, Māori! Along with English and NZSL, te reo Māori has been an official language of Aotearoa since 1987. This year marks 49 years since the Māori Language petition calling for te reo to be taught in our schools was presented to Parliament.

### Tonga Language Week 2021 5 - 11 September

This year's theme was Fakakoloa 'o Aotearoa 'aki 'a e Ako Lelei, which means enriching Aotearoa with holistic education.

The theme serves as a conversation starter on the importance of holistic education, diverse forms of learning and how Aotearoa can benefit from it.





# Reflections for Social Justice Week

Dr Rocio Figueroa



This week we celebrate 'Social Justice week' in New Zealand and I think it is a good time to reflect on what Jesus and his message of justice and love demands from us in the context of the Pandemic. For several months in this country, we had been very blessed to be free of Covid-19, although there was always the risk of forgetting people's sufferings and struggles around the world. But today, with the Delta outbreak, we are once again

aware of the fragility of the human condition and the difficulties many brothers and sisters are going through.

When we analyse the pandemic, we see a natural disease with overwhelming consequences for humanity. The theologian J. Sobrino points out the importance of not just talking about the natural factors of a disaster and how to mitigate them, but the necessity of taking the social factors seriously. The fact that most victims of the pandemic are poor is not an accident, but it belongs to the essence of the pandemic. So, the consequences of the pandemic are not only produced by natural causes, they are also a product of injustice. In the pandemic the poor are the most vulnerable; they are the ones who are suffering the most.

This pandemic is an epistemic means to 'see' the world and to think of our social responsibility. The impact on a society of Covid-19 reveals pre-existing conditions. It reveals the sin of the world, the sin of our

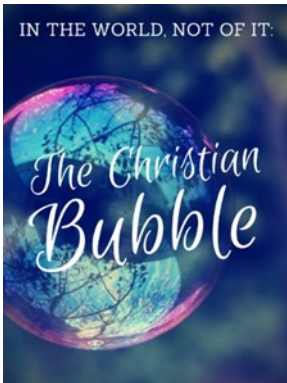
structures in which we have abandoned the most vulnerable. It helps us to visualise what our consumeristic societies are trying to hide. When we talk about "seeing" it is not just about knowing the reality. All of us 'know' the reality of poverty in New Zealand but not everybody 'recognises it'. That is why the pandemic can be an epistemological instrument for the world. The pandemic has been like an x-ray or a mirror. In this I mean that it allows us to truly see how we have shaped our society before the pandemic arrived and how we had forgotten to live in solidarity with our brothers and sisters. We have not answered the question God asked of Abel after the death of Cain: "Where is your brother?" (Gen. 4:9).

It is a good time to reflect how many times we have embraced a consumeristic and egoistic view. It is a good time to remember that in the core of Jesus' heart were the most vulnerable and we as his followers need to put the poor, forgotten, marginalised and victims of injustice at the core of our mission.



# Christians in the world, not in spite of it

Reflections by Mark Bond



As we began another lockdown period, I got to thinking about liminality and its potentially concomitant feelings of stagnation and frustration. We might want to go out, see family and friends, and get back to our "normal" lives, but we also want to be safe, and stop the Covid Delta variant from spreading within our communities. This sense of being pulled between two conflicting desires—what psychology calls *cognitive dissonance*—is perhaps something we all wrestle with on an almost weekly basis (I know I do!), and it is all the more pronounced during moments of liminality, of navigating

boundaries, and—as many would agree—of the Christian life.

Inspired by Fr. Brendan Ward's early August homily on the temptation to bisect the dual (but harmonious) natures of Christ, and Fr. Merv Duffy's T7231 lectures about how Jesus often alluded to his divine nature in ambiguous and implicit ways, I'd like to offer some of my reflections on a particular task we all have as Christians: to live in the world, but not of the world. This can be a tricky task to navigate, since our world is ever-changing and becoming increasingly secular. But perhaps if we see the task as *allowing for possibility* rather than as *creating tension*, then we can begin to see the real joys and benefits that can come from living in Christ while living in the world.

Humility—a good self-knowledge—allows for sympathetic and gentle growth when it comes to navigating the line between Christ and the world. I say this even as I struggle with it! Sometimes I manage to have a good balance, and sometimes I don't, but I'm only human, and I'm not always going to get it right. Of course, what *doesn't* help my growth is treating the world as if it's separate (or even opposed to) God, or constantly using divisive labels to define myself and the world around me: *there are parts of me that are Christian, and parts of me that are worldly; I'm not being Christlike enough; I*

*have Christian friends and secular ones.* This kind of thinking, which I myself have fallen into at times, fails to see the unity between God and His Creation. As Karl Rahner might say, the world participates in God, so the two are joined at the hip—not always harmoniously, but then again, that's the fun of being Christian! We have the immense privilege of using our words and actions to help smooth over those points of discord, misunderstanding, judgement, and anger that arise when the world doesn't seem to get along with God.

If I embrace adaptability, living each day as an opportunity to enmesh my Christianity with the day-to-day needs, problems, and questions of those around me, instead of seeing my Christian life as a personal and unchanging treasure that needs to be protected from the world, then I might come closer to living out the reality of Jesus. If Jesus could immerse Himself in the varied lives of tax collectors, alleged prostitutes, and Roman officers, then surely I should engage with a mix of peoples, situations, and issues—even if they don't seem "Christian." If (God willing) my spiritual life is not only Spirit-led but *adaptable*, then it comes closer to pointing to the Gospel, which bears its own radical "both-and" nature. It is the divinely inspired, inerrant Word of God, but it's also present in every moment, and speaks to the hearts of people from all walks of life. To me, the Gospel is not an inert book that sits on an ivory tower, waiting for non-Christians to look at it, but is rather a reality that can be lived out in my life *right now*, even (and especially!) amidst my sufferings, struggles, foibles, inadequacies, and frustrations. If I resist the temptation to separate the secular and the spiritual, then I can begin to deepen my sense of "Christian" as what I am more than what I do, and from there, I can work to embody Christ rather than merely perform Him. Jesus doesn't bring dissonance, but opportunity, and those opportunities start to bear fruit when I understand that I am a Christian *in* the world, not in spite of it.

*Kia ora! I'm Mark Bond a seminarian for the Diocese of Auckland, and I enjoy reading, relational ministry, and the occasional game of tennis. Numbers are not my thing, so I've spent the last seven years lecturing and researching in English Literature at the Universities of Auckland and Waikato. As for right now, I'm simply looking forward to whatever Jesus has in store for me. May God bless you!*