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RLN welcomes story ideas, news items and other input. If you want to be involved in this media ministry, please be in touch with the editor.

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Cover: Deacons have more fun! Dan, Di, Lorna, Helen, and Tanis goof off at the deacons' Lenten retreat at St. Philip's, Norwood, anticipating the joy of resurrection.

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In our efforts to pursue new funding sources for Rupert's Land News and expand the reach of the magazine, RLN Weekly, website, and social media accounts, we have responded to the Diocese of Niagara's offer to share their advertising manager with us. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Angela

Rush, who has been with the Niagara Anglican for five years. Angela brings to RLN over 15 years of experience in advertising sales, marketing, and customer service. She has led many successful promotional and fundraising initiatives and been involved with youth ALPHA in her home church. For all of your advertising needs or suggestions for new initiatives, you can reach her at rlanews.ads@gmail.com or 905-630-0390. We are looking forward to working with Angela over the next four months to see if this commission-based



partnership is a good fit for our diocese.

Allison

Dear Editor,

The recent communique from the House of Bishops suggests that given the division in their house, it is probably a waste of time for the Clergy and Lay Houses to vote. This effectively rules out any possible "interference" by the Holy Spirit, who has a knack for doing extraordinary things. Because the Bishops are divided over whether the LGBTQ community should be entitled to a Christian marriage ceremony does not mean that their communique should write finis.

It is, however, a warning

that the defenders of the faith have chosen to be its arbiters – without recourse to the due processes afforded clergy and lay participation. If the Clergy and Lay Houses read that their cause is doomed, they will either fight or flight. The fight is to defend and uphold LGBTQ Christians against being subtly defined as "different but equal" by their own Anglican fathers and mothers in God.

Our bishop sees graduated definitions of "equal" by having two different wedding liturgies. Canadian citizens are equal under law, but not, apparently, in any new-and-

improved marriage canon as espoused by the House of Bishops and improved in Rupert's Land. The Anglican Church of Canada describes itself out as being "welcoming," and maybe most times it is, but once you have any liturgy divided into "one for you and one for me," it will be a Church divided.

A glimmer of hope lies in the election of four new Bishops between now and General Synod. Maybe the Holy Spirit will have a chance, after all.

Sheila Welbergen

Bishop Donald has written his own letter to the Diocese in response to the conversations about the marriage canon and General Synod in recent weeks. [Read his letter here.](#)

RESURRECTION IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

Donald Phillips

The Great Vigil of Easter is my absolute favourite worship service of the year. Everything about it is “extra-ordinary.” We gather in a dark church building on a Saturday evening, light fire, have many Scripture readings, ring bells, and gaze upon a newly-adorned altar as we celebrate the first Easter Eucharist.

One of the musical highlights is the Exsultet, an anthem of praise celebrating Christ’s victory over death, usually sung by a deacon. I often think about the fact that even though the written text speaks of “shining splendour” and “radiant brightness,” it is sung in a semi-dark church focused on a single candle. That paschal candle flame symbolizes the glorious light of the risen Christ, but at this point in the worship, we don’t yet experience the fullness of the light of the risen Christ.


Our inability to see God’s potential to initiate resurrection, rebirth, and recreation can easily limit our hopes and our expectations of what God is up to in our lives and in the lives of those around us. We’re not alone in this. St. Paul spends the whole of chapter 15 of his first Letter to the Corinthians trying to explain the resurrec-

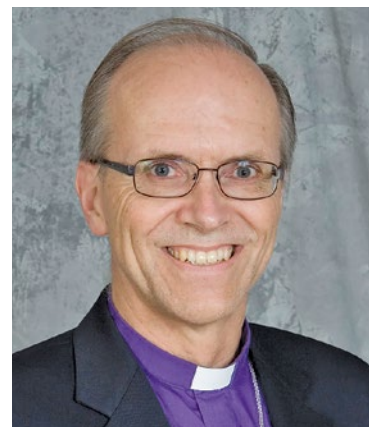
tion, exhorting his hearers not to expect the result of resurrection to look anything like the body that has died. And while he tries to explain using the analogy of a seed, which bears no resemblance to the plant that springs forth, ultimately he describes it as a “mystery.”

I believe that God is continually about resurrection, rebirth, and recreation in our lives, the life of our Church, and the life of the world around us. I find the challenge is to be open to perceiving it, ready for God to do a new thing even when we see no evidence of it yet emerging. Often in my own life and ministry, I expend a lot of energy trying to “resuscitate” the form that was — trying to bring back to life the reality that was. And if I feel some responsibility for what has “died” — what has failed or brought disillusionment rather than hope — I try that much harder.

But resuscitation is not resurrection. Resurrection does not simply return something to life. It recreates it, and sometimes in ways that are not immediately recognizable. Luke’s account of the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus is a great example. The risen Christ actually meets up with them,

walks and discusses religious themes with them for several hours, and they aren’t able to recognize him. It is only after he has opened their hearts and minds to the possibility of God’s plan, and demonstrates it with a significant and familiar ritual, that their eyes were suddenly able to see their guest for who he really was.

When we have given up on ourselves, become discouraged by the actions of others, or given up hope that the situation in which we find ourselves can ever be a source of life again, we need to open ourselves and look for the new creation that God is birthing. It will most likely be right in our midst — where we least expect it! 



**△ Donald Phillips,
Bishop of Rupert's
Land**

ENDEARING PAIN: LIFE LESSONS FROM MS AFFLICTIONS

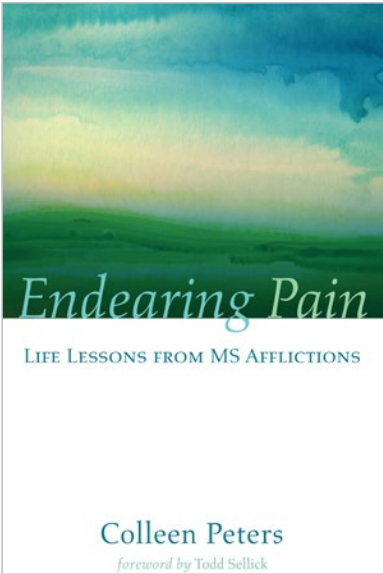
“There is scarcely any passion without struggle.”

Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*

The ancient city of Corinth has given us two important considerations. The first is the myth of Sisyphus: the realization of our endless efforts to find personal peace in a flawed world. The second is St. Paul's Corinthian church: the recognition that we, together, are the “Body of Christ,” each being a part of the whole.

I have known Colleen Peters since long before she was struck — given, received, adopted, cursed — with Multiple Sclerosis. Back then, she was filled with vinegar, spoke fast, was giddy and annoyingly playful, kind, deeply compassionate, and intellectually interesting. Like many others, I followed her decline into MS with angry sadness. I hate the bastard “Death,” and I hate his cousins.

Now I am old enough to know — and Colleen and I have both loved Henri Nouwen long enough to realize




— that powerlessness isn't evil; it is a necessary posture for us as Christ-followers. It is our chosen identification with Jesus, from cradle to cross. This anguish-of-powerlessness is meant to be unlike Sisyphus and entirely as St. Paul was saying; we are not meant to do this alone. Within the Christian community, we are all part of the Body of Christ; we are not alone.

Abstractly, this sounds wonderful. In truth, we all visit Golgotha. We come with friends, the Body, but no one manages to stay awake, and we are ultimately alone and very scared. Although Colleen has always been loved by everyone, most of us don't have the endurance to keep up with her daily

push-up-the-hill. Recognizing this, Colleen has brilliantly called on the sleeping saints of the past to help augment her slowly diminishing strength. Her book *Endearing Pain* is intertwined with her own worthy and earned insights, along with the deep reflections of past faith-filled literary giants.

The past dozen years for Colleen have been confusing, frustrating, and at times tormenting. At the same time, she has remained kind and compassionate, never whiny, intellectually stimulating, creative, and still giddy and annoying. She is a true saint.

Her book is filled with hope and she tolerates no despair. It is a must read for all those still awake. 

Juergen Severloh has been attending saint benedict's table for close to a decade, primarily in Advent and Lent, the seasons of the Christian year most open to wrestling with human vulnerability and weakness.

Colleen Peters and her husband, Len, are active members of saint benedict's table, where her ongoing reflections on living with MS have been a source of insight and inspiration for many.



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THE NEW REALITY OF NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTRY

Brian Ford

One of the questions asked of those seeking ordination as a priest has been whether or not they will be looking for a paid position. In the secular world, the question would seem ridiculous to someone graduating from community college or university, but in the Anglican Church it's become a necessity, given the shrinking number of full-time paid positions available in our diocese and across the country. The question also forces us to rethink our understanding of ministry and the



△ *Community life and ministry can flourish in small congregations like St. Philip's, Scantebury, even when they cannot afford to paid clergy.*

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nature of Church. So while the question is necessary on a practical level, posing the question in such a binary way may not be the best approach to ministry.

In his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul declared his right to receive support from them, yet almost in the same breath he declined that right ("the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" 9:14). At times during his missionary travels, Paul even turned to his former trade of tent-making as a way of supporting himself (Acts 18:1-4), his aim being to demonstrate that the gospel, like God's grace, is free to all (1 Cor. 9:12-18). But while Paul's ministry was preaching the gospel to those who had never heard it

before, we are now dealing with a parish context of greater stability and it is important not to equate the two.

Paul's example notwithstanding, I consider the issue of clergy stipends to be largely a practical one. In a parish situation, a stipend enables people to do ministry full time without concern over how they will support themselves or their families. If a parish wants a full-time incumbent, it has to be prepared to enable that ministry. In today's world, the growing scarcity of full-time positions for priests is a challenge, but one that largely arises from our old understandings of Church.

I suspect many of us secretly harbour some notion that the "norm" for our churches is having full pews each Sunday and a full-time rector,

available 24/7 to respond to parish needs. Perhaps we recognize that those days have passed, yet there still seems to be a remnant of double-think when it comes to expectations for our parishes: we wish things to be the way they used to be. The reality is that there are a substantial number of congregations in Rupert's Land who are too few in number to support a full-time incumbent.


Yet even if they had the financial resources, do they need someone full-time? During my time in Rupert's Land, I have served in a number of interim, part-time, and honorary positions. I've done this because I was also able to earn a living outside the Church. Similar to Paul's experience of working during the week making tents, and on the Sabbath going to the synagogue to preach, I spent the week working in information technology and then on Sundays went to church to preach and celebrate. In reality, I fill a niche.

But is this a model for parish clergy today? There's

a fundamental problem with any model: it's usually designed to address a specific set of circumstances. Unfortunately, in the Anglican Church we have all sorts of varied circumstances in our parishes, so we may need a lot of models!

One thing I've come to understand over the years is that our thinking about ministry largely follows from our understanding of the Church. Whether we view the Church as a family, a club, or a hierarchical institution will greatly influence how we conceive of ministry. Joyfully, there are some signs of change: we are no longer the established Church, I hear a difference in our church-related vocabulary (the use of words like "family" to describe congregations), there is more emphasis on the ministry of all the baptised, and so on. Ultimately, changes like these along with the changing world around us influence our thinking about ministry. Who is a minister, what is ministry, and how do ordained clergy (priests and deacons), fit into this chang-

ing reality? This leads us back to the most fundamental question of all: what is Christ calling us to be and to do as the Church in today's world?

In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul exhorted the people to work out their own salvation in fear and trembling while also reassuring them, "It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13, 14). It seems they had a long way to go, but God was with them. Perhaps we are in the same position, with more growing to do than we realize, growth which may reveal in us a very different Church than the one we've been in the past and carry us far beyond the question of stipend or no stipend. 



△ *Brian Ford is the priest at St. James', Beausejour, and an honorary assistant at St. John's Cathedral. He is retired from jobs in information technology and family counselling.*

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WHAT THE VULTURES KNOW

Gwen McAllister



Photo: Resurrection, by Chris Camino

For years, I loved Lent and Holy Week, yet dreaded Easter. Once, I named a homily “I Hate Easter.” The problem for me was that Easter rang false; it was a premature “all’s well” after the facing of Hell. The problem was not with Resurrection, but with the way our culture had bled it of its meaning.

One of the lies our society tells itself is that death is failure and must be avoided at all costs. Resurrection, then, becomes an escape, a way to cancel out death. As a parent, I am troubled by how present this escape is in children’s stories such as Robin Hood, The Jungle Book, and Harry Potter. In the pervasive story, the friends begin to mourn the character’s death, but suddenly he (usually he) opens his eyes and is not dead after all! Everything is back as it was before; that which we fear has been conquered

once more. More obvious in children’s stories, the theme prevails in our culture: our heroes don’t die.

Yet even further from our society’s imagination is our faith’s call to live interdependently, not as the heroes of our own stories, but as one body. We are called away from the separation of individualism and into messy, vulnerable, and life-filled relationship together. The writing of the “I Hate Easter” sermon helped me delve into the story of the Emmaus Road and what came after, realizing that resurrection is no happy return to all that was good before. Those who loved Jesus did not get back their daily life with him as before; everything changed. The disciples were forced to walk in faith into a new life, as the body of Christ. They didn’t know what would happen and had to go through feeling stripped and vulnerable.

But we know the story, so we know what happened: the Spirit enlivened them, they grew in courage, and they changed the reality of what it meant to be human together. They lived out the Way they had been given, the kingdom of heaven, like a blazing fire in the middle of cold empire.

If we claim the same faith as the early Church, we will understand “Church” as primarily that living community that is the way of Christ embodied, and only supported by structures and institution. In our time and place, this very Easter season, vultures are circling the edifice of our churches, eyeing the valuable real estate, wanting to fill those “unproductive” spaces. Feeling under pressure to simply survive, it is not surprising that the Church in this model has not wholly embraced the invitation to reconciliation coming from


indigenous Anglicans; we are afraid of losing what we have. The desire to avoid, to move back to the way things have always been, is fear of death. If we seek to escape death, we also escape the transforming power of resurrection.

I love the Anglican tradition with its patterns of liturgy, the Church year, and the wisdom of generations carried by them. I love the church buildings that proclaim a space not taken by commercialism and production, a space for beauty and peace, sacredness and togetherness. I love the linens, the vestments, the wood, and the windows. But we are not going to be able to keep all of this, and maybe it is not even right to. What

then are the most important carriers of our faith? What is the core of our faith, and what does it mean to be the Church we are called to be? It is not easy to ask these questions, because it feels like death. But when we go into it faithfully, we can begin to feel the excitement and fear that comes with the promise of new life.

Our reluctance to connect with Christ's beloved on the margins, and to plunge into reconciliation with Indigenous people, shows that we still hold stock in empire, that we still have more dying to do before entering fully into the new life of God's Church in this time and place. It is gospel that we find Christ among those who are rejected and used by those with

power, and so part of our current death and resurrection is about decolonization. Within the Anglican Church, we have a collective of indigenous Anglicans who are seeking their way forward as non-empire Church. We can learn from and with them what in our tradition is actually colonial empire trappings that are holding us back from where God is leading us.

The vultures of our society know what bits of the Church are dead. They see where we keep a false front, how we have held on to what is not the living Gospel, where our words have meant more to us than the living Word. They see how much creaturely life we would sacrifice for the sake of our buildings and familiar understandings. May we also see with such clarity so that we let go of what is dead, mourn our loss, and be ever raised into the living body of Christ in the world. 

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△ *Gwen McAllister is a transitional deacon currently doing a placement at St. Margaret's, Winnipeg*

VISITING THE GURDWARA

Polly Pashu

The word "Sikh" evolved from the Sanskrit term *Shishe*, which means "disciple". Sikhism is a monotheistic religion that was founded by Guru Nanak in Punjab, India. Guru Nanak was born on April 15, 1469 in the village of Talwandi, located in what is now western Pakistan. Guru Nanak was a religious pioneer in that he revolted against the caste system and rituals held at the time, declaring that all people should be as one, irrespective of their colour, creed, or religion. He was never afraid to raise his voice against cruelty and injustice and lived among the people, sharing their sorrows and joys, and teaching them the way of honesty and truth.

After Guru Nanak's passing in 1539, his message was carried forward by each of his nine successors. The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, ordained that subsequent to his passing, the sacred scriptures of Sikhism, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, would be the final and everlasting teachings of the religion. The scripture is written in Punjabi and contains teachings in the form of poetic verses. The fact that the *Guru Granth Sahib* includes teachings from other faiths demonstrates the respect that Sikhs have for the views of all people. The *Guru Granth Sahib* is kept in the Sikh place of worship, known as

a Gurdwara. The scriptures contained in the *Guru Granth Sahib* are recited in ragas (musical measures) and placed on a dais with a canopy above it. As it contains the cumulative teachings of all of the Sikh Gurus, the *Guru Granth Sahib* is treated with utmost respect and reverence.

The Gurdwara is where Sikh people gather to pray and celebrate, including marriages, births, funerals, and holy days. Visitors are always welcome in the Gurdwara, as long as certain basic rules are observed. Visitors must keep their heads covered in the Gurdwara and remove their shoes upon entry as a sign of respect. In the prayer hall, it is common for men to sit cross legged on one side of the room, and women on the other.

Another fundamental aspect of the Sikh way of life is the concept of *Langar* (kitchen). In Sikhism, *langar* means "blessed food". Every person who attends a Gurdwara is provided with *langar*, which is always vegetarian. This practice is a demonstration that Sikhs do not differentiate people



Photo:
Kartik Kumar S

on the basis of skin colour, religion, or status. Everyone is considered equal, a practice reflected by the fact that all people who are served *langar* must sit on the floor and eat together.

One of the holiest days of the year for Sikhs is the birth of the Khalsa, or Vaisakhi, held on April 13th of each year. This marks the New Year and holds historical and religious significance because on this day in 1699, Guru Gobind Singh gave Sikhs their new name (Singh, meaning "Lion") and their new national identity.

The most noticeable thing about Sikhs is their distinctive appearance. Baptized Sikhs are identified by what is known as the five K's. These are articles




Photo: Tarnjeet Singh

of faith, which include: Kesh (hair), Kanga (comb), Karra (steel bracelet), Kachha (long underwear), and Kirpaan (small sword). These articles of faith are essential

to the baptized Sikh. Each item carries with it symbolic meaning and reminds Sikhs of their duty to respond to the call to defend the rights of the weak and oppressed.

All Sikhs are encouraged to perform sewa (selfless service). Acts of selfless service can include activities such as washing dishes, cleaning floors, and serving food. Sewa is routinely performed in Gurudwaras but is not limited to them. As an active member of my community, my acts of sewa have included serving as a mentor for Sikh children by teaching them to write and speak Punjabi and teaching

them about basic religious practices at the Gurdwara. I also serve my community by sharing information on important social and health-related topics, including suicide prevention and the health risks of high blood pressure. I am proud to be a Sikh woman and hope that with greater knowledge of who we are, people of other faiths and religious beliefs will gain a deeper level of appreciation for the ideals we stand for. 

Polly Pashu is a Winnipeg Sikh and a cardiology technologist.

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THE ART OF SEEING

Connie Gefert

Last summer, I was visiting family in Cleveland and visited an exhibit called "Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse." Travelling through the exhibit was like a pilgrimage through garden after garden of spectacular beauty. The ability of the French Impressionists of the 19th century to see, and to capture their

heart of human beings who are so open to the divine image that they can reflect it in their art.

After journeying through a series of galleries, I ended up in the "holy of holies," as it seemed: a room at the end that was the climax of my pilgrimage. Facing me on the wall were three giant paintings of Monet's

in Paris, but Monet ran out of money after the first World War, and the paintings he had completed were divided up and sold to three museums in the United States. In the special Cleveland exhibition, they were reunited for the first time since the war.

I sat and gazed at this stunning triptych for a long time, perhaps half an hour. It drew me into the beauty at the heart of the universe. It was an experience of prayer.

Contemplative prayer is like that; it has no object other than to gaze upon the beauty of God and to rest in the awareness of my own beauty as a creature of God. St. John Vianney, the 18th century French priest who was the Curate of Ars, was famous for a response he made when a parishioner asked one day, "What are you doing when you sit in the back of the church before the Blessed Sacrament? You don't say any prayers aloud. You just sit there." "Oh," answered the curate, "I just look at him and he looks at me."

The gaze of love. It's a gaze that draws us into relationship with the God of love. That relationship — like all relationships — takes intentional time devoted to being together, and like any human relationship it develops over the years, slowly,



△ *Mia Feigelson, of Monet's "The Water Lily Pond, Green Harmony"*

sight (or insight) in colour laid down on canvas, was an experience of prayer for me. It took me into the heart of God's creation, and showed me the beauty at the

water-lily pond. Together, they stretched about 42 feet across and 6 ½ feet high. The three paintings were originally meant to be part of an installation at L'Orangerie

patiently, as we become more comfortable with the solitude and silence needed to hear “the still small voice,” to become aware of the stirring of the Spirit.


This kind of contemplative prayer reminds me of a blog post written by an art student at the University of Toronto called, “The Art of Slow Looking.” That is a perfect description of contemplative prayer. Slow looking involves just being with a painting, perhaps for as long as an hour, not analyzing but being with a beautiful work created by a human being created by God, impressed with the image of God. In slow looking, we see ourselves mirrored in an act of creation. In “slow praying,” we need do nothing but listen “with the ear of our heart,” as St. Benedict said, sitting in silence, looking at God and knowing the loving

gaze of God on us.

But how, you might say, how do I learn that kind of prayer? I know how to tell God my needs and those of others, and I love the prayer and praise in Sunday worship. But how do I sit and let God look at me and me look at God?

Try this for a few days: find a quiet place where you can be undisturbed for five minutes (your living room, outdoors as the weather warms up, at your desk, or at the library). Even sitting on the bus or in the bathroom, you can close your eyes and just “be” for 5 minutes without anyone being suspicious that you’re doing something weird. Be aware that God is present in that moment. Prayer is simply being aware that God is always with us. Read these verses from Psalm 139:

*O Lord, you have searched me out and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
Just sit and look at your beloved looking at you.*

And if this is just too weird, in subsequent articles I hope to offer some practical, hands-on suggestions about the art of “slow prayer.” 



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△ Connie Gefert is a Sister of St. John the Divine at their motherhouse in Toronto.

PARISH NEWS **ROUND UP**

▷ saint benedict's table

Parishioner Colleen Peters is launching her book *Endearing Pain: Life Lessons from MS Afflictions* at McNally Robinson Booksellers on May 2 at 7:00 p.m.

▷ Ordination

The Bishop is pleased to announce that Gwen McAllister will be ordained to the priesthood at St. John's Cathedral on April 24 at 3:00 p.m. Please keep Gwen in your prayers.

▷ St. Matthew's, Winnipeg

The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer is hosting a healing prayer service on Sunday, April 17, at 7:00 p.m. Come sit together in a period of stillness as we bring our own needs and those of the world before God.



▷ A Week of Sundays

Carolyn Mount

Instructions for living a life.

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

– Mary Oliver

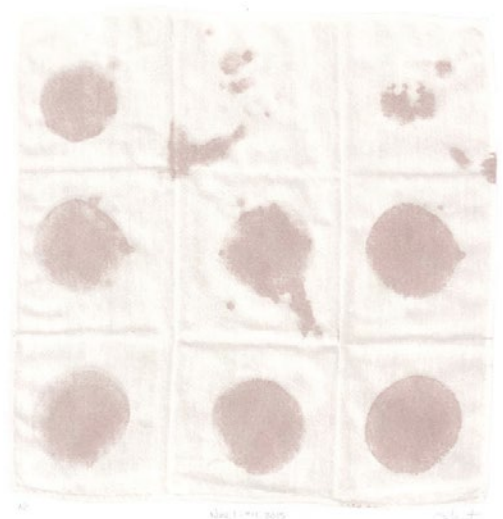
I do my very best to pay attention (though there is much I miss I am sure). By noticing the unnoticed or passed over, a world of wonder and beauty is revealed to me. Random swirls in marble represent a face to me. A fire hydrant wrapped in a blue tarp looks like a sculpture to me. A 'found' sculpture that is just waiting to be documented or captured through a certain lens, a certain viewpoint (mine as the artist) so others can see it as I do.

Week by week, I have been capturing the random, 'found' stains of wine left on linen cloths from a shared sacramental meal, through the act of digitally scanning and recording them. These abstract wine paintings or drawings speak to me of more than a shared meal. They are markers of communion, of community, of communing together where fear and hope are shared as much as bread and wine. Yet no one sees these images. Laid aside at the end of the meal, the linens must be cleaned

and prepared for next week's meal. I am astonished by the quiet beauty of this intimate act's recording and regret that no one else gets to see them.

So I must tell about it. A Week of Sundays is a collection of seven silkscreened prints representing a collection of these stained linens. Red wine is the sign of welcome for any that would gather. It also marks the paper (red wine has been used as ink here), like the scars that are etched on our souls, and tells of our journey to the table.

All prints were printed at Atelier Graff in Montreal during a two-week residency. More images can be found by clicking [here](#).



SEEKING MAURI ORA

Murray Still

They came by the thousands from around the world seeking *Mauri Ora* (life force, a positive state of being, vitality). The seventh gathering of Healing Our Spirit Worldwide was held in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Indigenous peoples have traveled the world in search of common healing since the first gathering in Edmonton in 1992.

The Healing Our Spirit Worldwide movement began as the vision of one woman to create an international forum focused on alcohol and drug abuse issues in indigenous communities throughout the world. Maggie Hodgson, a founding member of the Nadleh Whutren Carrier First Nation, lobbied the International Congress on Alcohol and Addictions and the World Health Organization in the late 1980's to begin arranging the gatherings.

I attended the first gathering in Edmonton and was impressed with the scholarship on addiction and recovery. Then, as now, indigenous peoples told stories of addiction and the challenges of healing from shared stories of colonization. The seventh gathering featured a number of workshops on the theme of *mauri ora* and keynote speakers who were international experts and leaders in health and healing among

indigenous people.

In Canada, Kairos has published a number of resources which are designed to educate the general public around our indigenous



history. One of the resources, the blanket exercise, tells the story of colonization here and teaches about the need for healing. I delivered the blanket exercise in my first workshop and showed a video of the 2012 Rupert's Land sacred circle in a second workshop. One of the workshops I attended showed a documentary of a northern Canadian indigenous community and its journey of healing over 25 years. Another featured the recent history of the Idle No More movement, presented in part by Marie Wilson, one of the Truth and Reconciliation commissioners.

Upon arrival, all participants were welcomed at a traditional *marae* (Maori meeting place). We were

under the protection and hospitality of the *Te Arkinui* (Maori King), who welcomed us in the opening ceremonies, which began outside in the rain. We expe-

rienced a *powhiri* (welcome) which included a warrior from the *tangata whenua* (hosts) issuing a challenge to the *manuhiri* (guests) to see whether we were friend or foe. The warrior carried a spear-like weapon and once inside the marae, he laid down a token, often a small branch, for the visitors to pick up to show they come in peace.

We were told to proceed into the marae, women first, followed by the men. In ancient times, this was deliberate, as the sending of the women first meant you were coming in peace. Once inside the marae, the men were seated in the front, traditionally to protect the women if violence broke out. Inside the marae grounds,



a woman from the host side performed a *karanga* (call to the *manuhiri*). Upon that signal, we moved on to the marae. A woman from among the visitors responded and we walked silently forward.

Once on the marae grounds and in front of the main ancestral house, the guests and hosts took their seats facing each other. At that point, speeches were made, starting with the representative of the King. Speaking in Maori, the representative welcomed the visitors but reminded them of the damage done by colonization. He commended the work of the conference that would address healing and reconciliation globally. The representative of the visitors responded by thanking the hosts for welcoming them and providing the opportunity to work on healing and reconciliation. A song was sung following each speaker, to support his address. After the speeches, the visitors presented a *karanga* (gift) to their hosts.


Following the formal proceedings, visitors and hosts greeted each other with a *hongi* (the ceremonial touching of noses). In this way, the visitors and hosts become one. Following the formal ceremony, we were treated to a traditional feast and hosted by the Maori King.

As a part of the challenge at the opening ceremonies at the marae, young Maori leaders performed the *haka* (ceremonial war cry). While in New Zealand, my wife Brenda and I visited a few of the marae and each time a smaller version of the original opening ceremony was performed.

For the closing ceremonies, each country in attendance was asked to perform some aspect of their culture. The Canadian contingent was led by Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Grand Chief, Derek Nepinak, and involved the Canadians in a round dance.

Following the gathering, Brenda and I traveled throughout the northern

island, where we were introduced to the Maori Church. We visited many sacred sites and attended a historic service celebrating the three streams of the Church: Maori, *Pakiha* (European), and Polynesian. In that service, we witnessed reconciliation in action as the cooperation between the three streams was celebrated. Later, I sat in on an effort at translating a psalm into Maori.

The integration of the streams can be seen in the New Zealand Prayer Book that has Maori on one page and English on the other. The Fijians are also translating the English into their language. However, while the Maori culture is welcomed, there is still work to be done to incorporate the language into English liturgies. And while the Maori culture is strong, the wealth is still held predominantly by the *Pakiha*. 



△ *Murray Still is the priest at St. Stephen and St. Bede, Winnipeg, and St. James the Assiniboine.*