

We Start With...

A two minute period of silence - a moment of peace.

From the 'Chair'

The highlight of the Sea of Faith year is the national conference, this year to be held in Auckland in early October. The theme is 'Responding to an increasingly uncertain future'. Climate change, overpopulation, resource depletion, pollution (also downstream effects including terrorism, wars, and financial crises) offer us many challenges as to how we could, or should, respond.

The keynote speakers are Lloyd Geering (now aged 97), Anjum Rahman from Hamilton, Kennedy Graham (Green MP), and Rod Oram (economics commentator, on 'The Theology of Economics').

You can find out more at sof.org.nz/2015conf including a registration form. It is a long way to go, but I encourage you to think about all the things you could do in Auckland in early October – if you were up there for the two-day conference.

Frances Smithson and I will be reporting back from the conference for the first half of the Dunedin SoF October meeting.

I trust you are enjoying gardens full of spring cheer; if only the weather would take the hint ☺

Gretchen

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Otago Community Hospice Funding

Services are provided free of charge to anyone who is dying and whose palliative care needs are beyond the level that are able to be

supported by their primary palliative care provider alone. To run this service, we receive contracted income from the Southern District Health Board which covers approximately 58% of our annual costs. The other \$2 million is generated through our community fundraising efforts. We have six hospice shops throughout the region and we rely heavily on these, and our bequest programme, to generate income. We also run events throughout the year and provide regular mail outs for our database of supporters.

Otago Community Hospice is a registered charity. **Charity No. CC20590**

Glenda Hall Counsellor with the Otago Community Hospice

Thursday, 24th SEPTEMBER

**Highgate Church buildings,
Maori Hill
Tea and Coffee will be available
From 3pm**

NEW TIME

**The programme will start
at 3.30pm**

Contribution - \$4

Action for Peace

Last evening I attended, with about 300 folk including many of you, the 12th annual inter-faith Peace lecture. The group who arranges the lectures was set up in response to Sept 11th 2001 by the three faith groups, the University and the City Council to try to ensure there was no negative backlash in Dunedin from those events in New York. The community here of course had absolutely no connection with the group that brought the World Trade Centre down.

Rabbi Fred Morgan talked about the time for Peace and a time for War (Ecclesiastes). He commented that whilst Ghandi's civil disobedience techniques succeeded in expelling England from India, the same technique would not have worked with Hitler.

He also said that the idea of "I'm right, you are wrong" would not produce a peaceful outcome in any situation – there had to be respect for the views of "the other" (much along the lines of Martin Buber) – a respect for our common humanity as we are all created in the same human mould ('in the image of God' according to scripture). Combative approaches may produce a winner but will not 'win over' the loser and so win the peace. He advocated a fuzzy logic where instead of black / white, right / wrong there were shades of grey which enables both sides to be comfortable.

Pope Francis – Action in the Church

Pope Francis is making it easier for women and doctors to seek forgiveness for abortion, by allowing all priests to forgive it. In Catholicism, abortion is viewed as such a grave sin that it can be punished with excommunication.

In most countries, only a bishop can approve forgiveness for abortion. They would then delegate an expert priest to hear the confession.

The change is only for the coming Jubilee Year, beginning in December. However, the rule relaxation will not affect Catholics in England, Wales and Scotland as all priests there can already forgive abortion without seeking permission from a bishop.

The Pope said many women who sought an abortion did so because they "believe that they have no other option". He added that he had "met so many women who bear in their heart the scar of this agonising and painful decision".

The easing of the rules is being seen as a shift in Catholic Church policy, reflecting the Pope's outspoken views on compassion and mercy. "I have decided, notwithstanding anything to the contrary, to allow all priests for the Jubilee Year to absolve of the sin of abortion those who procure it and who also seek forgiveness," Pope Francis said.

BBC 1st September

Pope Francis has unveiled reforms intended to make it easier for Roman Catholics to get annulments and remarry within the Church.

Catholicism does not recognise divorce and teaches marriage is a lifelong commitment. In order to separate, Catholics must have their marriage annulled by showing it was flawed from the outset. The radical reforms allow access to procedures free of charge and fast-track decisions. Catholics seeking an annulment previously needed approval from two Church tribunals. The reforms will reduce this to one and remove the requirement of automatic appeal.

BBC 8th September

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