



THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

**Delivered by the Right Reverend Derek L Eaton
QSM, MA, Dip Theol,
to the First Session of the Fifty-second Synod
of the Diocese of Nelson**

**This address is in two parts.
Part One, the Synod Sermon,
Given at Christ Church Cathedral on
Thursday evening the 3rd October, 2002 and
Part Two at Nelson College for Girls on
Friday 4th October, 2002.**

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS (Part 2)

(Friday morning – 4th October 2001)

Nelson College for Girls

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE – A GENERATION FOR
JESUS
(Let's fight for our kids!)

WELCOME

A te whanau a te Karaiti
 Naumai, haere mai
 Haere mai!

Let me set the scene by recapping what I said in our Cathedral last night, in Part one of the Presidential Address (the sermon).

“Reaching a Generation for Christ” is our theme for this Synod. My thesis is – no it is not a thesis it's a reality – that there is a missing generation in our churches by and large – namely those under 40 years of age.

That's a generalisation and there are some marvellous exceptions, but the stark reality is that we are a greying church – and aging church.

Last night I sought to put in a biblical context the necessity of fighting for this missing generation. This morning you will be hearing from seven people who are in the age bracket that we are talking about. Most of them are already leaders in their own right, they are highly motivated and are fully engaged in their various responsibilities and callings. I acknowledge that there are others whom I could have just as easily invited to share with us.

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| 1. Andrew Burgess: | All Saints' Parish (Vicar-elect) |
| 2. Anthony Dancer: | Stoke parish (Curate) |
| 3. Peter Carrell: | Bishopdale College (Director) |
| 4. Mark Chamberlain: | Bishop's Chaplain for Church Development. |
| 6 Brenda and Julian Dobbs: | Bishopdale Parish (Vicar and Assistant). |
| 5. Tim Mora: | Greymouth Parish (Assistant). |

We need to listen to what they have to say.

I remind you, as I did last night, that all of them are probably younger than the median age of this synod. They and others of this age group will be the flag carriers – not only of today, but also of tomorrow, when many of us will have passed on. The future is in a sense theirs. The responsibility of reaching this generation for Jesus Christ is primarily theirs.

Will we hear what they are saying? Will we trust them, release them and support them as perhaps others released and trusted many of us to lead years ago?

SOME STARTLING FACTS:

One third of the world's population is under 15 years of age. Does that say something to the Church?

In a world often inhospitable to them, large numbers of these young people in underdeveloped countries live on the streets, are recruited to fight in under age armies, exploited for their labour, sex or body parts – it's horrific! In the West many in this age group feel marginalized and not listened to.

Whatever our view might be, if the real needs of these young people are not met spiritually, educationally and emotionally they could become a powerful force for violence and social unrest as some believe is already happening.

There is a global youth culture emerging made up of young people in the West and a growing number of their counterparts in the 2/3 world. They watch the same TV programmes, read the same magazines, listen to the same songs, eat the same food and wear the same clothes. A new generation has emerged and for the first time in history it is global. This global movement of teens and 20's (sometimes called "millennial kids", "Generation X", "Busters" and other uncharitable names) is beginning to have a world-changing impact on our societies. There are over two billion of them in the world. Some planet watchers are wondering if the global young person is not a new driving force in the making!

The Church of Jesus Christ needs to figure out how to invite them into a life of serving and giving.

THE DECLINE OF THE CHURCH – “GOING TO THE DOGS”

I don't really want to talk about numbers this morning but I do so to reiterate that the most serious lack is among the young adults, teens and children.

In the late 1980s a popular Methodist Theologian, William Willimon wrote an article which fell into my hands not so long ago. It's a bit of light hearted satire, and yet very searching and I think it has something to teach us. Let's have a bit of fun for a moment while I tell you about it.

The article is entitled "Going to the Dogs". Willimon argues that the easiest way for the Methodists in the U.S.A. to get out of fatal their decline in Church attendance and adding several million new converts was by taking the simple step of baptizing their dogs.

He quotes from what he calls "a brilliant but neglected monograph by a certain Charles Neilson called *Communion for dogs - Das Abendmahl fur der Hunde*" (in the German original). "Reformed Churches used to stress discipline, but now it is clear that we train our dogs better than we train our children. Since dogs are not self-centred, ego centric or selfish they are now the only appropriate Christ symbol. They are loyal, adorable, loving and caring and clearly should be allowed to receive communion".

Willimon argues that the only reason not to move immediately in the direction of the Nielson proposal, of baptising our dogs, is simple bigotry and the anti-canine language of such biblical texts as Revelation 22:15 which you all know says, “outside are the dogs and sorcerers, and fornicators and murderers and idolaters.” But, he asks, “What does that proof text prove?” He says, “I have served churches where murderers may have been scarce, but fornicators were not. And besides we’ve learned to jettison so much of Scripture with which we do not agree. Why should we preserve the obviously anti canine, anti dog sentiments of Revelation 22:15?”

He further argues that Genesis chapter 9 asserts that God’s covenant was established with “every living creature” and “every beast of the earth, as many as came out of the ark”. He points out that the inclusive language Bible reworks Hebrews 11 to read, “By faith Abraham and Sarah obeyed when they were called to go to a place not knowing where they were to go”. But, he asks, what about Abraham and Sarah’s dogs? Did the dogs that faithfully followed them know the route any better than Abraham and Sarah? Did their following require any less faith? No! He argues, in fact the dogs had to have more faith than Abraham and Sarah since they were following human beings who admittedly had no idea where they were going.

Now he admits that the original text doesn’t actually say that Abraham and Sarah had dogs, but he contends that that very omission proves his point. In telling the story – backward, conservative, bourgeois people have completely and intentionally overlooked the contribution of dogs. Do you find dogs mentioned in the stories of Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David and Bathsheba or Ruth? – I rest my case!

And finally Willimon points out that scholars such as Cullman and Jeremias give weight to what is called the “oikos” formula, from the Greek word for “household”, noting that in a number of places in the book of Acts – someone is baptised and his whole household along with him. Even though children are not explicitly mentioned – these great scholars assume that children were also members of the household and were therefore baptised at an early age.

“Well”, asks Willimon “How many dog owners do you know who do not consider their dogs to be part of the household? We always took ours with us when we went to the beach or on holiday. Isn’t it reasonable then to assume that the Early Church would have taken them along for baptism?”

The idea never really caught on with the Methodists, but as Western Anglicanism finds itself at the end of a decade of evangelism and facing a decline in Church attendance we might want to give it some thought as we consider a missing generation.

Well, that’s a bit of light hearted stuff, but it highlights the desperate straights many churches are in.

You are aware that as a diocese we grew very fast through the decade of the 90’s – but now we have all but stopped growing.

Many of you have heard me share the following statistics; they make one think.

- In Nigeria there are more Anglicans in church on a Sunday than all of the UK, North America and Australasia put together.
- In Lagos the capital, there are more than 40 Anglican Churches with between 1000 and 2500 in their morning congregation.
- There are 400 new Anglican churches planted each week in the world
- In Africa the average age of the Anglican Christian is 20 years of age.

I ask the question again – In New Zealand are we failing our young people and children? Is there a lost generation? We need to wrestle with this. Let's listen to some of our younger emerging leaders.

Appendix 1	- Andrew Burgess	- Pointing to Jesus – Theology as discipleship
Appendix 2	- Anthony Dancer	- The Social dimension of the Mission oriented Church.
Appendix 3	- Peter Carrell	- The present and future of Theological education and ministry training.
Appendix 4	- Mark Chamberlain	- Living the Revolution of Jesus – Right attitudes for ministry.
Appendix 5	- Julian and Brenda Dobbs	- The joys and sorrows of reaching 20 – 40 year olds – an urban perspective.
Appendix 6	- Tim Mora	- Reaching 18 – 25s – a West Coast perspective.

THEOLOGY AND LIFE

Let me try to draw this shared presidential address to a close. I have always held, as I think many of you do – that belief and behaviour are closely linked – what we believe and how we live. Those who have spoken this morning have reinforced this.

If we are concerned about the future of our church and the missing generation, could it not partly be the result that, as Anglicans, we have not articulated clearly what we believe and joyfully lived out that belief showing its relevancy. There has been confusion. Let me say it again – theology and life style are inextricably linked together. What are we modelling for the next generation?

In closing I want to ponder something very serious with you.

THE CHALLENGE BEFORE US

Over the years this diocese has endeavoured to stand firm for biblical orthodoxy and has at times been at odds with the more liberal trends seen in our church and elsewhere – especially in Western churches. Others sometimes see Anglicans as being rather complicated. Outside observers are not always sure what we stand for.

Personally, I believe this has been a problem for us (some of you may disagree with my analysis). At its best, historically speaking, the Anglican Church stands for the simplicity of genuine Faith, the centrality of Jesus as God's son, the bold preaching of a biblical Gospel which includes social justice, a heart for the poor and the importance of holding to unity, even over the difficult issues that seek to divide us.

Some words spoken by Donald Coggan that fine scholarly evangelical Archbishop of Canterbury before George Carey and Robert Runcie, might be helpful. He was speaking to a group of young adults preparing for ministry not too long before he died. They are prophetic words.

“I have listened to so called sermons where the Name above all names is not even mentioned. Indeed God might count himself lucky if he got a look in. Why does the Lord of the Church have so thin a time in the churches which bear his name – or – has he left those churches as when he left the temple in Jerusalem with the words ‘look there is the temple, forsaken by God.’

“Why is the pulpit used to discuss current issues to the neglect, if not to the exclusion of the life and death issues of the majesty of God and the magnificence of Jesus Christ, ‘of the grace that masters the soul and recreates the will’ – to use a thought provoking phrase of P. T. Forsythe.”

He goes on: *“Let me linger here for a moment. There has been a decline – no worse than that – in church attendance. People have voted, voting with their feet. I ask myself ‘why this defection from the Church?’ The reasons are legion and complicated, but is it possible that the one reason for defection, perhaps the main reason, is that people are hungry for God – though they generally do not define their need in terms of God – hunger. And if they cannot find him in the structures of the Church, in the lives and preaching of those who run those structures then they will look elsewhere (remember he is talking to young ordinands).*

If the leaders are not obsessed with God and his grace. If the people are fed on fast food and on bits rather than on the meat which is provided by men and women of prayer and vibrant theology, are not we to blame for the emptying pew?”

And one more remarkable sentence ... *“When the prayer desk is little used and the fire of the love of Jesus burns low and the central themes of the Christian faith are ousted from the pulpit to make way for little essays on matters of topical interest, then the danger lights should be flashing and the ambulances should be summoned – for better an ambulance at the top of the cliff than a hearse at the bottom.”*

My dear brothers and sisters, as a bishop, I want to say to you that I take no joy in the illness in the Church in the West, especially when thinking of the missing generation. But I believe we must face it and name it and I also believe its cure is at hand. I am very optimistic and will not be despondent.

I am more excited about the Church’s future than I have ever been. The world has yet to see what the Church of Jesus Christ can really be and do. But please listen carefully. A merely human, “wishy-washy” Jesus, who lives on only in the minds of his followers, is of no hope to a perishing world. The very Word of God, co-eternal with the Father, supernaturally incarnate in the life of Jesus Christ, victorious over hell, death and the grave, risen, ascended, reigning and returning – that Jesus is worth living for and I might say dying for. That Jesus is worth every ounce of our energy, our prayer, our proclamation, our study, our ministry, and our lives.

That Jesus is what I believe this diocese is about. That Jesus is what you and I have to proclaim to all young people, to women and men, to girls and boys who are literally dying to hear about it. (Though they may not realize that fact).

May we, all of us, clergy and laity, be in the truest and fullest sense of the phrase, ministers of the Gospel of this Jesus Christ, '*obsessed with God*' (to use Lord Coggan's phrase), committed totally to the authority of his Word, and the anointing of his Spirit, and may we settle for nothing less than his glory in the Church.

Together, with the help of God, I believe we can be one of the great dioceses of the Church, small and insignificant though we may be. And it just may be, if we are faithful to Him, we can be instrumental, along with others of like mind, in the renewal of the church, a great church, a church we love.

This will include the revamping of Bishopdale College and the equipping of lay and ordained alike for Bible based God honouring, relevant ministry. It will include targeting our young people and listening to them. It will require sacrifice financially and at every level from diocese, to parish and mission district to individual. It will mean taking risks and embarking on bold initiatives and it will be exciting.

The best is yet to come. The Church may never be free of storms, internal or external, but its resources for riding the storms are, I believe, inexhaustible.

The Anglican Church's immune system in many areas has almost gone and I believe we have two choices. Either we can help rebuild the walls, as we saw with Nehemiah last night, and fight for our kids and reach the missing generation, engaging in the task with joy – or we can adopt Willimon's advice and "try going to the dogs."

The choice is ours.

The means and the strength are His.

Kia kaha.

Be courageous.

Appendix 1: Andrew Burgess (All Saints – Vicar-elect)

POINTING TO JESUS – THEOLOGY AS DISCIPLESHIP

The question which should constantly confront us in our church life is this:
Are we living faithfully as those who belong to Jesus Christ?

That is an incredibly broad question – faithfulness to Jesus involves the whole of our lives, and therefore the many aspects of our lives. But the broad nature of the matter of our faithfulness also means that it is a rich and rewarding task to consider our faithfulness. It is life-giving and spiritually enabling to consistently recall ourselves, and each other, to the central realities of belonging to Jesus.

The Theological Enterprise

This is where theology comes in. Like everyone else on earth, Christians exist within time and space, within the normal everyday reality of family, work, culture, and values. We exist within a whole melting-pot of influences and agendas – and in a consumer society there are plenty of people who will try and sell us all sorts of ideas and values.

The pressures on us to think and therefore to act – to live our lives – in certain ways are huge. I suspect that we little understand just how great the pressures on us are.

- Why does so much American Christianity pay a great deal of attention to money?
- Why does much British Christianity show more reserve and value conservatism?
- Why do many Asian and African Christians have a very clear understanding of the moral law of the gospel, while many of us in NZ struggle to understand God's prohibitions as anything other than repressive?

The truth is that our environment shapes our thinking profoundly. That shouldn't be too surprising. That is why the question of our faithfulness is so critical. It is easy to so shape our perception of the good news of Jesus Christ that we end up at least a little unfaithful – maybe utterly unfaithful!

The good news of Jesus Christ must be the lodestone of all we are and all we do – Jesus Christ is the 'real deal', the way we need to follow and the truth we need to know. As Christians – as God's church – we are called to live with Jesus, and to proclaim Jesus. The gospel is to be the measure of what we think and what we do. Throughout the New Testament letters the writers encourage us to get right in our thinking about Jesus, and to act right in our living of Jesus – in fact they don't really see a separation between the two halves. Thinking right and living right are about one thing – faithfully walking with our Lord. Theology is about having our thinking, and therefore our living, in line with the truth of God. It doesn't achieve this by itself – but it is a crucial part of the picture.

Theology is the church's task of self-critique. It is a corporate and an individual responsibility before God that we consistently look to the Gospel in such a way that God has full permission to stop us in our tracks and challenge us. Theology is about discipline – that is about discipleship – it is about working hard, and thinking hard, in order to seek faithfulness.

This doesn't mean that theology replaces the gospel – it cannot and must not try and take the place of the proclamation of Jesus – quite the reverse is true. But what it must do is consistently point us to the gospel, it gives us tools and insights to understand how the gospel impacts upon us – even to identify the gospel from all the false versions that our world, and even our church!, can offer.

I want to offer a very simple and clear example – some of you will be quite familiar with it:

When the National Socialist movement – that's Hitler and the Nazi Party – came to power in Germany in the 1930's, they used a great deal of religious symbolism and rhetoric in their propaganda. They attempted to make Nazism look like a German form of Christianity, and they tried to sell the idea that Adolf Hitler was God's appointed leader for the German *volk*.

The thing is, they largely succeeded. Most of the German church went along with this to some degree. Why? Largely because they lacked theological resources to realise that the Gospel of Jesus Christ could not be lined up with the 'gospel of Adolf Hitler'. When Hitler moved to claim headship of the German Church as one part of his headship of the German nation, only a small group of Pastors and theologians resisted.

Those church leaders who did resist had one central theological insight, among a number of insights, which most profoundly enabled their resistance. Theology informed them that there is no other Lord but Jesus Christ, that Christians are to have no other Fuhrer than Jesus Christ, and that the church can have no other head than Jesus Christ.

Now, it is very easy to sit back at a distance and think that we could never be so foolish as to fall for something like this. But it is just not true. The theologian who was instrumental in leading the church that resisted Hitler wrote an open letter to the church in the UK, warning that we are all guilty of allowing other lords to supplant Jesus, that we are all shaped by forces that are opposed to Jesus. The German case was simply particularly obvious, especially with hindsight.

That is the challenge if you like – the need. But the other side of the equation is so encouraging. Theology can help to feed a lively and rich church which is intent upon discipleship and which lives out faith in the Master. Theology is life-giving, because it is about shaping our lives in full accord with Jesus and His salvation of us. It is exciting because it must always point us to Jesus and direct our hearts and minds into His truth.

We all know that the days of attending church as a part of normal life are over. But the reality of discipleship – of belonging to the living Jesus Christ – that reality is as fundamental and challenging as ever. As we seek to reach the 'lost generation' – the generation who consider the story of Jesus to be irrelevant nonsense – the depth of our theology matters a great deal. If we are to share Jesus, then we need to know who it is we are pointing people to, and we need to know what He is all about. We need to understand how Jesus calls us to be utterly transformed and to live for Him.

It is only in this true gospel that we can hope and live. This is the only good news that is worth sharing – and, what’s more, it is only this Jesus, the true and living Lord, who can capture the imaginations and minds of those who think we Christians are losers. I get excited about the depth that theology can help us achieve – and I know that this is what it is all about. Jesus Christ is the truth we need to know, and the Lord we MUST proclaim. Let’s go deeper.

Appendix 2: Anthony Dancer (Stoke Parish – Curate)

THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE CHURCH IN MISSION

Our Vision for Mission

As a church in Nelson we are a movement driven by a vision – a vision of mission. We are a missional church. We are a mission movement. Yet when we talk about mission, we need to be aware of a sea change emerging in theology and the church around the world, particularly amongst evangelicals.

This section of the church is beginning to radically and faithfully reorientate itself; it is beginning to recognise the social and political shape of mission and mission–transformation, and thereby embrace and embody the vision which so empowered the early church – that God’s mission is concerned with transforming and renewing the whole of creation and the structures which inhabit it.

These are exciting times in mission. As a church our vision for mission and what it means to be the church needs to be guided by the truth of this sea change, for it goes to the very core of our identity. In other words, we need to be at the crest of the wave of that sea change, and ride it. Now that’s an exciting and a demanding place to be, and the single most important demand placed upon us is this: God seeks our response of obedience to his mission. That call upon us can be summed up in two words: *recognition* and *repetition*. I want to use these words to help us move forward.

Recognising

...God is in the world

First of all then, being Christ’s missional church means recognising that God is in the world, where people are, not in the church. The church is not an enclave or a retreat where God is kept like some relic. God is not some ideological abstraction – God is in the world, where people are. God, right here and now, in *this* world, just as it is: the world that people live in, love in, and work in. I think in history, the failure to recognise the full implications of this has meant that God has sometimes worked *despite* the church, rather than because of it.

...that God’s mission is personal, social, and political

Our God is a personal, social, and political reality, present in the world through God’s Holy Spirit. That is what proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord and seeking the reign of His Kingdom mean. To proclaim the Lordship of the living God in this world is therefore a social and political statement, as well as a statement of faith.

...that the church is a social and political expression of faith

So obedience to God’s mission in the world means we need to also recognise that the church is a political, social and cultural expression of faith: a community of believers gathered and dispersed in the world, whose culture is formed and shaped by the Word and the world as they confront one another. The church is a community living dispersed in the world as witnesses to God’s ongoing work of mission through His Spirit. It is *that* cultural commitment to the Word *and* the world that makes us most truly evangelicals. Therefore, a growing church, one which is faithful to the radical and evangelical nature of the Good News, is one which does its theology immersed

simultaneously in the culture of the Word and the culture of the world, being a church with the Bible in one hand, and the newspaper in the other, for example.

So, being the church means being a social and political reality that witnesses to a different reality than the one acknowledged by the rest of the world. It witnesses to the reality of God's Kingdom – God's just order. The *Confessing Church* recognised this during the Second World War. If we want to know what the obedient church looks like, we might look to them.

The Confessing Church movement was founded by evangelical pastors who stood in resistance to attempts to make evangelical churches the instruments of Nazism, confessing the Lordship of Christ, and founding alternative seminaries (interestingly, a seminary along these lines has recently started in the USA, called *Word and World: A People's School*). Far from retreating, it meant taking risks: Bonhoeffer, one of its founding members, returned from the USA to resist the Nazi onslaught. For his acts of confession he was imprisoned and hanged. Now, there are some who say it cost him his life. However, it seems to me in that act of Confession, he found it: an ultimate act of resistance to the power of Death. An extreme example, perhaps, yet we face the same onslaught against God's Kingdom each and every day as the Word and the world confront one another; perhaps it's just a bit more subtle.

...Word and world : Confessing and Confronting

The Confessing Church was passionate, radical, and pioneering. Central to its identity was its commitment to the Word and the world. They understood that through Christ's life, death and resurrection the Bible literally described true, redeemed, restored reality: reality as God sees it. They confessed this reality, in which Christ reigns. And they recognised the social and political nature of this reign.

So one thing we can learn is this. When we are thinking about the social reality of the mission of the church (when we are thinking about social justice and mission), we need to keep in mind the question of whose justice we seek, and which reality we proclaim.

Sometimes social justice is seen as an extra bolt-on addition to the Good News. If this were ever the case at all, it is simply due to our failure to recall the answer to this question: *whose justice, which reality?* It is of course God's justice, and the reality of that justice – that justification – as a present reality and a future hope (God's Kingdom), manifest in the ongoing action of the Holy Spirit in the world.

...the Bible describes reality

And so as a church we must recognise that the reality the Bible describes is a reality where the first come last, the marginalised are embraced, the hungry are fed, the thirsty drink: this is a reality which is contrary to that which most of the world inhabits (indeed, most often it turns it on its head). And here, we need to recall that the church itself is a marginal thing, not a majority thing. Yet, ironically perhaps, the poor, the marginalised, the dispossessed, are in fact in the majority in the world: a two-thirds majority.

...being biblical people means being radically evangelical people

So, like the early church and the Confessing Church, we need to recognise that being biblical people means being radically evangelical. And being radical evangelicals means being nothing other than obedient and faithful witnesses, engaged, immersed, excited, and empowered by God's mission in the world. It shapes our very identity. Being the church is therefore not about retreat, but about engagement. And that has social and political consequences that we must recognise and embrace, just as Jesus did.

Repetition

...embodying Christ in the world and living the Gospel

Our obedience to God's call on our lives requires this recognition then, and it also requires *repetition*. It requires us as a church to embody the Word (to embody Christ) in the world, embodying God's reality in the world in all that we say and do, and upholding the reign of God's justice. A church that is seeking to authentically embody Christ's body in the world is about more than the purely personal. It stands in resistance to other claims to Lordship. It is a church that witnesses to the reality in which the values, systems, and structures of this world are turned on their head. It has dramatic social and political consequences (as the example of the Confessing Church showed us).

...affirming God's reality: saying Yes and No

Simply, being Christ's body, embodying the Word, means being at odds with the world. It can mean being odd. It has social/structural and personal implications. For example, it means confronting and resisting systems, structures, ideologies and organisations (be they governments, health care, education, multinationals, idols, capitalism, socialism etc.) when they stand in contradiction to the reality of God's Kingdom and restoration of the *whole* of creation, in order that the truth of God's Kingdom might be known.

And it means being the advocate for those who are marginalised by the systems, structures, ideologies and organisations of this world: coming alongside self-sacrificially and without reserve, and embracing the marginalised, the destitute, the hungry, the poor, and the environment, in the love of Christ as co-workers with the Holy Spirit, meeting them just as they are.

Conclusion

That, as the church, is our charge. The mission and ministry of the church to witness to God's mission in the world requires that we embrace it and take it seriously. There is no doubt that doing so may feel a little uncomfortable. It may seem a little daunting. I suppose that in many ways, it should – our Lord has set a huge and exciting task before us, yet by faith, through his grace, together, I believe we can ride the wave of that sea change. The future, our future, starts now.

A very brief list of further reading

Karl Barth 1939 *Church and State* SCM, London

Andrew Bradstock and Christopher Rowland 2002 *Radical Christian Writings: A Reader* Blackwell, Oxford

Michael Budde & Robert Brimlow (eds) 2000 *The Church as Counterculture* SUNY, New York

- Anne Hope & Sally Timmel 1984 *Training for Transformation (3 Vols)* Mambo Press, Nairobi
- Janet Miller 2001 *Catechizing for Justice: A Six-Session Program to Promote the Gospel Mission* Resource Publications, San Jose CA
- Eugene Peterson 1997 *Subversive Spirituality* Regent College Publishing, Vancouver
- Christopher Rowland 1988 *Radical Christianity* Orbis, New York
- William Stringfellow 1973 *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land* Word Books, Waco TX
- John Walsh 1991 *Evangelization and Justice: New Insights for Christian Ministry* Orbis, New York
- Walter Wink 1998 *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* Galilee Doubleday, New York
- Nigel Wright 1996 *The Radical Evangelical: Seeking a Place to Stand* SPCK, London

Appendix 3: Peter Carrell. (Bishopdale College, Director)

**THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND
MINISTRY TRAINING**

I want to offer three reflections on the theme of theological education and ministry training in the our church, drawing on observations about the whole of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand. Applications flowing from these reflections will be specific to our Diocese.

Educational opportunities abound, but ...

There is currently an embarrassment of riches in New Zealand in respect of opportunities to study theology and train for ministry. There are a multitude of providers including some who provide excellent distance learning degree level education. There are opportunities to pursue study to masters and doctoral level, which were unknown just a decade or two ago.

During the last two decades within our own Anglican church there has been a massive swing away from education for the few at St. John's College to education for the many in a variety of regional and distance learning programmes, as well as continued provision of first-class education through St. John's.

On the face of it we might expect that this state of affairs would provide a surplus of leaders in ministry with vacancies highly sought after by a slate of top-class candidates. The reality, paradoxically, is a little different. In recent years it has been surprisingly often that the yield of suitable candidates for some specialist positions has turned out to be remarkably thin.

One reason for this, I venture to suggest, is that we have down-played the importance of the role of full-time, lifelong, stipended clergy. We have rightly shifted paradigm from one-man clerical ministry to shared ministry between lay and ordained. But in doing so we have inadequately recognised the strategic importance of the leader of shared ministry and the very specialist skills and particular personality types required for this role. As a consequence we have not been able to excite the imagination of significant numbers of high calibre young people and thus create an appropriate

context for God to call today the people who will be the leaders of team ministries tomorrow.

One sign of this evident both in our diocese and in other dioceses is the scarcity of people in their twenties offering for ordained ministry. A change in this situation requires a renewed vision for the value of ordained ministry and in particular for the extraordinary but worthwhile challenge inherent in the role of vicar or ministry team leader.

According to this analysis of the state of the church, education and training is in a reasonably good state of health. But the mix of people being drawn into our training and study programmes needs some adjustment for the future church.

I suggest that we need to consider ways in which we can pro-actively cast a vision of full-time, ordained ministry as one of the most exciting yet demanding vocations young adults can take up as their life's work.

Alongside that I suggest we seriously ask the following question: should we be more directive about the age-profile of the future leadership of our church? How do you react to the following proposals (which are my own personal suggestions, they do not necessarily foreshadow a change in diocesan policy):

- ❑ Only those under the age of 35 will be accepted for training for full-time stipendiary ordained ministry.
- ❑ New Lay Preacher licenses will only be issued to those under the age of 50.
- ❑ For every person over the age of 50 applying for a place in our diocesan ministry training groups each parish or mission district must also make application for a person under the age of 50.

Flaws in the educational process?

Let's suppose for the moment that we have all the right people enthusiastically involved in preparing for ministry, and in particular have a disproportionately plentiful supply of 20 – 40 year olds in the programme. Would all be well? One would hope so but let me share something I have learned from less than two years in my education role with the Diocese: we are flawed learners; we learn some things and forget others; we grasp some knowledge eagerly and filter out other lessons. There is not a direct correlation between training given and improvements to church life.

Training and study are valuable, and they do make a difference. In this Diocese, for example, we have seen great change in the 1990s, much of it attributable to the programme of equipping for ministry which we have embarked on. But education by itself is not a solution to the problems of the church. The major problems in the church are *you* and *me* – fallen, imperfect, sinful human creatures who learn some things well and choose to go our own flawed way on other things. If education alone could transform humanity then Jesus would not have needed to die on the cross!

This does not mean, of course, that we give up on equipping the saints, but I suggest that we need to reflect not only on the content of our programmes, but also on the kinds of students we draw into them. Not all flaws and faults in our human make up

are equal and we can sift out those whose learning style is less well suited to the life-situation we are moving into. The church of the future faces the challenge of constant change and this, I suggest, places a premium on trainees in ministry who demonstrate the following characteristics:

- ❑ a willingness to learn *and to keep on learning*,
- ❑ an ability to *flexibly apply* learning to the realities of the local context in which they minister,
- ❑ a *sensitivity* to the expectations and tolerances of their congregations,
- ❑ an understanding that *relationships* are more important than programmes,
- ❑ an ability to *lead* people forward in the journey of faith (not every ministry aspirant is a leader of people) and to *engage* the attention of busy people,
- ❑ a capacity to make rapid adjustment in *style* of leadership and communication.

The role of the local church in equipping for ministry?

My third and final reflection is on the relationship between study and training and our diocesan vision. At the heart of our vision is the local church. By this we mean that the local church is to be the focus of our diocesan endeavours in respect of provision of resources and equipping through education and training. The Diocesan Ministry Team fully understands its obligations within the Diocesan structure to provide functional and effective programmes for study and training. We also accept that the current equipping programme in respect of our local churches is capable of improvement and will always need adaptation to changing needs. Nevertheless, there is an important task in equipping for ministry which each local church can undertake within its own community life.

No one knows the needs of the local church better than the local church itself. No one knows as precisely as the local church itself what specific outcomes of ministry equipping are required by the local church. I believe an under-utilised part of the training process in our Diocese at the moment is training and education within the local church, co-ordinated by the vicar or priest-in-charge. On the face of it that sounds like a call for our busy clergy to be even busier. But consider this for a moment: no lay preacher, house group leader, worship leader, etc can work well in isolation. Each minister needs encouragement, refreshment, and re-learning the vision of the local church through regular meeting with the leader of the ministry team (which will normally be the vicar or priest-in-charge in a smaller parish, but may be a staff team member in a larger parish).

If such meetings are not being held then they should – they are at the core of the work of shared ministry. When such meetings are held they are an excellent opportunity not only for prayer and discussion but also for some intentional training. The advantage of training occurring in this way is that it can be carefully tailored to meet the objective of the local vision.

Equipping the saints within the local church is not an alternative to diocesan-based training but an appropriate and necessary complement. It may well require some input of diocesan educators – and we would welcome invitations to contribute. But each minister has something to share from his or her stock of experience in the realities of ministry. Local training, I am suggesting, needs to be as much part of our vision for the development of the future church as diocesan-based training.

Summing up we might say this: there is much to be thankful for when we survey the ministry education scene, but some big questions challenge us about who we are educating and how we are going about the task!

Appendix 4: Mark Chamberlain. (Bishop's Chaplain for Church Development)

LIVING THE REVOLUTION OF JESUS
- RIGHT ATTITUDES FOR MINISTRY

I had a talk with my son the other day. It was the kind of talk you long to have - about life and faith and choices. It was the kind that you know as a parent you can never have too many of, but end up having too few. And he finally admitted that he felt he just wasn't good enough to be a Christian. So I said to him, 'It's not about being good. Never think that being a Christian is like being a goody-good.' And to help him expand his vision of the Christian faith I told him the following story;

Imagine our world has been taken over by an evil overlord. He lives in a dark castle with a moat and battlements. And all the people are under his spell. They go through the motions of life but they're a shell of who they really are - such is their oppression. And the troops of the overlord are present everywhere - enforcing his will. But worse than that, people are actually blind to the reality of their situation - they don't even know they're in bondage.

But then in the fullness of time, a special operations paratrooper (this is a story for a teen!) from outside the kingdom decides to mount a rescue operation. And so he's dropped in behind enemy lines. And breaks his way into the castle, neutralises the guards and eliminates the dark overlord on his throne, laying down his own life in the process.

But on the third day the great paratrooper comes to life again and goes onto the streets announcing to the people that there's been a revolution and the overlord is dead - they can go free. And some of the people believe and they gather round to learn more about this new freedom - this new way of being human. And they band together to unlearn the old life and learn to live the new.

After a short time the paratrooper gathers his people and gives them one last message before he departs and this is what he said; 'Live the revolution. Never forget that you are free. Never stop living this new life.'

And so for a while the revolution continued. More and more people began to realise that they were in bondage – that they were living a kind of half existence – and so they joined the revolution. And there was great rejoicing in the land.

And that's where the story ended. But for you I want to add a little more;

But then a curious thing happened. Some of those who'd come to believe, began to look at the soldiers in the streets and the dark castle and began to ask if there really had been a revolution. And they began to listen to their neighbours and they gradually drifted back to their old lives. And so the revolution began to falter. And even though some continued to believe in the great paratrooper and still meet together, they no longer lived the new life they'd been taught. They forgot who they really were.

Now scripture says that 'The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God.' But in the 21st Century another phenomena has emerged – 'the god of this world has blinded the minds of believers as well.' The church in the west and in own nation, has become so enculturated, so engrained with the values of our culture, so enthralled with technology and entertainment and wealth and comfort, that many Christians can no longer distinguish between what God says about life and what our culture says. They may be in church on Sundays but they're not living the revolution.

So what can we do? We do what Jesus did. He had a vision for a new humanity – a new way of being human - and that vision found expression in the phrase 'The kingdom of God.' And Jesus lived the kingdom, he embodied the kingdom and he taught his disciples how to live in the kingdom. And today the best way to understand what Jesus meant by the kingdom, is to use the word 'revolution.' Jesus broke the power of Satan and set us free to be fully human – it's a revolution!

Learn to live the revolution

So I want to leave you with three challenges. The first one is personal. Examine your lives and ask yourselves 'How converted am I really? How radically different is my lifestyle to my unbelieving neighbour? Is Jesus Christ teaching me day by day what it means to be part of the Christian revolution? Are you learning what it means to be a revolutionary in your family, your work and your church. Because being a Christian is not primarily about being nice or good. It's much deeper than that. It's a revolution in the deepest part of your heart and mind. Learn to be a revolutionary!

It all starts in your leadership team

The second challenge I put to church leaders. Are you developing a ministry team in your church that is truly and humbly seeking to live the revolution together? Because it's all about being together. In these days it is more helpful to conceive of the local church as a revolutionary cell, set deep in the heart of enemy territory, than to think of it as a respectable community institution. And you leadership team is where that starts.

Work on your relationships

The third challenge has to do with the way your leadership team relates together. Are your relationships open and transparent and full of grace and forgiveness? The revolution of Jesus stands or falls on how we relate to each other. In the past we've emphasised personal holiness but that vision of a new humanity is much too small. Jesus calls us to transformed relationships in our leadership teams and then our churches. So work at your relationships. Seek forgiveness and healing if there's been hurt, set aside time to be together, to listen and pray, to encourage one another, love one another, and do whatever it takes to live the revolution. Because people these days don't need more words or advertising or slick stuff, but they do need to see the revolution embodied in people.

How is the Bishop's Chaplain involved?

In the last 2 months I've been trying to get to grips with my new position as Bishop's Chaplain for Church Development and one of the greatest joys has been to find myself in a ministry team who are sincerely seeking to embody this revolution. And we meet for prayer each morning and we pray for you – the clergy and ministry leaders of our Diocese. And our prayer is that each parish and each mission district is living the revolution of Jesus. Because within our Diocese are towns and cities that are growing in population faster than any other area in the country. Our Diocese is burgeoning with people, but most of them do not know the love and hope of God. But we have the good news, and the good news is the hope of the world. And we are compelled to tell others this good news.

So if in my new role I can help you clarify your understanding of the mission or sharpen your vision, or provide resources or advice or skills, please call me up – let's work together. I want to live the revolution with you. And if you need encouragement when there are problems or disappointments, please call me up – the revolution is going to be tough but we have each other. But whether you call or not, be assured of my prayers and my support and love. Let's move forward as a band of revolutionaries, taking the ground back for God.

Conclusion

The blockbuster movie 'The Matrix' was released during Easter, 1999 and it was a smash hit. And the film portrayed the future as having 2 interwoven worlds; one world is a computer generated world of artificial reality – the other is the real world. And when Morpheus spoke to Neo early in the film, he asked him *'Have you ever had a dream Neo that you were so sure was real? What if you were unable to wake from that dream? How would you know the difference between the dream world and the real world?'*

We Christians have discovered the difference. We know what's real. We have tasted God and know that he is good. But tragically, we're inclined to forget who we are. And like Cypher, who at the end of the film changed sides, we are sometimes wooed into thinking that the artificial world has more to offer than God's kingdom. It seems so compelling and so real.

So wake up! Never forget you're free. Never stop living the revolution of Jesus.

Appendix 5: Brenda and Julian Dobbs (Bishopdale Parish – Vicar and Priest Assistant.)

THE JOYS AND SORROWS OF REACHING 20-40 YEAR OLDS – AN URBAN PERSPECTIVE.

The gaze of the Church in this generation must be ever forward to what God will yet do in and through His church!

If we as a Church are serious about reaching the 20-40 year olds that are not yet in our churches, then we must seriously examine our structures, systems and leadership which are for some reason excluding this generation from the church today. Speaking from Bishopdale's perspective, yet I imagine from the perspective of all of the churches in this Diocese, we are not making the grade in our ministry to 20-40 year olds. This is a serious challenge for us if we are committed to the future of the Christian Church in this nation and around the world.

Some years ago I was invited to attend a Vineyard Pastor's conference in Waikanae. That particular conference was just as good as any leadership conference that has been run in this Diocese - the one difference was that 95% of those pastors appeared to be under the age of 30. I am 34 years old. After 11 years of ordained ministry I had hoped that I would be one of the oldest clergy leading parishes in this diocese, but this is not the case. If we are serious about reaching the 20-40 year olds of our community, then we must source out God anointed men and women of that age bracket and release leadership ministry to them. Insurance agents make 85% of their sales to those who are 5 years either side of their own age. How old is your vicar? You may love your vicar and he or she may be doing a fantastic job in their current ministry, but are they able to reach the 20-40 year olds who are not in our churches. Having younger leaders is no guarantee that 20-40 year olds will be converted to faith in Jesus, but it is a factor that needs to be considered. Many 20-40 year olds in Nelson spend their Sunday morning in cafés drinking coffee, therefore the personal style of those who lead worship in our churches needs to relate to those coffee drinkers and the style of our worship service needs to reflect an authentic spirituality that puts people not so much in touch with the church, but in touch with the Living God.

At Bishopdale we've learnt that the 20-40 year olds are non-institutional. This means that the old school tie network simply does not exist. We've learnt that because someone worships at Bishopdale, which is an Anglican church, does not mean in anyway that they will worship in an Anglican Church in any other part of the diocese, or any other part of the country. There is in our opinion amongst this age group a healthy lack of interest in the diocese and in denominational structures. People at Bishopdale will come and listen to Derek Eaton teach from the bible because he has a

teaching gift; they will not come and listen to him because he is the Bishop of Nelson. There is also an understanding that the Christian Church in Nelson is wider than the Diocese of Nelson.

We've learnt that ministry to 20-40 year olds is expensive, it's a ministry that takes significant resources and personal style. Our experience has been that the resources that are required to reach this age group will come as the vision is shared in faith to the members of the church. Recently Bishopdale purchased approximately \$14,000 dollars worth of audio visual equipment and computers. The funding for this came from within the church as the vision was sown

We've learnt that 20-40 year olds want authenticity and transparency within their leadership teams. Having a leader who is able to express that they've failed or done wrong significantly gains the trust of 20-40 year olds in our society.

Here's a message from three 20-40 year olds from Bishopdale, Nelson.

Erin Haines

I feel that for the Church to reach people of my age group in needs to contain three important elements. They are Passion, Relevance and Understanding.

- The Passion needs to be applied to worship - where the music and words reveal the hearts desire of the worshipper to touch the Heart of God with an outpouring of love and adoration.
- The Relevance needs to be in the teaching of God's Word. To be real with where the people of our age group are and delivered from a heart of genuine love for it, as a tool for today's living, not only our history as Christians, although that too is very important.
- Understanding of the issues facing this age group, e.g. work, finance, family and relationships. This means the Church needs to be a place that we feel safe to come and be listened too, and receive practical counselling to resolve issues, without judgement and with compassion.

Luke Shaw

A Church that reaches my non-Christian peers needs to be:

- **Relevant / Real:** Appeals to age group and their interests. Meets their needs, deals with their issues. Have young people present who know their peers. Powerful presence of God.
- **It needs to be fresh:** in terms of teaching styles, setting programs, meetings, worship music. Approach to discipleship and evangelism must be interesting, enjoyable, new.
- **It needs to have focus:** ministry that connects youth to God, through young people, their way. Must have vision for change and growth – geared for today and tomorrow. Ready to go and get out there.

Mark Quinney

This would be my dream for the church to reach my non-Christian peers:

- It should be totally relevant to their needs
- It needs to provide fellowship possibilities for men
- It needs to have a secure environment in which to share the struggles we all face

- It needs to give avenues for participation as possible
- It needs to be built on relationships not religion
- It needs to recognise that we have the responsibilities of young families and careers
- It needs to have an appropriate service structure including worship songs that are enjoyable
- It would need to provide a challenging message
- Other environments rather than a church building should be considered for meetings
- It would need to have men of similar age, interests and social standing already attending

The gaze of the Christian church in this generation must be ever forward to what God will do in and through His church. The church of Jesus Christ is far too important to have a generation of Kiwi's excluded from its mission and ministry by outdated structures and systems that are highly irrelevant to a changing society.

If we're going to reach the 20-40 year olds no matter where our churches are in this diocese, we will need to risk more, be prepared to fail, so that we can watch the fruit of our churches blossom under the enabling power of God the Holy Spirit. The gaze of the church in this generation must be ever forward to what God will yet do in and through His church. Folks the best days are yet to come. Let's take the risk and reach this generation for Jesus Christ. God Bless You.

Appendix 6: Tim Mora (Greymouth Parish – Priest Assistant)

REACHING 18 – 25S – A “WEST COAST” PERSPECTIVE

Around a month ago now I drove over and back to Christchurch for the Promise Keepers conference, "Storm the Gates." For both trips I had the company of a different individual in the 15-25 age range. They were both fascinating journeys for me as I listened and gained an insight into the thinking of that age group. Our conversations covered a lot of ground, but one key thread seemed to run through them all, and that was the importance of relationships. On the trip to Christchurch my companion was a Polytech student who believed quite strongly that God had brought him to the Coast for a purpose.

And it wasn't one of those purposes where he was here to "save the Coast" rather it was because God wanted to teach him something personally, to bring him to a place where he became more reliant on him. He talked about how for most of this year he had been living in a flat with I think four other students who lived the more liberated student lifestyle to the full, in terms of drugs, alcohol and sexual relationships. He shared about the time it had taken for him to develop a level of trust and respect with these guys where they accepted him for who he was and not for the stereotype they had, had of Christians. He was now at a point where they were each able to talk more openly of their personal lives. But it was a position he had to earn, and he had earned it because he has in one sense incarnated Christianity for them. Like Jesus he lived amongst them, never compromising but never judging either. And from what I personally know of the situation and from what he shared I believe that this young man has made quite an impact on their lives. He personally may never see the fruit of this year, but I am certain that they will remember him, and when times of crisis come in their lives, it may well be that they turn to God in their search for peace because of this year. And for him personally the year has also been one where the experience of his living situation has resulted in a deeper dependence and relationship with his Lord.

On the trip back I had the pleasure of the company of another polytech student. He was one of those who talked more than he listened, but that's okay, because as I listened, the importance of relationships came through again and again, because most of his conversation was about his family, his friends and his church family up north. He talked about the joy of surprising his family through unexpected trips home, of spending time with friends in both the good times and the bad, of the specialness of his baptism where he had been surrounded by his church family. Relationships and their implicit importance to him dominated his conversation and it made me realise that, now more than ever in our post-modern world and especially with the pre-baby boomers that relationships are incredibly significant.

Real evangelism where we want to win people, and especially this younger generation, to Christ takes time. It takes time because that's what we need to build relationships of significance. Relationships that will enable us to sow into people's lives.

So if we want to reach the 18-25's then we need to realise that one of the things they value above all else is relationships. Most often a small group of like-minded friends who really look out for one another, who are genuine, accepting, non-judgemental, tolerant, are out to enjoy life and who are there for one another when things get tough.

Other keys we need to understand before we will be effective in reaching this generation include the fact that they value experience over truth, relationships over being right, and that if they come to church, they come to encounter God rather than to learn about God. What this means then is that our evangelism is no longer all about proclaiming a series of faith propositions in the belief that if we can only demonstrate the logic and rationality of the Christian faith that they will surely believe it. And while this has never ever been completely true it is far less so today. Our Gen x'ers want to know that the truth works. They have to experience the outworking of what we claim to be truth before they will even consider taking it on board. Primarily this will occur through their observation of our lives as we build significant relationships with them in informal and smaller group settings. But it also requires that we take a serious look at the way we structure our services, our home groups and our worship gatherings. We must ask ourselves are we creating environments in which people are meeting with God. Are our sermons addressing the issues people are grappling with today, does the way we structure our worship draw people into God's presence, Are we giving people the opportunity to be more involved through reflection and meditation.

In Greymouth we run a service called Soul Reason, in which we experiment with these types of things. And in our planning we always ask the question.

What type of response are we looking for from those who come and how can we provide an opportunity for them to do that in an experiential way. I remember on one occasion when we were looking at the power of the tongue to heal or hurt through our choices of words, and we concluded by setting up a washbasin on stage with a small table nearby with small cups of mouthwash.

We invited people to come forward and in an act of confession to put things right with God, and then to symbolically rinse their mouths out and to spit into the basin. Much like I guess the waters of baptism are a symbol of our inner cleansing.

For our 18-25's truth is relative, which leads to individual morality, they fear dogmatism and therefore institutions, but they have a genuine interest in spirituality, desire close relationships and want to belong. They desire significance, and if we want to win them then we have to be like the first young man who rode with me to Christchurch who right now is incarnating Jesus to his flatmates.