



From the Chair.....

2017 EFM Conference



The EFM Conference at the School of Theology at the University of the South, Sewanee was attended by The Rev. Tricia Carter, The Rev Jean Malcolm and Valda McBeth, who gave EFM NZ an active presence in all areas of the Conference. The Conference was also attended by EFM representatives from Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Jean volunteered to assist with worship and consequently the story of Tarore of Waharoa (see p.3) formed part of the final worship.

There were workshops on all aspects of life within EFM including practical reflection activities. Opportunities for sharing and learning were plentiful.

Fredrica Harris Thompsett (author of 2017 Interlude Book "We are Theologians") was a keynote speaker, and spoke on her book "Doing Theology Ourselves". It was interesting to hear the context in which the book was produced, and to reflect on how far the Church has moved since this was considered 'revolutionary' in its encouragement for the ministry of the laity.

The New Zealand material including "The Church in Aotearoa, NZ" was well received, and we were commended on the presentation of all our material.

As I reflect on the gathering I realised that the strongest images I had of the week were of the people and the community which is EFM around the world. There was a profound sense of coming home as I visited Sewanee, and the warmth and welcome was overwhelming.

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Introducing EFM Board Member:

Sharron Cole

Sharron is the CEO/Registrar of the Midwifery Council of New Zealand and has been in this role since late 2010. Prior to this, she was for two years, the Director of the Wellington Catholic Education Centre. She came to that position following a five year appointment as Deputy Chief Families Commissioner.

She has worked in the public and community sectors for many years. Her public work includes an extensive involvement in health and ethics at local, regional and national levels. Sharron also has a broad range of involvement in the community including her roles as Chair of Parents Centres New Zealand and of Rethinking Crime and Punishment.



Sharron has been an active member of the Petone parish since shifting to Wellington in 1995. She has also been a member of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference Interfaith Committee since 2009.

In late 2015, she had an “experience of a lifetime” when she was appointed as a lay auditor to the Synod of Bishops on the Family and spent over three weeks in the Vatican, coming into daily contact with the Pope whose mission of mercy, love and reaching out to the peripheries is one she much shares. She is currently chairing the Synod Preparatory Committee for the upcoming synod for the Archdiocese of Wellington.

While Director at the Wellington Catholic Education Centre, her then website bio sums up her approach to and involvement in EFM:

As Director, Sharron is keen for the Centre to reach out to Catholics everywhere and to encourage and assist them to move on from the child's understanding of faith that most people have unless they have done some adult education or formation in the faith. With new learning, we gain a different understanding of scripture and theology and that in turn, has an impact on our participation in and appreciation of liturgy. It also leads us to a better understanding of what it truly means to be a Christian, living out the gospel values of Jesus Christ.

2018 EfM Fees

The 2018 fee for the full 36 week EfM programme is \$275.00 (GST inclusive)/person.

This is a slight increase on the previous fee which had remain unchanged for the last 4 year.

The EfM Board has decided that in future, the fees may be inflation adjusted on an annual basis.

PLEASE NOTE: The 2018 edition of the Volume A Reading & Reflection Guide (RRG) is a revised edition, and is not the same as the Volume A RRG used in 2014.

Tarore and the Spread of the Gospel

By David Moxon (<http://www.nzcms.org.nz/200-years/2014-pilgrimage/2014-tarore/>)

In the fields to the north of Waharoa, near the Waikato country town of Matamata, there is a small grave. A white cross adorns the resting place of a 12 year old girl who died in the year 1836. Around this grave from time to time there this site has seen the ordination of Maori deacons, special pilgrimages and a steady trickle of people of all sorts who make their way to this ordinary field. Why? The name of the girl buried in the grave is Tarore and the story of her life and death demonstrate how the gospel of Christ is able to bring peace and reconciliation.

Tarore was the daughter of the Maori chief Ngakuku. She studied at the mission school in Matamata where she was given a copy of the Gospel of Luke in te reo Maori by her teacher Charlotte Brown. It was a treasured possession and she kept it safe by wearing it in a kete (a woven bag made from flax) around her neck.

One night while camping in the Kaimai Ranges at the foot of the Wairere Falls, a raiding party from the Arawa tribe came across Tarore's group and attacked their camp, pillaging what they could find. In the action and skirmish, Tarore remained asleep when she received a fatal blow to the head. Her attacker removed the Gospel of Luke she was carrying, thinking it might be tradable.

Her death immediately created a desire for 'utu' (revenge) but back in Waharoa during her funeral Ngakuku, her father, preached against reprisal saying there had been too much bloodshed between the tribes already. Instead he called his people to trust in the justice of God. No blood revenge was sought. This revolutionary act set in motion a sequence of events that paved the way for restoration and reconciliation between tribes.

No one in the Arawa camp was able to read the book. It was not until a literate visiting slave named Ripahau read the text aloud that the people understood its true value. Tarore's murderer, Uita, was convicted by the message of peace displayed in the Gospel of Luke and humbled himself to go and seek forgiveness from Tarore's father.

Visiting Ngakuku was an extremely dangerous move and could easily have resulted in death. A local retelling of this story claims that as the men approached one another tears were shed and they embraced. After Uita humbled himself and repented peace prevailed between the two men and a church was built to honour the message which brought about this reconciliation.

Later Ripahau left Uita's pa and returned to Otaki. There he came into contact with Katu Te Rauparaha (later known as Tamihana Te Rauparaha) from Kapiti Island, the son of the great Ngati Toa chief. Ripahau was again invited to read from the scripture to Katu and his nephew Te Whiwhi. In this way the gospel began to warm the hearts of the people in that place. Some years later Katu (who was now called Tamihana) took Tarore's book with him when he travelled to the South Island to revisit his father's traditional enemies, bringing the gospel of peace there for the first time. The dramatic reconciliation of enemies that had followed Tarore's martyrdom was repeated. Tarore's story and the gospel she bore has long been amongst the taonga (treasures) of the Church in Aotearoa.

On the white cross above Tarore's grave there is written in Maori a reference to the death that brought peace to the tribes. The blood of this child became the seed of the Church. At her tangi, Tarore's father prayed that vengeance would belong to God; he never gave up hope in divine justice. The vengeance of God was the repentance and transformation of his daughter's murderer, and her story became a parable of hope forever.

Homily at the Holy Eucharist: Sent into the World

*Karen M. Meridith, Executive Director of Education for Ministry
Education for Ministry 2017 Summer Conference
The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee
Saturday, June 24, 2017*

The Nativity of John the Baptist: Psalm 85; Acts 13:14b-26; Luke 1:57-80A

Ministry, says Verna Dozier, is being about God's business. So what does it look like when we are about God's business? Zechariah might answer that it is "to go before the Lord to prepare [a] way, to give knowledge of salvation to [God's] people by the forgiveness of their sins ... to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Ministry, then, is being about God's business by being witnesses to the Kingdom of God in the midst of the world in order to offer that world the possibility of transformation.

That is, of course, the ministry to which the church is called, to witness to the possibility that life can be lived differently.

About the newborn John people ask, "What then will this child become?" John the Baptist, by what accounts we have, became one who saw in Jesus the possibility for living as "a light to those who sit in darkness." John became a witness proclaiming that possibility for all. Peter tells those at the synagogue, "God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised; before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John was finishing his work, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but one is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of the sandals on his feet.'"

John used the ritual of baptismal washing to call people to their own transformation in order to become witnesses to the possibility of transforming the world. At our baptism we too are asked to live a countercultural life, to renounce ways of living that might be more in line with the ways of the world. We are asked to commit to study and prayer together; to be aware when we fall short, to repent and return; to live lives that witness to the Gospel by serving and loving others as Jesus did and by seeking justice and honoring the dignity of every person. Keeping the baptismal promises is a powerful witness to another possibility for living.

The ability to do this kind of witnessing is developed through the very practices we've been talking about this week. It is one of the fruits of theological reflection that draws on deep study of the Christian tradition grounded in regular prayer and worship in order that we might be more attentive to God's presence in our daily lives. It is enacted in relationships formed through shared story. The courage to offer such witness is nurtured in a community that affirms listening for and responding to God's call.

In their book *Born of Water, Born of Spirit*, Fredrica Harris Thompsett and Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook offer a list of best practices for the development of baptismal ministry.¹ The book grew out of their work with and study of small congregations engaged in identifying and raising up local leadership, but I think it's also instructive for our learning communities in EfM. First of all they note that baptismal ministry blossoms in congregations who build on healthy ways of being in community, including paying attention to respectful communication, building relationships on trust, welcoming the gifts of all, using power justly and appropriately, and addressing needs and concerns as they arise.

These congregations know who they are; they know their history and listen to one another's stories. They invite everyone across generations to share their gifts for ministry. They share leadership. They commit to ongoing learning together. They share a rich symbolic life, expressed in worship and music, art and architecture, and creativity across many aspects of their life together, a symbolic life grounded in a deep belief in the abundance of ways the Holy Spirit's presence is made manifest among them. These congregations engage in ongoing discernment. And they intentionally develop wider community, denominational, and ecumenical relationships, seeking a variety of partners in work for the common good.

We might say that they look at every member, regardless of age, and ask, "What then will this child become?" and they find ways to foster that becoming. Fostering our becoming is part of the work of the institutional church. Sharing and exercising our becoming is our work as the church in the world.

Verna Dozier makes a clear distinction between the ministry of the church gathered and the ministry of the church scattered, between the institutional church and the church as the people of God in the world. Both are needed, but each has a different role. In her view, the institutional church's role is to nurture those whose call is to witness to the Kingdom of God beyond the institution. She calls them the people with Kingdom of God ideas.

People with Kingdom of God ideas, says Dozier, are needed to be about God's business in all the structures of the world—to bring the vision of the Kingdom of God into financial and economic structures; into political structures, into structures that serve social wellbeing, into structures in the humanities, the structures of meaning-making. "There is no place," she says, "where the people of God should not be, and wherever they are they are called to witness to another possibility for life."²

I often hear people say that the church should not be involved in politics. Our laws in the US enshrine that separation. But what this exposes is an inability to see the difference between the church gathered, the institutional church, and the church scattered, the followers of Christ, the people with Kingdom of God ideas who are sent out from the church gathered to be witnesses to the possibility of that Kingdom.

EfM lives in the “both/and.” As a program EfM is part of the institutional church, the church gathered. Our formal role as mentors, coordinators, trainers, and administrators is to nurture and support the participants in our groups, alongside whom we walk as the people with Kingdom of God ideas, the church scattered. As we look at the faces in our EfM circles, we need to be always asking, “What then will this child become?”

In her sermon at the consecration of Jane Holmes Dixon as Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of Washington, Verna Dozier said,

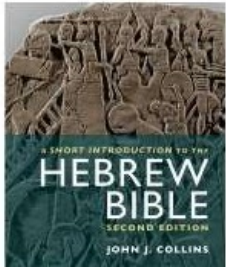
The Church of God is all the people of God, lay and ordained, each order with its own unique vocation, the lay order to be the people of God in the world, to witness by their choices and their values, in the kingdoms of the world, in the systems of commerce and government, education and medicine, law and human relations, science and exploration, art and vision, to witness to all these worlds that there is another possibility for human life than the way of exploitation and domination; and the vocation of the ordained order is to serve the lay order, to refresh and restore the weary souls with the Body and the Blood, to maintain those islands, the institutional church, where life is lived differently but always in order that life may be lived differently everywhere.³

May our EfM groups also be islands where life is lived differently—but always, always in order that life may be lived differently everywhere.

¹ Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook and Fredrica Harris Thompsett, *Born of Water, Born of Spirit* (Herndon, Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2010), 163-165.

² Verna Dozier, *The Dream of God* (New York: Seabury, 2006), 109.

³ Verna Dozier, sermon preached at the consecration of Jane Holmes Dixon as Bishop Suffragan of Washington on November 19, 1992, published in *Virginia Seminary Journal*, April 1993, 33-34.



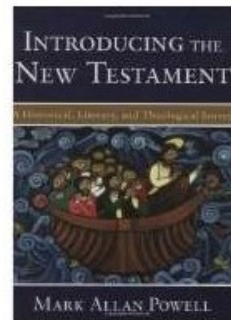
2018 EFM NZ Texts (RRG Volume A - Revised Edition)

Year 1 - The Hebrew Scriptures

A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible by John J. Collins

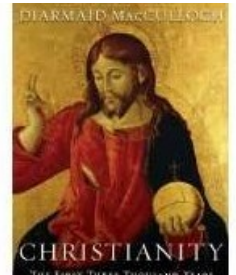
Year 2 - The New Testament

Introducing the New Testament by Mark Allen Powell



Year 3 - Church History

Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years by Diarmaid MacCulloch

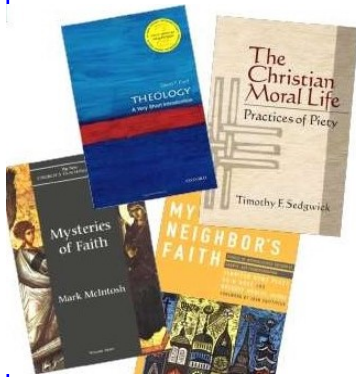


Year 4 - Theology, Ethics, and Interfaith Encounter

Theology - A Very Short Introduction by David F. Ford, Oxford University Press, 2013. (Part of the Oxford University Press Very Short Introduction Series)

Mysteries of Faith by Mark McIntosh. Cowley Publications, 2000. (Part of the New Church's Teaching Series)

The Christian Moral Life: Practices of Piety by Timothy F. Sedgwick. Seabury Books, 2008



My Neighbour's Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation editors Jennifer Howe Peace, Or. N Rose, Gregory Mobley. Orbis Books 2012

RRG Volume A: Living Faithfully in Your World Interlude Books:

- ♦ Fighting with the Bible: Why Scripture Divides Us and How it Can Bring Us Together, by Donn Morgan (Seabury Books, 2007)
- ♦ The Dream of God: A Call to Return, by Verna J. Dozier (Seabury Books, 2006)

NOTE: Both are available as e-books.



What is Education for Ministry (EfM)?

EfM is an adult learning programme designed to link Christian faith with daily life, and to deepen discipleship.

It combines Bible study, and education in theology and church history, with small group worship, prayer and fellowship.

Theological reflection, an integral part of EfM, offers a way of exploring faith today in a life-giving, challenging and purposeful way.

How does EfM work?

The EfM group is the nucleus of the EfM programme.

A group consists of 6-12 participants with a trained mentor.

Groups meet weekly for about 2 hours for 36 weeks over the course of a year.

An EFM group can start at any time of the calendar year.

How much time does EfM involve?

Group members commit to 3-5 hours each week in reading and preparation so they can contribute fully to the life and discussion of the group. Members are responsible for setting their own learning goals. There are no set assignments for handing in.



Education for Ministry

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