



# Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection

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# ECOLOGY, POPULATION AND JUSTICE

Environmental concerns are increasingly important for us in Africa, and central to these concerns are population issues. The first article here, by a third year philosopher at Kimwenza, Bernard Mumba, calls for a "spirituality of ecology." The second and third articles, by Richard Cremins, a long-time worker in the Family Life Movement, and Roland Lesseps, a life scientist on the staff of KATC, respond to points raised in an earlier issue of the JCTR Bulletin. Further comments on this topic are welcome.

## OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECOLOGY: ARE WE RESPONSIBLE FOR DAMAGE CAUSED?

"Human beings are created to praise, reverence and serve God our Lord and by means of doing this to save their souls. The other things on the face of this earth are created for the human beings, to help them in the pursuit of the end for which they are created. From this it follows that we ought to use these things to the extent that they help us toward our end, and free ourselves from them to the extent that they hinder us from it.... We ought to desire and choose only that which is more conducive to the end for which we are created."

### HUMAN ADVANTAGE

This famous passage on the "Principle and Foundation" from the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius has always put the human person as an advantaged animal. According to Ignatius, in the creation of the world God specifically had humans in mind, as the principal animal to whom God was to confer the world as a finished product. But ever since, humans have always struggled to maintain the world in its initial position. The liberty to manipulate and transform the world into a suitable place for humans has never been realised.

It is clear that humans own the world, for it was given to them. With this in mind, we can therefore define the human

person as a being of the world. The world simply cannot be what it is supposed to be without women and men. There exists between the human person and the world a close natural relationship, for the two literally depend on each other. Here we

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look at man or woman as a corporeal being who needs the world for survival. They are beings who have the life of an animal that eats, sleeps, drinks, recreates, pro-creates, etc. All these possibilities are offered to humans by what surrounds them in the world.

### QUESTION

Now the question that interests me is whether humans have realized the intended goal defined for them by the transcendental authorities. That is, have we learned to use all that is on the face of this earth in order to attain the purpose of our creation? In other words, women and men have been commanded to use the world in a rather discreet and profitable manner, in accordance with the laws of nature.

But we very well know that the universe is not a universe for humans only. It is a universe in which all other created beings also have the right to exist. Therefore the universe becomes for humans not only an object, but an object which has to be humanized by their proper handling and transformation.

We can further say that the universe as a whole is to humanity a mirror of its existence. The world can only be an object to humans on condition that humans also acknowledge that they are a *project* in the world. Human existence is never independent of the environment "in which we live and move and have our being." If this reality is not taken into consideration, the vital relationship between humans and the world will be ruptured. And this has been a fatal problem which has always existed. We humans have too often thought of ourselves as *extractors* from the world and the world as a *provider* for us without really thinking of the future of the whole community of creation.

### WORLD FOR THE OTHER

But the created world is without sense by itself, it is a world for the other, it is the world for the existence of humans. It is by the presence of these humans that the world becomes a world.

problem is it? Where did it come from? Where is it leading? Traveling to Malawi from Zambia, one wonders what happened to the famous forests of Malawi. In some parts of the country, almost the only tree growing is a mango tree.

## VEGETABLE GARDEN

The most interesting thing for me to ask myself as a young Jesuit scholastic is whether I can teach someone else the advantages of conserving nature when to myself it seems so strange a thing? Proposing to a fellow scholastic here in Kimwenza that we should start a vegetable garden at the edge of the campus, I received this as an answer: "I am here to solve the problems of Africa."

What he wanted to say in short was that philosophy was the only salvation, not only for Africa, but for the world as whole. He may have had some truth, but not the whole of it! Philosophy alone cannot do anything "L' être en tant que être", is probably nonsense.

If the ecological problems of the world were to be solved by philosophy, Greece could have been paradise from a long time ago! But teach some one how to plant a cabbage or a tree, and how to take care of the

environment in general, then you have not only solved a problem of the world but, more importantly, you have saved life. The world is as it is today because we have so much tampered with and misused it. It is perhaps slow to try to take up its original shape again. And it will do that this time at our expense.

## MESSY PROBLEMS

In the process of working, it is clear that we humans have to a certain extent failed to attain our end. Instead we have come to cause a lot of damage to the world. Our desire to change and transform the world has brought us a lot of very serious problems with the environment. Really life and death problems.

The question is: how do we get ourselves out of this mess? For we often find ourselves in a dilemma or difficulty which is not easy to explain or solve. For example, look at a country like Zambia that happens to be a very great copper producer. This very copper is in fact our main foreign exchange earner, the life blood of our economy.

But to be honest, it is enough to go to visit the Copperbelt of Zambia to see the disaster which those mines have caused to natural and human environments. In other words, the economies of

countries like Zambia are sustained by the mining of copper but their environments are ruined by this same process. That is the dilemma that must be faced.

Now can we say that we humans have, after all our great economic works, served our better selves, saved our souls? "What does it profit a person to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of their lives?" (Matthew 16:26) Would it not be right for us Jesuits to promote the *Spiritual Exercises* in the direction of

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### The question is: how do we get ourselves out of this mess?

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meeting this challenge? We have talked of all sorts of sciences concerning the problems of the environment. But very little has been proposed to develop a discipline such as a *spirituality of ecology*.

Perhaps we need to be developing this spirituality of ecology by basing the whole issue on the "Principle and Foundation" of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

Bernard Mumba, S.J.  
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## FAITH AND JUSTICE AND POPULATION ISSUES

I have been catching up on past numbers of the JCTR *Bulletin* and wish to congratulate the Editor on his sincere musings in #29 ("Letter from the Editor," July 1996) on the place of population and pro-life issues in "faith and justice" discussions and efforts. I am moved to respond to his request, "Any

comments?" By coincidence I have also just finished reading an article by Dr. John Billings (he of the eponymous Method) which might very well serve as a commentary on some of what the Editor wrote.

The Editor kicks off his reflections with the literary device

of an *incomplete dichotomy*. As a way of starkly raising the issue it may pass. But the dichotomy really does not do justice to the complexity of the question. What is at stake is not a clear choice between supporting every "birth control programme" imaginable and simply trusting in "God's providence" that all will be well if

reduce population growth is to raise the standard of living.

The implications for faith and justice efforts are clear. We have to address the causes of poverty, the decisions to structure the economy so that meeting basic needs and sharing common

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### **We must confront the hidden racist agenda of population control programmes.**

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resources is not possible. And we must confront the hidden racist agenda of population control programmes that argue that the growth of the non-white peoples of the world should not threaten the selfish way of life of the West.

2. At the same time, we can promote fertility awareness education as a component of basic education, in line with the UN Declaration On Education For All. This will provide the basis for the Editor's emphasis on free choices intelligently made about the size and spacing of new life in the family. It will also be the foundation for using the natural methods of family planning for those who decide to do so. We should be urging that these be available to all as a real choice in public family planning programmes.

To do all this it is not even necessary to believe in *Humanae Vitae* and much less to crusade against artificial contraception. All a priest needs to do is to ask the local Family Life Movement to help him set up a Family Life Service at his parish for an hour every Sunday morning.

As the Editor says, we need competence (in analysing the problem, in understanding fertility and promoting NFP), courage (of our convictions in the face of an indifferent if not hostile establishment) and compassion (for the poor who are deprived of the knowledge that would enable them to manage constructively their fertility). Family planning programme managers need knowledge of NFP since without this they are deprived of a prime tool for reaching their family planning goals.

### **AN HONEST CHURCH**

With the Editor I hope for a Church that honestly faces the issues involved. But since this is the kind of language used when the Church is being told to come into the real world and abandon *Humanae Vitae*, we should clarify precisely what we mean. We are looking in the other direction. The facts to be faced honestly are that NFP works and is acceptable to the people, that many of the contraceptives we are silent about often act as abortifacients, that NFP improves

marriages while contraception damages them.

Billings talks about his "insight into the fact that there is a fundamental difference, especially in its influence upon their marriage, between the use of a natural method and those methods which distort the sexual act, suppress or destroy fertility and especially cause abortion."

Finally, I am intrigued by the Editor's remark that Official Church social teaching is much more nuanced and responsible than what is often heard at international conferences, in classrooms and from pulpits. Is he referring also to the Church's sexual teaching?

As for international conferences, this could hardly have been put more responsibly than in the document presented to the UN Conference on Ethics in Family Planning, held in Bangkok about 1988. In pulpits? We do not often hear about it there. In so far as we do, how should it be more nuanced, without the nuance being an escape hatch into the realm of contraception? I would be happy to hear this explained by the Editor in a future issue of the excellent JCTR Bulletin.

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## **CARRYING CAPACITY OF EARTH FOR HUMANS**

In the July 1996 issue of the JCTR Bulletin (#29), the Editor called for comments on the human population issue. I offer the following piece not as a comment (and certainly not as a "theological reflection" as explained by the Editor in the October 1996 issue, #30), but

simply as supplying some important information on which you can yourself reflect theologically. I will limit the article almost entirely to the population issue and touch only lightly the intimately related issues of over-consumption of natural resources, especially by

the industrialized countries, and the growing inequality in income between the rich and the poor.

### **NOT "ANTI-LIFE"!**

Perhaps this information on population will at least help us

resources remains the same as it is now.

Still another doubling of the human population would seem to be a physical impossibility. It might be, though, that we will not even be able to reach the level of using 80% of the NPP; some speculate that before we reach even 60 to 70% of the NPP there will be an ecological crash with extinction of hundreds of thousands of species and serious depletion of the soil's capacity to support life.

### APPROACHING LIMITS?

According to Lester Brown and colleagues at the Worldwatch Institute, an indication that we may already be approaching the limit of our ability to feed the human population is the decline in the per capita production of grain that has been under way since 1984. From 1984 to 1993 world grain yields rose only 1% per year, whereas the human population increased about 1.7% per year. Since the human population grew faster than the grain yields, the per capita grain production declined from 346kg in 1984 to about 304kg in 1993.

The potential for reversing this trend by putting more land under cultivation is quite limited; in fact, since 1950 the per capita area of land worldwide used for growing grain has been declining, from 0.23ha in 1950 to 0.14ha in 1990, a decrease of 39%. New land for agriculture is largely offset by land removed from agriculture by urbanization, land degradation through human activities, and overuse of limited water supplies.

Every year approximately 6 million hectares worldwide are degraded beyond practical hope of reclamation, and an additional

20 million hectares per year become so impoverished that they are unprofitable to farm or graze. In the next 15 years declines will probably continue to occur in the per capita availability of rangeland (-22%), fish catch (-10%), area of irrigated land (-12%), and total area of cropland (-21%).

In sub-Saharan Africa, agricultural output grew at about 1.9% a year between 1970 and 1990 while the population growth rate averaged 3% per year. Hence during this 20-year period the per capita food production declined about 18%.

In Zambia the annual population growth rate between 1980 and 1993 was 3.4%. (It was 3.1% between 1965 and 1980.)

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### **Some people think the human population has already surpassed the earth's carrying capacity, its sustainable supply of essential resources.**

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Two indications of the chronic malnutrition (and other effects of poverty) of many Zambians are the under-5 mortality rate and the life expectancy at birth of Zambians. Of the 186 countries in the world, Zambia in 1993 had the sixteenth highest percentage of children dying before age 5, viz., 20.3%. In only two countries, Sierra Leone and Uganda, was there a lower life expectancy at birth than in Zambia in 1993: 44 years in Zambia and 43 years in Sierra Leone, and 42 years in Uganda.

The limit on agricultural output in Zambia may be determined not by the area of available land or fertility of the soil but by the availability of

water. There is a growing water shortage in the whole region.

### FAITH RESPONSE

Some people think the human population has already surpassed the earth's carrying capacity, its sustainable supply of essential resources. Whether correct or not, it seems obvious that in these latter days of the second millennium we live in a critical moment. We have only a short period of time -- a few decades at most -- to stabilize the human population, reduce consumption of resources, and achieve equitable distribution of wealth.

If we have not yet reached carrying capacity, we do seem to be close to utilizing the maximum share of the earth's biological resources that will be permitted before there will be a rapid deterioration of the earth's ability to support human life.

In these latter days of the second millennium, we live in a critical period of human history in which we have only a short period of time -- a few years at most -- to stabilise the human population, reduce our consumption of resources, and achieve equitable distribution of wealth. Can we find in our faith the spiritual resources to guide us through the changes we have to make if we want to leave an inhabitable planet for future generations? Specifically concerning human population growth, can we find in our faith the motivation to reduce human fertility to replacement levels and so halt our growth before we experience the calamity that will come from our exceeding the carrying capacity of the earth?

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itself the creation of injustice. We will then never see the "others."

During my "Christotherapy" classes at Gonzaga University, Spokane, my professor, Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J., commented on his second book, "Christointegration." According to Tyrrell, "authentic love of Jesus is a generative love that overflows into the support of others."

I strongly believe that we can destroy the concrete walls in our hearts through a recognition of the truth that *we all belong to a people*. We are all connected. Once we belong to a family, we will definitely value the presence of the "others." And we will therefore work for peace and justice, a requirement for all human beings.

## HUMILITY AND LOVE

Moreover, I strongly believe that the whole of human society will never enjoy justice and peace unless the powerful humble themselves and accept the weak. And who are the powerful? I think that the powerful are those people who feel that they have the rights

to judge others and win favours by destroying others' names and denying them their basic needs. They are happy with their selfishness and their love for injustice.

The most unfortunate thing is that these people are well informed

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**"Authentic love of Jesus is a generative love that overflows into the support of others."**

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about the evil in our society at large. Some of these people even belong to religious groups. It is sad. It is discouraging.

Teresa of Avila, like Saint Ignatius of Loyola and John of the Cross, experienced a special love of friendship for Jesus in his Passion. She gave herself for others in a self-sacrificing love. Is it not high time that we looked at the lives of the saints and learned some lessons? Surely, the universal church will flourish with the blessings of true justice coming from Jesus, Our Lord and Saviour!

## SEE THE "OTHER"

The theological reflection that I am trying to express here relates to the challenge of breaking the walls in our hearts that hinders us from attaining true love of God. God lives in our midst. God is not hidden. If God is love, then love dwells in our midst as well. God knows no fear because fear does not build justice, it builds walls.

I think we are blessed with what we know about the love of God. Therefore, let us deepen this knowledge and focus on Jesus, the life-giver and the author of abundant love. It is this love that will make us see the "other." This will enable us to then to destroy the walls and to live and enjoy the freedom of sharing with the "other."

If we can not find someone to help destroy the concrete walls that might surround us, Jesus is ready to do it *alone*. Just ask him now!

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# AFRICAN SYNOD: CULTURE/DIALOGUE

*The African Synod's call for vigorous evangelisation efforts requires open dialogue among all the agents of evangelisation. Some of the spiritual demands of such dialogue are discussed by Masautso Mpekansambo, a regent at Canisius.*

I came to Chikuni in August 1995. It was hot, dry and dusty. The rivers were dry. The land was bare and most of it was covered in ashes. Cows were mobile skeletons. They seemed to be grazing on invisible flora around the sacred Chikuni oasis (the dam).

One major thing that annoyed me was the influx of normal people

who came to our community asking for food. My first thought was that Tongas were lazy people. Why can't they grow their own food? Our community was turning almost into a soup kitchen. From August to December, I kept avoiding answering the door bell.

It took me five months to realise Tonga-land had been hit by a severe drought for two

consecutive years. Chikuni dam was getting dry. As a consequence, Canisius Secondary School opened only for examination classes.

In November the first rain fell. The dust disappeared. A week

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**My first thought was that Tongas were lazy people.**

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# FURTHER STEPS IN THE DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS: MARRIAGE, SCHOOL, WORK

*There is great interest these days in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Lay groups like the Christian Life Community (CLO) are growing in Ignatian spirituality. Kapyunga Nyirenda, third year philosopher in Harare, suggests some application of the Ignatian method of "discernment of spirits."*

In his autobiography, St. Ignatius of Loyola describes his initial experience in the practice of "discernment of the spirits." Ignatius developed the ability to reflect about different interior movements or agitations in his soul. He could distinguish between the agitations whose source was the good spirit and those whose source was the evil spirit.

For instance, when he was convalescing from the injury which he had incurred during the war with the French at Pamplona in 1521, Ignatius discerned different spirits moving him. He thought about how to please a lady and how to go on fighting as a soldier, doing these things for vain glory. These thoughts eventually caused him interior dryness. On the contrary, Ignatius felt truly consoled by the spirit which moved him and gave him the desire to follow the life of Christ and to help souls.

Is it possible that in our contemporary world, discernment of the spirits would help people in marriage, in the schools and colleges, and in the workplace?

## FOSTERING LOVE IN MARRIAGE

In marriage, discernment of the spirits would help the husband and wife. Since marriage demands that the partners love each other for better and for worse, in sickness and in health, they need to be deeply committed to this contract. Marriage involves the

partners' struggle to manage their home well by maintaining peace in the home, meeting the cost of needful commodities, and raising children properly. To sustain their marriage, husband and wife need continuous love for each other.

When the married couple face difficulties and do not know what to do, they need to discern the different spirits moving within them. The good spirit will give them love, generosity, patience, forgiveness,

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**The good spirit will give them love, generosity, patience, forgiveness, faithfulness, fidelity and courage.**

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faithfulness, fidelity and courage. These virtues will sustain the marriage, because they help the partners to reach out to each other and to foster the growth of the other. On the contrary, the evil spirit can move the partners to vices such as infidelity, selfishness, and unforgiveness. As happens in some instances, these vices do not sustain the marriage. Rather, they lead to broken marriages by making the partners bitter, the victims of unresolved quarrels. As such, the partners do not foster each other's growth and their marriage often fails.

## TEACHER AND STUDENT

With regard to schools and colleges, I believe that discernment

can help teachers and students in their work. The teachers have a duty to help students acquire knowledge by teaching them and directing them how and what to study. In response, the students are required to follow the directions of the teacher. The relationship between the teachers and students involves rules, regulations and discipline which are meant to maintain order and foster progress in the schools and colleges. Discernment of the spirits can help the teachers and students to achieve these values.

Through discernment the teachers can distinguish the spirits moving them interiorly. The good spirit will give teachers a desire to report for work punctually, care for the students' performance, love them, give them due freedom to ask questions, and direct them on what material to read. As a result, the students will benefit from their relationship with the teachers. The facts promote efficiency in the school and, indeed, good work among the students.

On the contrary, the evil spirit can give the teachers a desire to impose authority on the students. As it happens at times, some teachers may sexually abuse some students in order to guarantee them good exam results. Other teachers may favour some of the students based on the students' characters or a friendship between the teachers and the students' parents or guardians. These vices may lead to poor performance by

# PRAYER: A MEANS OR AN END ?

During the January 1997 Province Assembly for Zambia-Malawi, the provincial of Eastern Africa, Rodrigo Mejia, S.J., addressed the "faith and justice" mission of the Society of Jesus. Among his many helpful insights was an emphasis on the link between faith, justice and prayer. John Moore, theology professor at the major seminary in Malawi, describes his reaction to Rodrigo's presentation. We hope that the April issue of the JCTR Bulletin will carry further reflections on the Assembly discussions.

Fr. Mejia's presentations at the Province Assembly were highly appreciated and provocative. At least they provoked me to write something for the JCTR Bulletin. This is obviously a major conversion! Despite being in third level education and therefore a "professional" communicator, I have before this not yet even written a letter to the editor.

The first thing that provoked me was the position clearly put forward on the first day that for Ignatius (and therefore for us Jesuits) prayer was a *means* to the better (*magis*) service of God and neighbour, never an *end* in itself. Mejia clearly showed how this made sense within the historical context of Ignatius' time, faced with the Reformers' "*sola fide*" and the popularity of the Allumbrados' approach to prayer in Spain.

## RETREAT EXPERIENCE

However, I wondered if it was theologically sound to say that prayer was a means, never an end in itself. After all, the "Principle and Foundation" of the *Spiritual Exercises* states that we were created to "praise, reverence and praise" our Creator. Surely praise and reverence are at the centre of prayer, so how can prayer be relegated among the "other things" to be used or relinquished in order to achieve the better service of the Lord?

The reason why the question hit me so strongly was that I had

just finished my own annual retreat. I felt extremely thankful to the Lord for what I experienced during those eight days. After a rather stormy transition for the first two days, I settled down to a very quiet sort of prayer.

From Christmas Day on, after being struck by John's Prologue in the gospel of the third Mass, I read a chunk of John's Gospel as a preparation for each prayer period, and followed his Gospel right through to the end. However in most of the prayer periods, after pondering on a verse that had struck me, towards the end of I settled down to a quiet "resting" in God's presence in a spirit of love.

So as I listened to Mejia's first talk, I began to ask myself had I been wasting my time, or at least had I been acting in a very un-jesuitical way. Was my approach rather similar to the way that gave Ignatius so much trouble among the early Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits?

## IGNATIUS' EMPHASIS

Reflecting later on Mejia's talk and doing a little cursory reading, I realised that most of what he said in that first talk was already familiar to me. I was aware that Ignatius in the *Constitutions* (#582) did not prescribe any fixed length of prayer for the formed Jesuits and that GC-31 had restored this regulation after almost four centuries of the fixed hour prescribed by GC-4.

I was also vaguely aware of what Hugo Rahner stated so

clearly as a result of his historical studies: "The innermost purpose of the Society ever consists in helping souls; everything else in it, without exception, is

## Had I been wasting my time, acting in a very un-jesuitical way?

subordinated to this end." (*Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola*, p. 104) He goes on to quote from Suarez's *De Religione Societatis*: "Personal sanctification, prayer are subordinate to, and determined by, the purpose of aiding souls."

Rahner summarises his findings in an even more striking way in his *Ignatius, the Theologian*: "As Ignatius and his earliest disciples never tired of emphasising, there is no such thing as a technique of meditation for its own sake, since genuine meditation is only possible when a person is prepared to put what he has contemplated into action." (p.182)

So I had no ground whatever for disagreeing with the main tenor of what Mejia propounded in his analysis of the "faith" partner of that dyad which has been causing us so much soul-searching in recent years. What disturbed me was the way it was put – that prayer was only a means. Presumably our eternity will be spent in something analogous to prayer – "our hearts were made for you, Lord." Is that only an means?



# MARY MAGDALEN: A MEDITATION

Another book by Bob Kelly, assistant parish priest at St. Ignatius, will appear in mid-1997, entitled *Fan into a Flame*. In one of the chapters excerpted below, the author invites us to imagine a beautiful encounter of Jesus with a well-known woman.

The gospels, as we know, do not attempt to present a detailed history of all that Jesus did and said. They choose those words and deeds of Jesus that reveal the heart of his teaching, namely, that *God is love* and that we are invited to accept that love and share it and build a community of love. Jesus' love reveals the love of God, and this is especially true in the wonderful manifestation of love that is forgiveness of sin.

In a very well-known gospel scene (Luke 7: 36-50), a notorious woman gate-crashed a banquet given by Simon, the Pharisee. I believe that this woman most probably had an earlier meeting with Jesus where she became convinced that all her sins were forgiven. We do not have a name for the woman. I ask you to imagine that she is the woman known as Mary Magdalen and here I want to suggest an imaginative picture of how she and Jesus might have met and got to know each other. The only fault about the picture is that it must fall so short of the wonder and beauty of the encounter.

## NOTORIOUS CHARACTER

Magdala was a town on the west shore of the lake of Galilee, a busy centre of fishing and fish trading. We remember it today not for its fish trade but for one of its more notorious characters. She was Mary, a well known sinner in the community, but a sinner who became a very close friend of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Let us imagine how they might have met.

We can imagine Mary living in a small house on a slope overlooking the lake. She was not

in the fish trade but was a busy woman in her own line of business.

Her customers were all men. Most came to buy a little pleasure. But some came simply because they were very lonely. They wanted to talk and feel someone cared. Mary had a bad name in the town and was despised by the better women of the place. Her men visitors were from any tribe, religion or occupation. Jews, Romans, Greeks, it did not matter once they could pay. Mary had a deep, hidden, inner self where her real beauty lay. But this beauty was hidden under life's sorrows, hardship, failure, self-hatred, sin.

One day as she tends the flowers in her garden in front of the house she hears a footstep. It is a man's step and she turns expecting

## The hostility around her reminded her what a hopeless case she was.

to find a customer. But she gets a surprise when she sees who the visitor is. He is the new holy man called Jesus whom everyone is talking about, a fellow Galilean like herself. He greets her and admires the garden. She is moved by his presence. All kinds of thoughts run through her head.

She had never met him personally as close as this, but she had heard him speak to the crowds at the lakeside. He spoke very well but she never stayed long because of the hostile attitude of the other women. But what she did hear moved her deeply. He spoke a lot about love but not the kind she was selling. He spoke with such sincerity she felt a new longing for the real thing. A flash of hope

would come but quickly fade away as she sensed the hostility around her which reminded her what a hopeless case she was and she would walk away.

And now here he is standing near her, completely at ease and admiring the flowers in her garden. She thanks him for praising the garden. She was proud of it but none of her other men visitors seemed to notice it. She is wondering why he has come. Had he come to scold her, warn her, condemn her? He did not seem to be that kind of man. Or perhaps he too was a lonely man.

## A CARING MAN

She heard he was not married. Maybe he also is looking for the consolation of a woman's body. But again he did not seem to be that kind of man. When you were close to him and could look into his eyes there seemed to be a great mysterious depth in those eyes. You felt as if he had always known you and you had a strange lovely feeling that he cared about you.

After some small chat he said he was thirsty and asked to have a drink. She was glad to help him and went inside and brought him out a mug of water. He took it gratefully and then asked if he might come inside. This surprised her. It felt very good to be near him but she had been afraid to invite him in. She was wondering what people would say if they saw their holy man coming out of her house. But she keeps these thoughts to herself and gladly welcomes him in.

When they enter she offers him a chair and they sit and chat. He asks if she had lived long in the

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PENNY HAS DROPPED...

Greetings from Ireland! I'm responding very belatedly to your request in the January 1996 *Bulletin* (No. 27) to comment on a name change proposal for JCTR. I have only seen this issue now when some one here drew my attention to one of the articles.

Let me take your three questions one by one. Should we keep the name "Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection"? The short answer is *no*. It has always seemed to me to be an esoteric luxury to be holding a *Bulletin* which was commenting on a passing scene for a limited audience.

Should we change the name to "Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice"? Again the answer is *no*. It is too narrow if you use the name Jesuit and it does not signify that you are going to do anything. It is not inclusive of a wider world.

Can you suggest some other name appropriate to our task? Yes! "The Centre for Faith and Promoting Justice." This has an inclusive element -- not only Jesuit -- and it also has teeth in the word *promoting*. *Implementing* would be another choice, but perhaps too strong for your purposes. That the "hour has come," to use President Chiluba's electioneering slogan, is beyond doubt. There are plenty of signs throughout JCTR *Bulletin* no. 27 that the "penny has dropped"!

The opening article, "How Clever To Rip Ourselves Off," is a first class case in point. Fred Moriarty's reflections, with his imagery of a "sinking boat" and his

subsequent appeal of "Please, can someone help to solve this crisis of society?", really makes for pathetic reading. You, yourself, refer to the large amounts of money coming

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into the Zambian economy. Over the years, this has been the case. Now, Fred is inclined to wring his hands. The First World used to be blamed solely for the difficult situations, even to have been held responsible for droughts and famine. No doubt, the external debt is a contributing factor, but there is a "catch-22" element in all this.

And this is my main reason for remarking that "the penny has dropped" -- after all these years there is today an acknowledgment or emphasis on the other factors causing Third World problems. "The more one saves and gives, the more one takes and spends". Not a healthy situation, by any means. A high level of co-dependency has been created.

Your mention of corruption in high places is challenging. Yes, the view of John Paul II is apt, and that it is taken from the post Synod *Church in Africa* is also timely. The other articles, Bishop James Corboy's "Communio," and Eustace Sequeira's homily seem all to stress the same lack. Otherwise they would not have

written about it. I recently looked over some copies of contributions I made to the JCTR some eight or ten years ago. They were relevant then and even more so now!

Here in Ireland, in the west as it is called or the north, we have real issues, real problems, e.g. drugs, unemployment, ageism, youth alienation. But we are trying to deal with them at the roots. This calls for a strict analysis but, more important, a prevention method, is being sought. Of course, we realise that we cannot solve or control them, at least to a large degree. But we are facing into the problems.

One gets the impression that in the Zambia-Malawi Province the problems are only too well known and a beginning is being made. I believe that a change in your *Bulletin's* name would be significant, a start. And the owing up to a difficult situation as does Fred's contribution is also a beginning. Indeed, it is the first acknowledgment of its kind. So we all move on as the nettle is somewhat grasped!

To conclude, one unresolved issue comes through all the time. *Trust in community*. The young Zambians in formation feel they are not trusted. The whites or other non-Zambians feel justified in this incomplete lack of trust. Experience has shown that the transition stage is very dicey.

Martin Murphy S.J.  
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Case Study

Advocacy on Living Conditions

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1997-01-30

# January 1997 Bulletin: Ecology, Population and Justice: Our Attitude Towards Ecology: are we Responsible for Damage Caused.

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