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## A possible new path to Māori-Pākehā understanding

*Listening to the People of the Land: Christianity, Colonisation & the Path to Redemption*, edited by Susan Healy. Auckland: Pax Christi, Aotearoa New Zealand, 2019, with support from the New Zealand Dominican Sisters. 332 pages. ISBN 978-0-473-45957-4.

*Praying for Peace: A Selection of Prayers and Reflections*, edited by Kevin McBride. Auckland: Pax Christi, Aotearoa New Zealand, in association with the Pacific Media Centre, 2018. 152 pages. ISBN 978-0-473-43798-5.

THE STRENGTH of this series of essays in *Listening to the People of the Land* is the varying perspectives given on the brutal losses forced on Māori by white and Christian colonisation. In fact, if New Zealand was a truly just society, the teachings here would be a significant part of our school curriculum.

Editor Susan Healy draws the outline in the first 95 pages. Her chapter raises the occasional quibble and sometimes seems to downplay how inextricably interwoven were the settler culture and the Christian church in 1800s New Zealand.



### *Listening to the People of the Land*

Christianity, Colonisation & the Path to Redemption

Edited by Susan Healy

However, as contributor Jen Margaret says later: ‘Christianity and colonisation have been intertwined from the outset; they are mutually reinforcing projects.’

Healy traces the mistreatment of Māori, at least in part, to Pope Nicholas V’s publication of a papal bull, *Romanus Pontifex*, in 1454, which kick started the Doctrine of Discovery.<sup>1</sup> By today’s lights, it is ugly reading, but within less than 100 years, popes, as well as Catholic scholars and leaders, were starting to defend the human rights of indigenous peoples. For example, *Sublimus Deus*, 1537.

Her description of friendship between Māori and missionary is sad and tragic. For example, despite Samuel Marsden’s genuine friendship and insights, he ‘betrayed the people of Rangihoua’. It was a betrayal, but