

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

KIA TAU TE RANGIMARIE KI A TAATOU KATOA / WORKING FOR PEACE FOR ALL EVERYWHERE

This month's news...

A Universal Basic Income
for Aotearoa New Zealand ?

By Helen Doherty.

COVID19 PAIHERETIA:
A Universal time to retreat,
reflect, and restore to
balance.

By Rangī Davis.

Prioritize Peoples Needs...
Now.

By Janfrie Wakim

Tēnā koutou katoa.

The world has changed and continues to change at an alarming rate. Some of these changes have not been for the greater good. The COVID-19 pandemic has spread through the world and has impacted on humanity in ways that will still be felt for years to come. News headlines of alarming death rates, border closures, job losses and health infrastructure collapse has dominated globally. New Zealand compared to the rest of the world is in a better place than many other nations. This is the perception globally; but there has been a significant increase in domestic violence here in Aotearoa which should make our heads drop in shame.

While most of world copes with a pandemic environment – tensions between China and the USA continue to grow. In the last couple of days, violence has erupted within the United States due to yet another death of an African American from police brutality.

The glimmers of hope that sparkled just for a moment in stories of resilience, compassion, and solidarity during the Pandemic seem to be lost. How do we move forward together? What could a new world look like – if we focused on wellness and compassion? These were questions I was pondering not that long ago – and it seemed to me others were to. Now, we seem to be looking back...back towards a 'them and us' society rather than 'we together'.

I invite you to pray. Pray for the George Floyd's of this world; pray for persecuted indigenous peoples; pray for those in occupied territories and conflict zones, refugee camps, border detainment cells, for vulnerable women and children. Pray for a change of heart and a willingness to dismantle systemic and structural injustice.

Pray for us. Our world needs peace.

Bridget Crisp rsm



A Universal Basic Income for Aotearoa /New Zealand?

by Helen Doherty

In his Easter Sunday letter to 'Our brothers and sisters of popular movements and organisations' Pope Francis speaks of their shared conversations and 'all the beautiful projects that emerged from those conversations'.

He goes on to say 'you are social poets because, from the forgotten peripheries where you live, you create admirable solutions for the most pressing problems afflicting the marginalised.' In his letter he talks about how difficult it is for people to stay at home during this pandemic 'in tiny ramshackle houses', or for the homeless, the migrants or those in rehabilitation from an addiction. He says he knows they have been 'excluded from globalisation' and many live from day to day without any legal type of guaranteed protection and no steady income to get them through the hard times. He continues: **'This may be the time to consider a universal basic wage which would acknowledge and dignify the noble, essential tasks you carry out. It would ensure and concretely achieve the ideal, at once so human and so Christian, of no worker without rights.'** Pope Francis concludes his letter with a hope that this 'time of danger' will 'allow a humanist and ecological conversion that puts an end to the idolatry of money and puts human life and dignity at the centre.' Finally he urges 'Stand firm in your struggle and care for each other as brothers and sisters.'

Pope Francis advocates a universal basic wage, also known as a Universal Basic Income. This is a government payout to all adults and some say for children too, that replaces most benefits i.e. does away with the welfare system, supports all workers in the days of many redundancies and job losses, and pays the many people working for nothing, volunteers and carers among others. There are those who suggest it should be introduced in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is a controversial issue, which has given rise to differing opinions.

Action Station (<https://our.actionstation.org.nz>) has gone so far as to open an online petition to the government: - 'Coronavirus: Emergency universal basic income for everyone.' They argue that 'in light of COVID-19 the Government should trial paying everyone a Universal Basic Income (UBI) at the same level as Superannuation.' A trial of UBI would give everyone financial stability and would reduce administration costs, time and stigma. It could increase entrepreneurship and enable people to care for our communities in these difficult times. Action Station maintains that a trial could be a valuable way of assessing whether New Zealand should move permanently toward a UBI and they have several suggestions of how the government could fund such a policy.

There are others who argue in favour of a UBI; Newsroom editor Bernard Hickey says the Government should consider extending New Zealand's superannuation scheme to everyone in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, but if not, a universal basic income is also a good option. A universal basic income is "the simplest, fastest, cleanest, fairest way to do it," Mr Hickey said, adding that "we may well see something like that" (see <https://www.top.org.nz> to explore this viewpoint).

Finance Minister Grant Robertson confirmed the controversial welfare measure, which would see the Government pay all New Zealanders an income to survive, was 'on the table'. 'We're obviously going to be in a situation where a large number of people are going to be relying on income support from the state for an extended period', Robertson said on RNZ. Unlike other benefit payments, a UBI would not be dependent on any kind of means testing and would require no commitments from those receiving it, meaning people would still be able to work and earn as much money as they like without losing any cash from the scheme. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/120548086/coronavirus>

Others are less enthusiastic. David A. Preston comments that in Issue Nine of the Social Policy Journal of New Zealand Michael Goldsmith and Keith Rankin revived the idea of a Universal Basic Income (UBI). He says that Goldsmith promotes the concept of an unconditional transfer of money from state to

A Universal Basic Income for Aotearoa /New Zealand? cont.

citizen, with no requirement on the recipients to work or contribute in anyway. However, the failure to distinguish between activities the taxpayer can be asked to support because of wider social benefits (such as child care) and those where there is no social return is a fundamental weakness in the UBI approach. Rankin approaches the topic through the more promising perspective of the importance of developing social capital, and tackles the economic problems in more detail than Goldsmith, but overall fails to disprove the contention that the UBI systems are likely to lead to higher average tax rates, as well as other negative social and economic effects. In short, both articles suffer from a failure to demonstrate that their remedy is a cost-effective cure for the problems they wish to solve: the abolition of poverty and the distribution of the share of national prosperity.

<https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/>

Susan St John, Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Auckland Business School and Director of the Retirement Policy and Research Centre, expresses a warning about the UBI: 'Be careful what you wish for.' She asserts that 'Any universal basic income NZ implements would likely be far too low, helping all the wrong people and leaving those in desperate need even worse off. Adapting what we already have in place is a much safer approach.' Although many argue that the aftermath of Covid 19, with job losses and wage subsidies running out is the perfect time to introduce the UBI, she maintains that there are grave dangers in making policy decisions on the hoof. The implementation of UBI sounds simple and appealing but 'less understood, is that a UBI is much, much more expensive than the welfare payments it replaces. High tax rates on earned income are needed to fund it.'

Susan St John outlines in detail how the current benefit system could be streamlined and made fairer for everybody. She adds that the present NZ

Super could be adjusted so that the wealthy paid higher tax rates and it could be extended to solo parents and 50 and 60 year olds 'who are so badly served by the current Supported Living Payment or the Jobseeker Benefit.' She also outlines how Family Tax Credits could be paid more equitably. She concludes: 'In the crisis, instead of simplistic slogans, let's ensure that we look afresh at existing policies and adjust them appropriately and consistently with UBI principles: adequacy, individual treatment, non-discrimination, fiscal sustainability and simplicity.'

<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/ideasroom/2020/04/15/1127793/universal-bas>

Authors of The New Zealand Initiative's new policy paper 'Stay on Target', chief economist Dr Eric Crampton and research fellow Dr David Law say the UBI scheme is not the best policy tool for the present crisis. They contend that 'Giving everyone a lump sum does less good for those in the most need than finding ways of targeting assistance.' One option proposed by Dr Law is short time work (STW) schemes which have already proven themselves successful in Germany 'If these are applied as effectively as they were in Germany, employment could be 3% higher than it would otherwise be and the costs of STW would be significantly less than UBI,' Dr Law said. The policy paper also suggests an innovative extension of New Zealand's Student Loan Scheme to cover every New Zealander. Thus, those who have suffered a loss could borrow at the same rate as students do. 'Instead of giving a small amount to everyone, we would allow every person to borrow up to the amount of their income loss to a maximum of \$12,000. Why give high earners a transfer when we could instead do far more for those who have taken the largest hits?' Dr Crampton said.

<https://nzinitiative.org.nz/reports-and-media/media/media-release-univer>

In essence, both the proponents of a Universal Basic Income and those who have misgivings about it have the same goal in mind, that is, to alleviate the suffering of those who have lost their jobs and their livelihoods and been otherwise adversely affected by Covid 19.

For them all, the main concern is to reduce inequality in New Zealand society. The implementation of UBI is certainly appealing in its simplicity and apparent ease of administration. However, as shown above, it has many difficulties and is not necessarily the fairest means of easing the hardship caused by Covid 19. It will be interesting to see whether Grant Robertson includes the UBI in the budget that he presents on 14th May 2020.

COVID19 PAIHERETIA:

A Universal time to retreat, reflect and restore to balance

by Rangī Davis

Any kind of abuse destroys mana, dignity and worth. Its ramifications could even censor one's sense of identity which is necessary for well-being (Mason Dury). In my view I think that COVID19 had that kind of impact on many human beings and the planet, but with worldwide careful planning and concern for climate matters and restored wellness a lock-down plan started the journey of restoration seeking confidence to venture out again, transformed. From death to resurrection and how fitting is that we are in the middle of the Easter Passion story.

KO TE WA.

For the past six months I have been in a mamae and pouri place from tukino and whakama, produced by an article written by the New Zealand Herald and Ms Hill on 3 Nov 2019. It dragged me down into the stages of te Po and there I struggled, explored, cried, climbed frameworks of te whare tapa wha, prayed, died a little each time a flicker of that memory sparked, but resilient enough to gather breath for each moment to act out as if all was right with me, but my body kept telling me something else. My mind told me its ok, you'll get through, her pain is much more than yours, let it be, you'll get over it. Ko te mea nui ko te aroha. Love will conquer all and so I slowly released that mamae with aroha and started my restoration rebuild. I was feeling more confident and ventured out into the community to find more work, but when the Covid19 lock-down happened two events took place which re-triggered the mamae and tukino connected to the 3 Nov 2019 article. A retreat workshop that I was to facilitate in mid-March and had 25 registered participants already was cancelled because one of Ms Hill's advocates complained to the Bishop's Office that it was inappropriate for me to be facilitating it. Further to that a request from an organisation, asked if I could assist to work with a Maori client, and to be transparent and honest I informed the person that there was an article that she needed to read first and decide after that, and she never called back. I plunged back into the bottom stage of Te Po and crumbled.

Then the lock-down came, and the timing was right. It gave me the opportunity to really deepen into myself, and truly work with the gifted time assumed, rediscovering myself again in my Maori world of karakia, whakaaro, waiata, tangi, korero, taonga tuku iho, nga mea kikino me nga mea papai o tenei ao. It was excruciating and painful, but powerful and enlightening. The message that emerged at the end of it was I needed to address the mamae caused in a fitting, proper and loving way.

This address is not intended to harm, but an effort to restore to me and my whakapapa dignity, my reputation, integrity and mana. Since the release of that article, which a domino effect of stages on my life immediately following. One, in order to safeguard my clients and the organisation I was contracting to, I gave up my counselling services to Maori, therefore a loss of service to my Maori people and a loss of income for me and my whanau. Two, fear of a shadow of doubt cast over me was in my thoughts always, how are my professional colleagues and others thinking about me especially those who do not know me, leaving me juggling a string of insecurities.

WAKA NOA

Looking back, Ms Hill and I were rowing two different waka and going in two different directions. I had no prior knowledge of Ms Hill when she was introduced to me in the first encounter. From information shared in the paper she didn't know who I was too, except that I was a new member of Te Roopu Tautoko and served as a Housemother at Hato Petera College.

I had attended only two meetings with Te Roopu Tautoko prior and so had no access or knowledge of survivor's names or files. My knowledge of perpetrators at Hato Petera College while I was there, was very limited or nil until named in news articles.

WHAKAMANA:

Ki te taha o toku matua ko Rangī Teahuahu Tana tona ingoa
 Ko Tereawatea te awa, Ko Maungarangi, ko tuhipa nga maunga
 Ko Otiria te marae, Ko Porowini te Whare nui kaumatua, ko
 Tumatauenga te whareni teina

COVID19 PAIHERETIA:

A Universal time to retreat, reflect and restore to balance cont.

Ko Ngati Te Ara, ko Ngati Kopaki, ko Ngati Hine nga hapu, tae atu ki Te Waiariki ki Ngunguru.

Ki te taha o toku whaea, ko Mary Basil Tewake tona ingoa.

Ko Papata, ko Panguru, tu te ao, tu te po, Ko Hokianga te awa

Ko Te Ao Marama o te Waipuna te marae, Ko Ngati Manawa,

Ngati Kai Tutae nga hapu

Ko Hokianga whakapau Karakia ki Te Rarawa nui tonu.

Ko Rangi Josephine Davis toku ingoa the eldest child of 10 other siblings and a descendant of a whakapapa of generations of beautiful, strong, talented, cultured tangata whenua, connected to Ngapuhi lands, mountains, rivers, language, traditions and stories flowing through my bones.

I am married 51 years, a mother of seven adult children and an adored Nana by twenty-two mokopuna and two greatgrand mokos is why my heart beats is because of them. I was born to a strong fluent maori speaking wahine toa, bought up in a Catholic tradition and to a fluent maori speaking father strong in his beliefs tikanga maori, grounded in nature and natural lore. Learning hands on, rongoa maori, tikanga and practises alongside of my father, mother, uncles, aunties, grand-fathers and grand-aunties influenced my knowledge base, teaching and therapy practices that I use today. Tikanga Maori and Christianity has been the ongoing developing base of my groundedness and because of that I have been taught and shown respectful and caring ways to acknowledge, strengthen and enhance the mana of all relationships, being (te kahu o te ao) things that make up the fabric of the universe, seen and unseen, (me te tangata) and people no matter who (ahakoa ko wai).

KI TE WHEI AO KI TE AO MARAMA:

Strong to my tikanga beliefs I welcomed a kanohi ki te kanohi korero but was turned down. However, I am still open to following our tikanga in consultation a te wa.

Right now, I want to say to Ms Hill that I am deeply saddened, hurt and fiercely angry at all those persons who dare to have, diminished and destroyed the mana and tapu of another human being for sexual gratification.

It's a sin against God's purpose for showing his love for us and why he died and rose again. I am in full support of Ms Hill and all survivors of sexual abuse seeking to restore their own wellbeing and that of their whakapapa and whanau. I am sorry that Father Shirres hurt and destroyed your beautiful innocent being Ms Hill.

For me to share my side of this experience, Covid19 vibrations visited my space and mind. I had to welcome this unexpected manuhiri so that we could exchange korero and in doing so I was able to go into those deep dark 27 places of Te Po, seeking mauri and hihiri that transcends all aspects of te whare tapa wha to help me restore balance and lead me out onto a pathway of being enhanced so I can feel empowered to return to working alongside of wahine Maori and their whanau again. Like Dame Naida Glavish said the other night on TV, "your worst experience can be your best teacher".

In closing, the NZ Catholic Bishops Conference sent an Easter message saying, we journey from death to life. May your rising this Easter and our time of lockdown be marked by the peace and joy of the risen Christ who walks with us on paths of life.

No reira ka nui mo tenei wa, naku noa na Rangi Davis.

Prioritize People's Needs... Now.

by Janfrie Wakim

The timing of our ANZAC Day commemorations coincided with another annual April event the Global Days of Action on Military Spending. April 2020, will be remembered for the COVID-19 crisis with its echoes of the 1918 flu pandemic. This ongoing calamity throws into sharp relief the prioritising of military spending over the well-being of people and our planet. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) annual figures on world military expenditures show that 2019 global military expenditure increased for the fifth year in a row. World military expenditure totaled an estimated \$1,917 billion (US) in 2019 – an increase of 3.6% from 2018 and the largest since 2010. United States, China, India, Russia and Saudi Arabia accounted for 62% of expenditure and for the first time that two Asian states featured among the top three military spenders.

How does Aotearoa-NZ compare ?

The first 'Wellbeing Budget' revealed an astonishing 24.73%*, increase in spending compared with 2018. However, only a month later, the government announced it would spend \$20 billion over the next decade on increased combat capability, frigates and military aircraft. In the meantime, the pressing needs of whanau and children living in poverty as well as housing, health, education, disability and other public services were largely overlooked.

Earlier in 2019, the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG)'s report 'Whakamana Tāngata' urged an increase in main benefits and improved Working for Families tax credits for all families. The Families package in 2018 had done very little for the 174,000 worst-off children under the lowest poverty line (40% after housing costs). Few seemed to notice that the 2019 'Wellbeing' budget boosted military spending along with contributions of \$2 Bn/year to the New Zealand Super Fund (NZSF).

The Covid crisis has exposed the fragility and flaws in the social security safety net. Who could ignore the extraordinary numbers queuing at foodbanks for basic needs? Yet, these military and NZSF contributions took priority over the struggles faced by many low income families and their children.

The Child Poverty Action Group challenges the wisdom of continuing contributions to the New Zealand Super Fund (NZSF) especially in COVID-19 times. Families and other taxpayers must pay tax to fund not only current pensions, but also help fund their own state pension when the fund starts to be drawn down after 2050.

The numerous crises facing Aotearoa-NZ and the planet make it imperative that our resources are diverted first to our most vulnerable citizens. Expenditure on destructive weaponry and saving for a distant future makes little sense when unemployment and poverty are set to rise inexorably in the coming months.

Clearly the precarious nature of paid work for many whanau is both distressing and debilitating with long-term effects on parents, caregivers and children. Every means possible is needed now to mitigate the harm that ensues when income support is unavailable, inadequate and hard to access.

Internationally over 60% of those losing jobs are women. This gender imbalance will get worse as unemployment rises. The sectors hit hardest are those generally considered "feminine," such as healthcare. The impact will be felt not only by those involved in the COVID crisis but also on other healthcare services, education, caregiving, and leisure and hospitality. Even at a time when the relevance and necessity of these community-building services are more evident than ever, those employed in these sectors are most vulnerable to being laid off.

Prioritize People's Needs... Now. cont.

CPAG supports the WEAG recommendations for a secure safety net for all people, when their circumstances change as COVID-19 virus highlights so painfully. CPAG urges an immediate policy extension to allow low-income families to have the full Working for Families support to deliver at least another \$72.50 per week as this will help the worst off families keep their small children safe and well. The cost is around \$450M, a very small fraction of the military expenditure.

By suspending the extra \$20Bn (NZ) allocated to military spending in last year's budget as well as annual contributions of \$2Bn to the NZSF, the government will demonstrate its declared commitment to the wellbeing of low income families and their children.

*<https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/P01905/S00497/welbeing-budget-shocking-rise-in-military-spending.htm>

Janfrie Wakim has long been associated with Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand. Janfrie is actively involved in many social justice areas including Child Poverty Action Group and New Zealand Palestine Human Rights Campaign.

This article appeared on The Daily Blog, May 2nd 2020 (www.thedailyblog.co.nz). Permission received from the author to republish in the Pax Christi NZ newsletter.

Global Peace Messages

From the 18th until the 22nd of May, the Pax Christi International World Conference in Hiroshima was scheduled to occur. COVID-19 spread was the reason for the cancellation of this conference as the impact of this virus on humanity continues unabated. At this time the conference has been rescheduled for 2021.

As we remain isolated in our various countries during this pandemic, Pax Christi International launched a week of online global peace messages and prayers for the week that we would have been celebrating together as an international body. Messages from all regions around the world have been posted on the Pax Christi International website and Facebook page. Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand recorded a peace prayer. This prayer and other messages can be found on the Pax Christi International website (paxchristi.net).

Pax Christi has Moved!

The Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand National Office has moved to an office within *Te Unga Waka Marae*, 1 Clyde Street Epsom.

Our contact phone numbers remain the same. We will keep you informed as to where mail can be sent.

We are planning to move all email correspondence to a gmail address: **paxchristiaotearoa@gmail.com**. So please change you online address books. The xtra email address will be phased out.



DIARY DATES

- June 1st Global Day of Parents
- June 5th World Environment Day
- June 8th World Oceans Day
Anniversary (33 years) of NZ
becoming Nuclear Free.
- June 12th World Oceans Day
- July 13th Matariki begins
- July 18th Nelson Mandela / Freedom of
Speech.
- July 30th World Day of remembering those
people who have been trafficked.



PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Pax Christi is an independent Catholic social justice organisation. We work hard to address issues of peace and justice at a local, regional and global level.

If you want to know more about Pax Christi, to join meetings, or to set up group meetings in your area, please contact paxchristiaotearoa@gmail.com or ring 09 377 5541 / 021 729944

Pax Christi relies on volunteers & donations to enable the work to continue.

To make an online donation our a/c name and number is: Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand 03-01730353-867-00 Please contact us for a receipt. Your support is greatly appreciated.

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