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## EDITORIAL

SEVERAL YEARS WORK came to fruition with the publication of our English translation of Fr E. A. Worms' study of Aboriginal religion: E. A. Worms SAC: *Australian Aboriginal Religions*, NYMU, 1986; 231pp. + xvi, soft cover. It is available from: NYMU, 4/17 Jersey Ave., Leura, NSW 2781. Price: \$13.95 + \$2 for postage and handling.

I was just about to post off a copy to Professor Helmut Petri when I heard that he had been killed in a car accident in Germany only a few weeks earlier (in June 1986). A friend of Fr Ernest Worms and fellow-anthropologist specialising in the WA area, he had prepared Fr Worms' original text for posthumous publication in 1988. As a token of sympathy I still sent off the copy to his wife, herself an anthropologist, Dr Gisella Petri-Odermann.

Apparently Eugene Stockton's article in our previous issue (no. 27) has caused a deal of interest in some quarters — cf. Dan O'Donovan's letter. We look forward to positive and fruitful reaction, and already have a response from the field ready for the next issue (no. 29).

This present number contains papers that make it particularly valuable: papers by two outstanding Aboriginal persons in the NT, and a view of the gospel challenge Aboriginal society poses to the church in Australia by Fr Ted Kennedy whose life and work in Redfern (Sydney suburb) for more than a decade has given vivid expression to what he writes.

Fr Kenney's article is due to appear in *The Way*., we are grateful to the editors for permission to reprint it and make it available to our special range of readers.

Martin Wilson  
Editor

# THE PENTECOST EXPERIENCE IN ARNHAM LAND CHURCHES IN 1979

STAFF ORIENTATION COURSE NUNGALINYA COLLEGE

DJINIYINI GONDARRA

THIS IS A VERY BRIEF OUTLINE of the renewal of the Revival which took place in Arnhem Land in the Uniting Church Parishes, beginning in Galiwin'ku, Elcho Island, 400 miles east of Darwin, with a population of 1500 to 1600. In the early years, Galiwin'ku Community was the mission station established by the Methodist Overseas Mission back in 1942 under the leadership of Rev. H U Shepherdson. He and his wife Ella Shepherdson would have been the last pioneer missionaries to leave their beloved home and people in Arnhem Land, who had given long missionary service. Rev. H U Shepherdson had a call to the mission field on 2 April 1927. He was accepted by the Methodist Mission Board as lay missionary, engineer and sawmiller. Because of his long and outstanding Christian leadership and humility which lead him to offer himself as candidate for the Christian ministry, he was ordained at Galiwin'ku, Elcho Island on 19 October 1954 by another beloved missionary to the Aboriginal people in Arnhem Land, Rev. A Ellenor who then became the Northern Australia district Chairman of the Methodist Church of Australasia.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ reached Arnhem Land early in 1916 by the first pioneer missionary, Rev. James Watson at Goulburn Island, which is now called Warruwi. This is where the Word of God was first preached and planted in the hearts of many Aboriginal people and this is where God's Word from the

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Rev. Djiniyini Gondarra is present Moderator of the Northern Synod of the Uniting Church and Executive Secretary of the Bethel Presbytery.

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Bible became known to Arnhem Land Aborigines. Milingimbi Community was the second mission field established by the Christian missionaries. This Community was seen by the Christian missionaries as a centre of battlefield, where tribal wars and fighting would go on. It was the centre where Aboriginal tribal people from the east and west could come and meet and fight. But the Gospel of Jesus Christ was so powerful, which brought the Spirit of reconciliation and restoration and many enemies were won by the power of the gospel through the faithful witness of the missionaries who have strongly stood their faith, and which in the end won the battle by the victory of Christ. We are thankful to God for the pioneering faithful Christian witnesses given to the Aboriginal people in this Community by our loved pastor and his wife, Rev. and Mrs Webb who began their ministry in Milingimbi mission field in 1927. Though the life was difficult and much suffering was felt by them and the many other missionaries who had come after them, the victory was being won, as the seed of the gospel was being planted and scattered in the hearts and the minds of our people.

Yirrkala was the third mission field established in early 1934 by Rev. T T Webb and Rev. W Chaseling with the help of Rev. H U Shepherdson. Yirrkala Aborigines were seen by the missionaries as head hunters. They would not spare anybody's lives.

But because of the gospel of Jesus Christ being preached to them by those brave missionaries, many of the Aborigines were being won to Christianity and being converted into Christian faith. The first church was built in Yirrkala in early 1941 by Rev. Kolino who was then just a lay missionary from Fiji. He was the first missionary who started the first church choir in Yirrkala for the native Christians, and the first Pacific Island missionary ordained by the Methodist District Synod in North Australia.

Minjilang was another mission field which was the fourth mission established in Arnhem Land in late 1941. It was then called Croker Island mission. This mission field was very different from the rest of the other mission fields along the coast. The Government asked the Methodist Church to have care given to the part-Aboriginal children and the Government agreed to work together with the church to look after and establish a good home for them. The children were being taken from their

mothers who were not looking after them and put into the care of the Christian mission. Many of these children grew up in the Christian home and in the Christian pastoral care. In Minjilang mission, already there were Aboriginal people of that land living away from the Mission Station. They were the Yiwatja and Marrgu tribes. The missionaries also encouraged them to come and live in the mission and be looked after. Many of these people were being trained and helped to become more involved in the mission work, and together they worked side by side, the Aboriginal from that place and the part-Aboriginal who was brought in by the missionaries from Darwin and from the Communities around the Northern Territory. The important fact was that Minjilang mission field was so unique which suited the needs of both kinds of people — the traditional people of Minjilang, and the half-cast people. Both were being treated equally. We are so thankful to God for the beloved pastors such as Rev. and Mrs Fatua Tauto from the Pacific Island in Fiji and Rev. and Mrs John Cook who had so much love for the part-Aboriginal children and treated them as their own children. These children were lost and depressed, torn in two worlds, the white man's world and the Aboriginal world. Even today they are caught by these kinds of problems.

We are grateful to God for the witness given by the faithful Christian missionaries to the part-Aboriginal children in Minjilang in those early days. Without the Christian church, many of these neglected children could have suffered and died. There were many other lay missionaries who have entered into this Christian ministry of caring for these lost children, but I just can't mention them all. But we thank God for the fruitful ministry offered by loved brothers and sisters.

Now back to where I began talking about the Revival in Arnhem Land. The new policy was just being established by the Christian church in Arnhem Land called 'Free to Decide' and 'Self-Determination'. The church had to take a very slow step in this change, and not rush in quickly. There was also very strong pressure from the government which took place in 1969. This new government felt sorry for our Aboriginal people and felt they should have more money. All the workers were put on a training allowance and later on to award wages. They received this money too quickly and did not know how to use it wisely. The Christian church knew that change must come and that equality of opportunity must apply to all Australians, both black and white.

One missionary friend said: 'However, a slower rate of change would have been better for the Aborigines. However, some of these changes were not for the best.'

What she said is very true, because there were strong demands from the government. The Communities were administered by all Aboriginal councils. Many of those changes took place in Arnhem Land destroying the Christian Community spirit and there was no longer respect for each other in the Community. The people were travelling backwards and forwards by charter aeroplanes bringing back things for their children and for their wives, as well as bringing liquor which destroyed the life of family and community. The fight would go on every day. The missionaries spirit was corrupted. It was like the early days when missionaries went to stop the tribal fights. The churches and missionaries tried very hard to stop drinking and fighting and helped the Communities in Arnhem Land to see and understand that many white-man values are bad and make you spoiled. One Christian missionary said: 'The white-man values takes away your true Aboriginal traditional values, your Aboriginal spirituality, your culture and your true Aboriginal identity.'

What he said is very true, because many of our people were already saying to others things like these: 'don't believe what the church and missionaries are telling you. You must accept all the white-man's values because they are better than our own, leave your old ways of living and live like the rest of the Australians.'

The missionary movement in Arnhem Land has taken as its mandates the great commission in Matthew 28:19-20 which says: 'Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples, baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.' I understand that mission is to include every aspect of the work which the church is sent into the world to do, and I understand evangelism in a different sense, which is called Holistic evangelism. It is a means of communication of the good news about Jesus Christ. You will remember very well the story in Acts 1:6-8 when Jesus and His disciples met together before the Ascension took place, the disciples asked whether God's reign was now come in full. Jesus told them it was not their business to worry about that, but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you beginning in Jerusalem and going outwards into Judea, Samaria and on to the ends of the earth.

There is something quite unpredictable, unexpected and mysterious about the way that God's rule is realised in communities and in the lives of individuals. So the disciples are told to wait for the Holy Spirit and then they would be witnesses when Pentecost came. Something quite unplanned and unexpected happened. They began to babble in other strange languages and people asked what is this that is happening? What is going on?

Galiwin'ku, Elcho Island experienced the Revival on 14 March 1979. This year was a very hard year because the churches in Arnhem Land were going through very difficult times. There was more suffering, hardship and even persecution. Many people left the church and no longer the Christian gospel had interest and value in their lives. Many began to speak against Christianity or even wanted to get rid of the church. This attitude was affected by the changes that were happening. There was money and other things coming into the Community from the Government. The people became more rich and were handling lots of things such as motor cars, TV, motor boats, good house, etc. The responsibilities were in the hands of the Aboriginal people and no longer in the missionary's hands. The earthly values became the centre of Aboriginal life. There was more liquor coming into the Communities every day, and more fighting was going on. There were more families hurt and more deaths and incidents happening which were caused by drinking. Whole Communities in the Arnhem Land were in great chaos. The people were in confusion and without direction. The Aboriginal people were listening to many voices; the Government was saying you are free people and you must have everything you want, just like the other Australians. And there were promises from one to another. To me the Aboriginal people in Arnhem Land were like the Israelites in Egypt being slaves and in bondage because of all the changes that were brought into the Community. They were like the vacuum suction which was sucking in everything that comes, without knowing that many of the things that came into Communities were really unpleasant and which only destroyed the harmony and the good relationship with the people in the Communities.

I thank God that I was being called back to serve my own people in Arnhem Land especially to Galiwin'ku. In 1975 I had just completed my theological training in Papua New Guinea in Raronga Theological College and was appointed to Galiwin'ku Parish as a Parish minister. This celebration took place when there were lots of changes taking place and when the church was

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challenged by the power of the evil which clothes itself in greed, selfishness, drunkenness, and in wealth. As I went around in my daily pastoral visitation around the camp, I would hear the drunks swearing and bashing up their wives and throwing stones on the houses and glass being broken in the houses. And sometimes the drunks would go into the church and smoke cigarettes in the holy house of God. This was really very terrible. The whole of Arnhem Land was being held by the hands of Satan. I remember one day I woke up early in the morning and went for a walk down the beach and started talking to myself. I said, 'Lord, why have you called me to the ministry? Why have you called me back to my own people? Why not to somewhere else, because there is so much suffering and hardship?' I then returned to the manse where Gelung, my wife and the children were. This was our last day before we left for our holidays to the south, visiting our old missionary friends and also taking part in the lovely wedding held in Sydney for Barry and Barbara Gullick, one of our missionary workers still remaining at this present time in Galiwin'ku Community. It was almost 6.30 am and it was my turn to lead the morning devotion. The bell had already rung and I had rushed into the church. When I got there, there were only four people inside the church. We used to have our morning devotions every day early in the morning because this system had been formed by the missionaries in the early years. God had given me the Word to read and share with those four people who were present in the church with me. The reading I selected was from the Old Testament, Ezekiel 37:1-14 'The Valley of the Dry Bones'. Most of you know the story very well, how God — Yahweh — commanded the prophet Ezekiel to prophecy to the dry bones, and how that the dry bones represent the whole house of Israel, how they were just like bones dried up and their hope had perished. They were completely cut off. After the morning prayers Gelung, the children and I were ready to leave for Gove and then on to Cairns in North Queensland. We were away for four weeks and returned on the date which I have written, 14 March 1979. To me and all the Galiwin'ku Community, both the Aboriginal Christians and to the white Christians, these dates and the month were very important because this is the mark of the birth of the Pentecost experience in the Arnhem Land churches or the birth of the Arnhem Land churches. To us it was like the Pentecost in this 20th century. It happened when Gelung, the children and I arrived very late in the afternoon from our holidays through Gove on the late Missionary Aviation Fellowship aircraft to Galiwin'ku. When we landed at Galiwin'ku



Airport we were welcomed and met by many crowds of people. All seemed to be saying to us, 'We would like you to start once again the Bible Class fellowship. To me it seemed that God, after our leaving, had been walking on and preparing many people's lives to wait upon the outpouring of His Holy Spirit that would soon come upon them. Though Gelung and I were so tired from the long trip that took from Cairns to Gove and then from Gove to Galiwin'ku, we expected to rest and sort out some of the things and unpack. We just committed ourselves to the needs of our brothers and sisters who had welcomed and met us at the airport that afternoon.

After the evening dinner, we called our friends to come and join us in the Bible Class meeting. We just sang some hymns and choruses which were being translated into Gupapuynu and then into Djambarripuynu. There were only seven or eight people who were involved or came to that Bible Class meeting, and many of our friends didn't turn up. We didn't get worried about it. I began to talk to them that this was God's will for us to get together this evening, because God had planned this meeting through them so that we will see something of His great love which will be poured out on each one of them. I said the word of thanks to those few faithful Christians who had been praying for renewal in our church, and I shared with them that I too had been praying for the revival or for the renewal for this church and for the whole of Arnhem Land churches, because to our heavenly Father everything is possible. He can do mighty things in our churches throughout our great land. These were some of the words of challenge I gave to those of my beloved brothers and sisters. Gelung, my wife also shared something of her experience of the power and the miracles that she felt deep down in her own heart when she was about to die in Darwin Hospital delivering our fourth child. It was God's power that brought in her body the healing and the wholeness.

I then asked the group to hold each other's hands and I began to pray for the people and for the church, that God would pour out His Holy Spirit to bring healing and renewal to the hearts of men and women, and to the children. Suddenly we began to feel God's Spirit moving in our hearts and the whole form of prayer-life suddenly changed and everybody began to pray in spirit and in harmony. And there was a great noise going on in the room and we began to ask one another what was going on. Some of us said that God had now visited us and once again established His Kingdom among His people who have been bound for so long by the power of evil. Now the Lord is

setting His church free and bringing them into the freedom of happiness and into reconciliation and to restoration. In that same evening the words just spread like the flames of fire and reached the whole community in Galiwin'ku. Gelung and I couldn't sleep at all that night, because people were just coming for the ministry, bringing the sick to be prayed for, for healing. Others came to bring their problems, even a husband and wife came to bring their marriage problem, so the Lord touched them and healed their marriage.

Next morning the Galiwin'ku Community once again became the new Community. The love of Jesus was being shared and many expressions of forgiveness were taking place in the families and in the tribes. Wherever I went I could hear people singing and humming christian choruses and hymns, when in the past I would have only expected to hear only fighting and swearing and many other troublesome things that would hurt your feelings and make you feel sad. Many unplanned and unexpected things happened every time we went from camp to camp to meet with the people. The fellowship was held every night and more and more people gave their lives to Christ, and it went on and on until sometimes the fellowship meeting would end around about 12.00 in the morning. There was more singing, testimony and ministry going on. People did not feel tired in the morning, but still went to their relevant work. (Not like what we can see through the Kava and through many other things that are happening today). Many Christians were beginning to discover what their ministry is, and a few others had a strong sense of call to the Ministry to be trained to become Ministers of the Word. And now today these few ministers who have done their training through Nungalinya College have been ordained. These are some of the results of the Revival in Arnhem Land. And many others have been trained to take up a special ministry in the parish.

The Spirit of Revival has not only affected the Uniting Church Communities and the parishes, but as well the Anglican Churches in Arnhem Land, such as in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Roper River, Numbulwar and Oenpelli. All have experienced the Revival and been touched by the joy and the happiness and love of Christ. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Arnhem Land has swept further to the Centre in Pitjantjatjara and across the west into many Aboriginal settlements and communities. I remember when Rev. Rronang Garrawurra, Gelung and I were invited by the Warburton Ranges people and how we had seen God's Spirit move in the lives of many people. Five hundred people came to the Lord and were baptised in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. There was a great Revival that swept

further west. I would describe these experiences like a wild bushfire burning from one end of Australia to another side of our great land. This experience of Revival in Arnhem Land is still active in many of our Aboriginal parishes and the churches. We would like to share these experiences in many white churches, where doors are closed for the power of the Holy Spirit. It has always been my humble prayer that the whole of Australian christians both black and white will one day be touched by this great and mighty power of the Living God.

Another wonderful thing that happened within the Uniting Church in Australia among the Aboriginal people is the formation of the new movement, called the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. This movement was born out of the Revival experience. God was beginning to show Aboriginal people within the Uniting Church how to seek His will for the Aboriginal Church.

The Third Assembly of the Uniting Church accepted the Congress mandates very warmly. The Congress has now become a part of the newly formed Commission for Mission within the Uniting Church in Australia. Let me just share with you the history of the Congress and how it began and when. The seed of this Congress was sown in February, a few years ago in New Zealand when the Rev. Charles Harris our President and the Rev. Bernie Clarke our Consultant met with the Maories and Pakeha at Ahape in a Maori Mari. They found out that the Maori people in New Zealand have a great similarity with the concerns of Aboriginal people.

This seed as they described has now germinated and taken root. A dream has become a reality. We give God our Heavenly Father the glory. No man could have done this in such a short time! It was a great atmosphere and a great feeling among our people when the vision was born in our spirit and we trust that God our Father was creating a new understanding in our hearts and in our minds. We can now truthfully say God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform. If we had our way and were trying to do it our way He would not have allowed us to get this far. He wouldn't have let us get beyond base one.

At Crystal Creek, Townsville in August 1982, the early formation of the National Congress of the Uniting Church in Australia took place, initially called the 'Black Congress'. The Interim Committee was set up which met once early in 1983. The Interim Committee suggested to the Queensland Synod, North Queensland Presbytery, and the Townsville West Parish, that the

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Congress chairman (which he was then called) the Rev. Charles Harris, be released from parish duties to travel around the nation to Aboriginal communities and Synod bodies to tell the story of the Congress. It was also aimed at gathering Aboriginal church leaders and Synod representatives to a national conference at Galiwin'ku, Elcho Island, in August 1983.

That Conference saw over 80 delegates and Synod representatives create history in the life of the Australian church. The Uniting Church played a key role in the whole venture. The Conference went for five days. It was a very challenging and important time for all. Aboriginal people chartered planes to get to the Conference. It was here that the name was changed to Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress.

What are the aims of the Congress? The primary aim of the Congress is evangelism. Aboriginal and Islander Christians want to respond to the command of Jesus to 'Go and make disciples'. But evangelism is not only just organising the occasional rally, or even door-knocking. Evangelism means caring for the whole person. We want to be free to engage in a Holistic ministry to our own people. Yes, we want them to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour. And yes, we are concerned about housing, employment, training, community development, alcohol rehabilitation, land rights, health and youth work.

But for us to do this ministry we must have control of our own organisation. We must do things in ways that Aboriginal and Islander people are comfortable with. The structures and regulations of the Uniting Church are things we do not understand. They are not our ways of doing things.

This is just a brief outline of the history of how Congress has developed and now become the Commission for the Aboriginal Mission.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REFLECTIONS

MIRIAM-ROSE UNGUNMERR-BAUMANN

FELLOW CATHOLIC WOMEN, thank you very much for inviting me to speak to you tonight. I am nervous. I know you will understand. I have spent a lot of time wondering what I should say to you. Finally, I decided to speak about 'me'. Please don't think I do this in a spirit of vanity. I feel that in speaking about 'me' I can best speak about my own people.

I was born in the bush in 1950 at Daly River eight miles upstream from where the Mission is now. My language is called Nangikurrungurr. I speak four other local languages.

I have been thinking over what I have learned from my parents and my group. It is summed up in the word 'culture'. I learned how to look out on my world, the country and the bush. I listened to the wonderful stories that told how everything came to be — hills, the waterholes, the river, the places of importance and the stories that went with them. My life was filled with beautiful stories. My people could not read. They did not write. They remembered and they told and they retold. Interest was always fresh like new discovery. The countryside was somehow part of me and I was part of it; it was filled with named places and I came to learn so many of them. It was my home. It was me.

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Text of talk given to the Catholic Women's League, Darwin, early 1986. Miriam-Rose prepared the NYMU logo - a simplified form of the pulpit decoration she refers to in the text. Through Dove Communications we helped her publish her Stations of the Cross last year (*Australian Stations of the Cross*).

I watched my people preparing for ceremonies. We were deeply interested in all of them, even though we could not take part in all of them. Those we were involved in meant complete involvement of the whole group. I never felt alone in these ceremonies. Often now when I come to Church I do feel alone. This worries me because I know that as Christians we should never feel alone but wonderfully united.

I watched the men make our dugout canoes for fishing in the river and the billabongs. I watched them make their three-pronged wire-spears for spearing fish and their shovel spears for spearing kangaroos and wallabies, also at times for fighting. I watched them spearing fish at night with paperbark torches held high. I saw them diving to catch freshwater turtles in their bare hands.

I was shown how to follow tracks and challenge the cunning of the animals. Bush tucker was my natural food — bandicoots, blue-tongue lizards, rock pythons, porcupines. I waded into the billabongs with the women to gather water lily stems and seeds. I watched the men catching duck and geese. I sat beside the women as they dug up yams or went with them gathering the many kinds of berries and bush plums. I was taught to know what to look for at various times of the year. I learned to read the seasons. (Poem: 'Four of a Kind')

I was shown how to tease out fibre from the 'marapan', palm tree, make string from it and from the string make dilly bags and fish nets.

Looking back I now realise how much influence my family and my group had in my early education, my cultural education. It also makes me realise how real and practical that education was. I learned by *doing* and I *wanted* to do because I could see it was so important for my elders and for me. We were in the education process together. Education was naturally motivated. Education was part of life. Education was for living.

Looking back on these days of childhood I realise how independent we were. With very little difference, we lived as our people had lived for so many, many years before us. We had no house. We lived in a wurley. We had no money. Nature was our bank. We looked after its capital and drew on its interest. The new world that was beginning to invade us could fall to pieces about us, but we would go on. Our social ties were strong. The extended family was the human side of our world. It gave us support. We developed as people by interaction within that family.

I developed a love for the bush and especially for its quietness. I do believe that in quietness is man's very search for God. I began to experience in that quietness the great Spirit, the Father of us all. Today, often when I am out hunting, I am drawn to sit in the bush by myself, among the trees, on a hill or by a billabong or by the river and be simply in His Presence. To me this is the closest and dearest prayer.

The ceremonies brought us together on a religious group basis. They impressed on me the fact and the satisfaction of a communal worship, a worship in language and song and dance and action that is meaningful to all. I long for the day when our deep Aboriginal ceremonial instincts can find genuine expression in our Christian celebrations, when these celebrations will no longer be foreign but truly ours.

I was about five when I was taken under the care of my Uncle Joe Attawamba and my Auntie Nellie. The Mission was just beginning at the Daly. Uncle Joe was police tracker at Daly River working with Tas Fitzer. When Mrs Eileen Fitzer became seriously ill at the time of a big flood and there was no escape by road, Uncle Attawamba walked with record-breaking speed to Adelaide River township to ask for help. As a result, Fr Frank Flynn brought medical help up the river by boat and helped in the evacuation. Thanks to Uncle Attawamba, Mrs Eileen Fitzer is still with us today. After this incident Uncle Attawamba became the tracker at Adelaide River and, at various times, at Pine Creek and Mataranka. I went with him and attended school at each of these places.

When Auntie Nellie died Uncle Attawamba retired and did light work for Mrs Fawcett at the Adelaide River Hotel. He sent me back to my mother at Daly River. I was about 14 years old. I continued my school work at the Mission school under Sr Mary McGowan. At the age of fifteen I was baptised by Fr Corry and made my First Communion five days later.

In 1968 I did a 'Teaching Assistants Course' at Kormilda College. I was invited back again in 1971. At this time I became interested in art and painting. I began to develop my own particular form of symbolic art as appears in my Stations of the Cross and other religious art expressions. Alan Marshall of 'I Can Jump Puddles' asked me to illustrate his book 'People Of The Dreamtime' which I gladly did. I was also invited to a Christian Artists Conference in Bali. The theme of the Conference was the 'Our Father'. As a basis for my contribution I used my Daly River pulpit design. The whole

object of this symbolic drawing is to express the unity demanded by God, our common Father and Creator and by His Son who brought about the new Creation.

In 1972 and 1973 I taught as a 'Teacher Aid' at the Daly River Mission School. During these two years my interest in art further developed. It became an integral part of my teaching. I encouraged the children to express themselves — their inspirations, their perceptions, their aspirations, their joys, their ambitions, even their frustrations in colour and symbol. Symbols, true symbols, are such wonderful things. They draw on things deep down in you, expressing at times the almost inexpressible. They lend themselves to further and still further meaning. Aboriginal people are people of very deep feeling, and symbols are their deepest and favourite mode of expression.

In 1974, with a sponsorship from the Commonwealth Government, I joined the 'Primary Arts Branch' of Victoria. This involved working with Art teachers in primary schools throughout Victoria. At the same time I continued my prac. teaching in various schools throughout Victoria. After the completion of this year I was accredited as a fully qualified teacher, the first Aboriginal in the Northern Territory to be so.

In 1975 I returned to the Daly River school. During this year I met my future husband, Ken, who was contract building for Catholic Missions. At the end of 1975 Ken was moving on. He told me he was 'looking for a wife' and 'would I be interested — three days to decide!' I decided in favour. At this time I accepted the job of 'Art Consultant with the Professional Services Branch of Northern Territory Education.' It involved visiting all Territory schools as a Consultant on Aboriginal art. In 1981 I taught at St John's College, Darwin. In 1982 I returned to the dearest place on earth, my country, the Daly.

After moving about among various schools I would make this observation: I found that non-Aboriginal children were deeply interested in and anxious to hear more about Aborigines and their way of life. I felt there was a great need for more Aboriginal teachers to work among non-Aboriginal school children.

Looking back over my comparatively short life I am overcome by the suddenness of the deep changes that have come into our Aboriginal world from the time I was a child till now. Almost overnight there came: citizenship, money, houses, supermarkets, transport, alcohol, missions, settlements, associations, councils, government interest and government policies



sometimes contradictory...etc. etc. etc. A new way of living came upon us. We had to make the unimaginable leap from being people 'of the beginning' — Aborigines — to people of these latest times. Europeans travelled a far, far slower road. They had hundreds of years to absorb change. I readily excuse them if they cannot understand what goes on inside us. However, I think, I beg that they should try to understand, be it ever so difficult, and be practically sympathetic. When outsiders do not show a spirit of understanding, do not try to understand, the position becomes, if it were possible, even worse.

In recent years the role of woman in Aboriginal society has become more and more prominent. Throughout Australia you will find it is the mother, very often the grandmother, who is struggling valiantly to hold the group together. The male, for the most part, has not found his role in the turmoil. The things that made him important, such as being leader of the ceremony, the protector, the supplier, the hunter have gone or are fast disappearing. Sadly there has been no authentic replacement. The woman, the mother continuing to hold the important role in the family, has lost less. The imbalance has been to the detriment of the family and the stability of the group.

Today I see my people caught in what I feel is a terrible whirlwind, tossed about and trapped in a circle of confusion, frustration, often despair, unable to escape. I myself have been thrown about by that whirlwind. I have felt the confusion, the fear, the helplessness. Yet, in some strange and wonderful way, God is, by degrees and ever so gently, lifting me out of the whirlwind. In addition, He has through circumstances, asked me to assume a role not frequently taken on by an Aboriginal woman: as a teacher, as a spokeswoman, especially as President of an Aboriginal Council I find myself trying to rescue my people from the whirlwind. Often I find in them a lack of response. They prefer the fear within the whirlwind to the fear of the unknown without. I have been accused by my own of not knowing my position as a woman. I have been told even of the danger I run of being 'sung' to death for decisions I make. Such threats affect me greatly. I am an Aboriginal. I have in me the deep, age-old fears of my people. Yet, thanks to God, in my Christian Faith I have something that drives out fear. Such obstacles, fears, pains become a challenge to my faith and deepen it. They throw me closer to God, God who is love — love that drives out fear.

May my people find in God's love deepest confidence in their identity and the way to true development. May it support them in their struggles. May that same love produce among fellow Australians a spirit of understanding. Especially, may that love make us all one.

Let me conclude with a reference to my pulpit design. That design speaks about unity. The four fingers of the hand of Christ emerging from the wings of the Dove represent the four Gospels going out to peoples of all cultures under the impulse of the Spirit to make all one in Christ, something He so urgently wanted; a unity made rich by diversity. The Ten Commandments, under the wings of the Dove are fulfilled to perfection in the one great unifying command to love God and God in neighbour. The cross at the top and the circle for the nail wound represent the Passion. We are all redeemed and made one through the blood of Christ, bloodbrothers and bloodsisters of Him and children of a common Father. The circle in the hand also represents the host while the whole design is set within the chalice. We are, in the words of St Paul, made one in one cup and one bread. Let us pray for that unity. Let us do our best to live it.

## 'CALLED TO BE POWERLESS'

TED. KENNEDY

THE GOSPEL STORY of the widow's mite is a favourite with many Church fund-raisers. It is constantly suggested that Jesus was applauding the voluntary act of a poor widow in giving to a worthy cause all she had to live on. It was God's will that she should drain herself dry — *she was called to be powerless.*

Such an interpretation leaves us with a very hard God indeed, and with a Christ who, in this instance, is aligned with the scribes. Certainly it contains no clue as to why people wanted to kill him.

I think the story is really one of Jesus' lamenting human exploitation. He had already shown a distinct offhandedness toward the treasury tax. (Mth.16:27.) The chief priests had got the clear message from his angry outburst in the temple that he was really aiming beyond the sellers — at themselves. It was *their* pockets that were being lined. The sellers were their front men. If he was going to oppose their highly reputable way of robbing the poor, then he must die.

The widow's mite story is not unconnected. The atmosphere is still electric from Jesus' diatribe against the scribes for swallowing the property of widows, when he takes up a position, probably derisively, opposite the temple treasury. He observes one such oppressed widow put all she had into the treasury. He complains about the extent of her exploitation, then moves away, predicting the destruction of the very temple itself. (Mk.12:38-13:2.)

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Fr Ted. Kennedy is the parish priest of Redfern, a centre of Aboriginal population in Sydney. He has been associated with outreach to the Aboriginal people of the area since the early 1970s.

The above interpretation is, I admit, markedly divergent from the common one, and this points to a marked divergence in the perspective from which the Gospel is viewed. But this is precisely the sort of new starting-point which the Church has called us to look for in a renewed evaluation of war. And it is precisely the sort of fresh and radical starting-point in viewing the whole of the Gospel, which we must adopt if we are to face honestly and seriously our Christian responsibility towards the poor today. The words of Albert Einstein: 'The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking' apply equally and urgently to our way of thinking about the Gospel. The Gospel itself is in urgent need of liberation.

I do not think there is any validity in a so-called Christian *call to be powerless*. Power-mongers have often for their own purposes devised such a vocation — for others, not themselves. Then again, sometimes the phrase is used as a piece of rhetoric, as if indeed it were possible to *render oneself* powerless. The story is told that once St Francis of Assisi entertained his brethren by playing an imaginary violin consisting of two branches from a tree. In his voluntary poverty he had succeeded in depriving himself of the violin, but the musical accomplishment drawn from his inherited culture was with him still. He could not jump out of his own skin. In that sense St Francis was *not* poor or powerless as those who have been wrenched from their cultural inheritance are.

One of the difficulties with this kind of rhetoric is that a language about 'poverty' can be devised which has no need for reference to *real live poor people*. Its claim to be theological language is the very reason which makes it counterfeit — that it purports to run free of any concrete historical correlate. How often do we see the spotlight focused on some famous Christian 'worker among the poor', where there is evidently intense fascination with someone who has voluntarily renounced certain possessions, and less interest in the actual persons who live in a state of enforced dispossession. There is a hushed admiration of such a person staying heroically among the poor, who themselves would seem to remain always anonymous, always undesirable company, non-persons with interchangeable features, pictured in the background to our famous White Christian Missionary. Here I know I am on dangerous ground. There have been times when some affluent Christian

listening to me has reacted with amazement that I was not struck dead on the spot! Rich Christians do seem to need such heroes feeling dependent on them to act vicariously on their behalf, as long as their heroes remain demure before the oppressors of the poor. In the cramped conditions where the poor are forced to live, you will often find stench, disease, alcoholism and petty violence (in contrast to the massive disguised violence of the rich landlords). It does seem strange that in an age when deodorants are available to combat odour, antibiotics to conquer disease, the behavioural sciences offering intricate insights into dealing with deviant behaviour that the comfortable educated Christian takes flight at the thought of a face-to-face meeting with the devalued people of the earth. Even more sadly, the fear which grips them when faced with a personal introduction to the poor clouds their vision. They fail to see that the poor have not chosen these degraded conditions but accept them rather than compromise their own humanity and so degrade their inner dignity. It is true that none of us can be held responsible for what others make of their own interior lives, but what does not sink into our conscience is that we are accountable to the poor. We cannot breathe through their nostrils, but we must take responsibility for the polluted air they breathe.

In this paper I am endeavouring to put aside specious notions about Christian poverty and powerlessness which still have wide currency today, but also to examine ways in which the terms *poverty and powerlessness* can have real Christian significance. There is of course in all of us an interior powerlessness over our lives which is a simple fact of life, and which we can neither control nor lose. It is our powerlessness before God upon whose power we rely. When we deny this, imagining that we can arrogate this power to ourselves, we shackle our own freedom and that of others. It is of the essence of Christian spirituality that we learn to acknowledge and become amenable to this powerlessness in ourselves. It is a prerequisite to all prayer. This call then is not to render ourselves powerless, but to *recognise and accept* a powerlessness which is already and always there. We have only to look at so many recovering alcoholics who have found sobriety along with their own powerlessness. It is humbling to realise that very often it was not in their attendance at Mass or the sacraments that they first heard the call to accept their

powerlessness. We do need to stress this awareness when we come to talk about faith. Its direct reference is God himself. But it ought lead us to join hands with all our brothers and sisters, to reach out to every person and all the animals and all of creation too -- all our brothers and sisters. Here we all stand equal in our powerlessness before our Creator.

That is what St Francis sang about. No wonder then that he should have so mistrusted riches which keep reading back to us the betraying thought that we don't need God, and suppress the inner joy which goes with the realisation that we do. When we get to know the poor we come to realise that it is we who do the worrying, they who do the suffering. We do need to be freed from that false self-accrediting effortfulness which gives rise to brooding anxiety. What is more, when our faith leads us to think in the plural with all the other elements of this created universe, it should also lead us Christians to accept with both hands the environmental issues of our time.

But then there are other forms of powerlessness which are defined against the background, not of God, but of other human beings. Within this definition there are two groups of people who can be seen to be powerless in contrast to the power of others or because of it. They are *little children* and *the poor*. There is a language which belongs very much to the world and which is commonly used when referring to these two groups of powerless people. It does not take into account the possibility of a relationship with them. It implies that they comprise a sort of inert mass waiting to be activated by us. We have the right to control and regulate their numbers. It can come as somewhat of a surprise to us Christians, who can unwittingly absorb such language when we realise that the Gospel emphasis is the reverse. They are the active ones, we the passive. They are the missionaries spoken of in the Gospel in this way. They bear a *consecration* bestowed on them by God, not because of merit won, but simply because of what they are. It is not a question of romanticising some virtue peculiar to them nor attributing to them some added worth over other human beings. It is simply to recognise depths to the old Catholic principle of sacramentality. Such people are not God, but they remain the unique revelation of the presence of Jesus for us. Out of the mouths of babes and the poor do we hear his authentic voice. This is to say more than that Jesus is poor; it insists that the poor are Jesus. They possess a luminosity

for us which is described in the New Testament as:

1. their already possessing the Kingdom (Mk.10:14; Lk.6:20.)
2. their having faith (Mth.18:5; James 2:5.)  
and therefore
3. they must be welcomed for themselves in Christ's name (Mth.18:5; Mth.25:45.)
4. and we must become like them in their relationship to the Kingdom and in their faith. (Mth.18:2; Mk.10:25.)

We are called to see them in faith as the instrumental cause of our salvation. Such belief should energise the specifically Christian abhorrence of abortion and every other form of injustice. It should drive us into a precision of language in describing our relationship with them. What transitive verbs can we properly place between us and them, where we are the subjects, which do justice to the Gospel relationship? For we must remain alert to the constant pull to exchange the language of the Gospel for the counterfeit language of the world.

The Gospel is very precise. There is no mention of *helping*, or *giving welfare to*, or relating to the powerless in any indirect or vicarious way. In fact there is no hint of the very popular *transport model* which suggests that we have power and resources, spiritual, moral, educational, physical or muscular which we can proudly carry across the widening gulf between ourselves and them. The Gospel stays with the simple homely, two-way term *give welcome to*. This is a long way from the altruism which does not allow for mutuality, which keeps the powerless always beyond arm's length and always *other*. If such altruism were a virtue, it would be open to the powerless to exercise it. But the poor themselves know better than any how to *give welcome to* the poor and to little children. In the bittersweet world of the poor, there are no unwanted little children, no unwanted poor guests. So the poor seek out the poor to receive a genuine welcome. We must turn to them and ask a blessing from their consecrated hands, and believe that they will receive us into everlasting tents.

'In the first centuries of Christianity' wrote Peter Maurin in the *American Catholic Worker* fifty years ago:

the poor were fed clothed and sheltered  
at a personal sacrifice.

And because the poor  
were fed clothed and sheltered  
at a personal sacrifice,  
the pagans used to say  
about the Christians

'See how they love each other.'

In our own day  
the poor are no longer  
fed clothed and sheltered  
at a personal sacrifice  
but at the expense  
of the taxpayer.

And because the poor  
are no longer  
fed clothed and sheltered  
the pagans say about the Christians  
'See how they pass the buck.'

Jesus was quite insistent in directing his followers into a personal eye-level friendship with the real live poor — by his own example, but also in his advice. 'Make to yourselves friends with the mammon of iniquity so that they will receive you into everlasting tents.' He also made it clear that if we are going to make the poor our personal friends, we will therefore make enemies of the rich. Don't let anyone try to convince you it can be otherwise. Such terms of persecution are central to the following of Jesus, not a possible, though hoped-against contingency.

**To know personally and reverence the poor and to accept the inevitable consequences from this must be regarded as normative in all Christian living.**

That which must be a constitutive element in our very first steps as companions of Jesus has often been presented as an optional refinement. This neglect carries with it a distorted perception of all Christian values including a proper understanding of the very nature of God in Christ. (Jr.22:16-17.)



During the Second World War, Dorothy Day was pursuing a pacifist line in her newspaper *The Catholic Worker*. Some members of the movement found that they could not subscribe to her position fully, feeling that the USA was involved in a just war against Nazi Germany. Dorothy accepted their conscientious position. She wrote a note to all members in the Catholic Worker houses saying that, provided they continued in the daily responsibility of feeding and sheltering the homeless poor, they would still be regarded as full members of the Catholic Worker Movement. Her own pacifist position remained unmitigated. She believed that to be where the poor are will eventually lead to a purer understanding of the Gospel.

Orthodoxy is tested by orthopraxis. To deny personal hospitality to the poor is to deny the faith. Our love for God is only as strong as our love for poor people.

What I am saying here comes as an affront to those accustomed to negotiate religious terms without ever meeting the actual poor. In fact, *their* reading of the Gospel suggests that they ought never do so. The admonitions of Jesus: 'Let your light shine before men...' and 'Do not parade your good works before men...' have come to refer for them, in the first, to their social peers; and in the second, to the poor. It is sometimes actually suggested that the rich should allow their benefactions to be advertised among their fellows (who will presumably be edified and encouraged to follow suit) but they should remain anonymous to the actual poor people who receive their cast-off goods via some agency. So the rich ought never cross the doormats of the poor, nor the poor cross theirs!

This is a complete inversion of the priorities set by Jesus. The areas of publicity and anonymity have been reversed. Our almsgiving should not be paraded publicly for our fellow rich to see. It is only the poor who should see our embarrassed efforts to meet up with them. When the poor truly experience in their inmost spirit a fidelity shown them by us Christians, a hope for them now as well as forever, and a love for them coming from our hearts, then let that light shine so that together we may glorify our Father in heaven. That is to preach the good news to the poor.

Then again, in our evasion tactics to beat off the Gospel, we develop the knack of metaphorizing the literal, and literalising the metaphor. There is the story of Jesus at the

leading pharisee's banquet. He spoke with a literal directness to his wealthy host, advising him not to invite his friends, brothers, relations and rich neighbours to his parties, but rather the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. As always when meeting the rich, Jesus showed that their wealth cut no ice with him. The same directives apply to us, yet we deftly transpose the unambiguous poor in the story to our own tame metaphorical and 'spiritually' poor. Then the parable Jesus told to the guests becomes converted from a metaphor into a literal blueprint of action, a sturdy rule of politeness for all social occasions. Such theories we devise to avoid table fellowship with those who in reality are the most desirable of friends!

There was once a Religious Order called the Trinitarian Fathers who saw their ultimate vocation in exchanging themselves for slaves, so that each went out into the unknown, never again to share common life with their fellow Trinitarians, but regarding their new life as offering community life to the full. They looked on their fellow religious more as in-laws, relating to each other through their *nearest* brothers and sisters, the most oppressed people of the earth. I find their example a happy one in contrast to so much present-day stress on false community, requiring religious to be meal-mates forever; with the poor outside the gates.

In the dominant world-society, the powerless are deemed to be people who don't matter. A closer scrutiny shows that it matters a great deal to the rich that the poor should remain outside. They are counted on *not* to be counted. The healing actions of Jesus were not just physical cures. They included the removal of forms of social leprosy and they unleashed a dynamism in the poor based on their own faith — these were sufficient cause for the powerful to have him killed. These two factors, his compassion for the socially rejected and his trust in the power of their own faith underlay the personal relationship he had with them. What is of enormous significance is that while he held uncompromisingly to that relationship, he could face the death which resulted from it, knowing that he had nothing to lose.

When Jesus looked upon the poor, he recognised, in the same horizontal line of vision, the face of his Father. He received them gratefully as the Father's gift. Never is the uniqueness of Jesus' power over human power so high-lighted as

in the defiant stance he took when confronting those who would soon bring about his death, with his arms around the poor, saying in effect. 'We are indestructible.'

There are undoubtedly today two competing theologies of the meaning of Church which stem from two equally competing interpretations of the figure of Christ and of the nature of sin. The first places almost no consequence on the social context in which Christ lived. The kind of God he is made out to be leaves him as one with no real choices in life. The figures of power in a Jewish elitist nation and a Roman colonized state are all accidental. They are like quaint drawings on a cardboard stage-set which is no longer needed now, so discarded. What becomes then important is not *when* or *how* Christ came to be killed, but only the fact — in Churchy billboard language — *that* Christ died, and for us all. The only meaning in Christian poverty derives from such a non-historical model. Private morality is the only morality that counts. Human oppression cannot easily be brought into focus as a question of morality, let alone kept in permanent view. So your civic activities are confined to the politics of morality rather than the morality of politics as such. The political lobbying for private moralities rather than the social morality of the political order.

In the radically revised theology of the meaning of Christ, we find the morality of politics his primary concern. Social sin comes up clearly as the first reading of sin. It was social sin, not private sin, that brought death to Christ. The sin of rendering others powerless is the primal sin, that which constitutes the very meaning of sin, the sin of the world. So that racism, sexism and national and social elitism in all their forms emerge as primary targets in all of Christian living as they were for Christ. The existence of poverty betrays a severe breach in God's Covenant and is therefore an insult to God himself. Any so-called Christian spirituality which does not come to grips with this from the start is guilty of privatising and pedanticising and thereby trivialising the Gospel: religious, but spiritually hollow.

By these standards, at least in my own Australia, we Christians have a long way to travel. As I see it, our Catholic schools are continuing to produce our full quota of racists, sexists, capitalists and the war-minded. The aggressive male-dominating syndrome: 'Lay every girl; shoot every

boong; make every kill in business' continues to escape the otherwise vigilant eye of the moralist. That mentality presses down heavily on thousands of girls and boys long before some turn to the feminist and gay movements for support. Yet many a frowning moralist looks at these movements as the cause of social evil rather than the result -- people sinning rather than sinned against.

Oscar Romero, the murdered Archbishop of San Salvador, was different. 'It is, in practice, illegal' he said, 'to be an authentic Christian in our environment .... precisely because the world around us is founded radically on an established disorder before which the mere proclamation of the Gospel is subversive.'

There is a logical link between the attitudes that the poor are already dead and that little children are not yet alive. Both are based on the fallacy that life is no more than worldly power. At this very late hour it is urgent that we realise that the reverse is true -- the powerless hold the key to the world's life. If there is to be a peaceful future for the world, it lies in their hands.

It is in this initiative from the poor and powerless that the real Gospel energy is being released today. In comparison it is hardly worth noting the faltering efforts of Western Christians to make use of their power on behalf of the poor. All around the world the poor are refusing to allow their birthright to be wrested from them -- that human space where their spiritual-cultural heritage can be nurtured, where they can live subsistently and keep renewing the world's resources and where they can give and enjoy each other's welcome -- 'all they have to live on'. That human space is a place of peace. It stands as the direct counterpoint to the power-drive of unrestrained economic growth which is most likely to bring about war. The poor are inviting us to join them in their struggle, to realise that our own liberation is intimately bound up with theirs, so that none of us need ever pay tax to the treasury again. The poor are requiring of us Western Christians vast attitudinal change. If we drag our feet, they may take measures to require behavioural change anyway. It is to be hoped that our faith will recognise here the cutting edge of the Gospel, the only real alternative to the spiral of violence being pursued by the powerful today.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I would like to express my personal thanks and congratulations to Eugene Stockton for his helpful contribution, *The Plight of Catholic Missions in Australia*, (*Nelen Yubu* 27 (1986) 20-29).

Last week in Broome, Bishop Jobst asked me my opinion of the article. My reply was: 'I am amazed that an outsider could form such an accurate view of the situation of the catholic church in the Kimberleys.' Of course, Eugene is something more than 'an outsider', having had a fairly good extended opportunity of direct observation over here.

Nobody, least of all the author in question, is doubting the fact that a great amount of generous effort has been, and is being, expended in the difficult Broome diocese. For us who are immediately engaged in the scene of which he is speaking, to respond to his friendly assessment by saying that he over-looks much that is positive, would be to miss the point and to illustrate well the typical defensive reaction.

None of the genuine reformers of the past would have denied that many useful works were going on in different places and that, if one looked closely, one could discover germinations which held promise. But their task -- not a pleasant one for them, but full of pain and sadness at the hurt they would probably cause to persons dear to them -- was to draw attention to the bleak overall picture and the urgent need of doing something about it.

The one thing I am most in fear of now is that we, the bishop-clergy-religious structure of the catholic north-west, may persist in our not seeing. It has happened before in human history. Cf. Mt 13,14-15.

Yours truly,

Dan O'Donovan

Fitzroy Crossing, WA. 4 July 1986.

## FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Father Wilson is continuing to work around Australia, doing the background survey for his 'PICT' paper on the Church's outreach to Aborigines. The survey is of church workers within the Aboriginal apostolate. The precise focus is the missiology they are working out of. So far he has gathered information at Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Woorabinda, Brisbane, Dubbo, Bourke, Wilcannia and Adelaide, and by the time we go to press should have passed through Perth and be well up in the north-west of WA — if not even back in Sydney!

Before setting out for the west, he also attended the biennial conference of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in Canberra, and then responded to a request from Nungalinga College to present some themes and be a resource person during the annual Orientation Course in Darwin; after which he planned to continue his survey. But the best laid plans ... huge holdups occurred with the NYMU electronic machinery (which produces amongst other things this periodical) when it looked as if the whole caboose could be hurled into the sea, with the secretary after it. However, calm was restored, the machinery is behaving itself, and Father set out once more on his way to distant areas.

Brother John Pye's book, 'The Tiwi Islands', was updated and revised this year and its sales are soaring. This interesting and authentic booklet serves a very valuable purpose in disseminating facts about Bathurst and Melville Islands. No wonder the supply is all out to keep up with the demand. Congratulations, Brother!

Another book which has at long last reached the market place is the translation of Fr E A Worms', *Australian Aboriginal Religions*, produced by NYMU, assisted by a grant from the Bishops of Australia. Some of the comments from Bishops about it are very gratifying: '...I congratulate you on the work you and your collaborators have done to bring the achievements of Father Worms to a wider readership.' '...I am sure that by translating you will earn the thanks not only of anthropologists but of all those who have an interest in our Aboriginal people. I hope that the translation receives the acclaim it deserves.' '...the present opus really brings him [Fr Worms] and his message home pretty forcefully.' All very encouraging statements!

Before our next edition appears, Pope John Paul II will have visited Australia. We trust that his journey will be much blessed and very fruitful.

Fr Peter Robinson msc was host to Fr Wilson for his stop-over in Adelaide. Fr John Fallon msc writes to us of his work at Pularumpi, Melville Island. And Brother John Barrett msc, aged 93 this year, is still as bright as ever and living quietly in Darwin.

Sad news that Fr G (Mick) Saap msc died in July. He will be missed by many admirers, not least the people of Leura parish in the Blue Mountains of NSW where he spent many happy years as Chaplain to the Sisters FDNSC at their convent 'way up on the highest peak of Leura. I used to 'chauffeureuse' him about the district sometimes when I was at home on leave from the Missions. Fr Wilfred Dew msc also died in July this year. He was an avid reader of *Nelen Yubu* and had been in ill health for some time. We commend them both to the care of our dear Lord.

A delightful surprise when my telephone rang to announce Fr Claude Mostowik at the other end! Back from about four years in Rome, he sounded very bright and happy and is at present stationed in Sydney. Welcome home, Father Claude!

You'll be glad to hear I've come to the end of my column for this issue.

Secretary Keren.

## P U B L I C A T I O N

Fr Ernest Ailred Worms, Australian Aboriginal Religions, survey of traditional religion throughout the continent — religious material culture; high spirit beings; initiation; birth, death, funerary rites, human destiny.

German edition, *Australische Eingeborenen Religionen*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1968. Translated by M Wilson, D O'Donovan, M Charlesworth; printed by Spectrum Publications, Richmond, Vic., for Nelen Yubu Missiological Unit, 1986. Pages 231+xvi, soft cover, sewn, available from:

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## S U B S C R I P T I O N S

On your address label will be found a figure set in brackets which indicates the last issue of *Nelen Yubu* for which you have paid. If you are in arrear we would appreciate your bringing your subscription up to date for the current year (nos. 25 - 29). Annual subscription is \$10.00 for four issues, post-free within Australia, but plus \$1.60 p.a. for overseas subscribers. We are not able to send out accounts, so must rely on your co-operation in this matter. We thank those people who have responded to our request in recent issues of *Nelen Yubu*.

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