

# CHRISTMAS BAILOUT?



I've just been reading commentaries on the European economic story in the light of Ireland's bailout. It's sobering stuff. Ireland's gross debt to GDP ratio is in the order of 94%, exceeded by Belgium (110%), Italy (118%) and Greece at 130% (the latter having already been bailed out earlier in the year). Spain and Portugal are looking to be next in the queue for bailouts. Even Germany, France and Britain are a worry with debt ratios of 75%, 84% and 68% respectively. Much of this debt is state debt as governments have sought to guarantee private borrowing through shoring up banks (similar to the South Canterbury Finance story), and encourage "business as usual" investment and consumption.

New Zealand's outlook looks relatively brighter, trailing, as we do, on both the Australian and Chinese economies, which have fared as well as any. Some commentators expect an increase in employment next year while others weigh employer confidence, a relatively high dollar, lower consumer consumption as all pointing to a "double dip" in the

recession. Certainly there's a lot of uncertainty in the air. Meanwhile our national debt soars.

With Christmas approaching, I've been wondering what the baby Jesus story has to say to all this. The claim of Christmas is that God became one of us, that God entered into the uncertainties of our human condition with the purpose of a bailout for a humanity stuck in a sinking ship.

The Bible also asserts that this has huge ramifications for how we live together and even for how we treat the creation which sustains us. It was a risky plan in an empire fraying at the edges and remains so, as global capitalism, which has hitherto delivered unprecedented wealth for many (if not for the majority), also shows signs of wear and tear.

It's difficult to discern what this might look like ten years into the new millennium but it surely has to have something to do with our consumption habits and quest for the satisfying life that consumerism promises. It seems

a strange remedy indeed for our economic ills that proposes more of the same foolishness that has landed us in trouble in the first place.

Over-indulgence in retail therapy points to an unhappy nation (we all know that when depressed we eat and spend more than we should). Self-deception in creating and using credit, and unrealistic economic forecasting with little accountability must also point to a lack of integrity in how we treat one another. It is little wonder then that governments end up pandering to sectional interest groups rather than making the hard decisions necessary for our common good – including the good of our planet and the world's most vulnerable.

It is easy to be pessimistic in all this. Certainly many pundits are. But some travel in hope, just as the wisemen did all those years ago in their unlikely journey. They read astrological charts to find their way. We read indexes and newspaper headlines – some might argue that chicken entrails

## Christmas at St Michael's

### ALL AGE XMAS PAGEANT

WED 15 DEC, 6PM The Tui Choir will be there and the play is guaranteed to be the usual riot.

### 9 LESSONS & CAROLS

SUN 19 DEC, 7PM A Christmas tradition featuring the Lyrica Choir from Kelburn Normal School. All the old favourites will be read and sung, with mince pies and Christmas cheer served afterwards. Suitable for all ages.

### CHRISTMAS EVE

11PM TO MIDNIGHT This will be a high service with a choir, so if candles, bells and smells, an anthem or two, carols and traditional liturgy are your thing this is the place to be.

### CHRISTMAS DAY

9.30AM We'll be celebrating with a combined service, gifts for children.

All events will be held at the church, Upland Road, Kelburn.  
Note there are no services on Boxing Day, which is a Sunday this year.







# Going back to School

*Each week 8 volunteers from St Michaels Parish go back to school – to Kelburn Normal school actually. They only have to be there for an hour each week! What do they do and why do they choose to go?*

*Imagine the excitement on the face of a 6 yr child who gets to read to this ‘adult’ who visits each week: someone who gives them uninterrupted time and lots of encouragement. Two St Mic’s volunteers, Dianna Nobel and Frances Rabone, talk with MiKel News about why they help out in the classroom and their experiences.*

**Mikel News: Tell us why did you volunteer to go back to school?**

**Diana:** Initially I volunteered as I saw it s a way of feeling more a part of the community. I’ve only recently moved to NZ and wanted to find out more about the way things are done here. I thought literacy was something I could help with from a background of my own children’s reading journeys and as a Montessori nursery teacher. So when volunteers were called for through St Michael’s I put my name forward.

**Frances:** I wanted to understand more about education these days so I could relate to my own grandchildren and their schooling. I am also a retired teacher and I write the occasional children’s book so I thought it would be a way to keep up with contemporary things.

**Mikel News: So what happens each week when you go to Kelburn Normal?**

**Diana:** I currently take the same 6 children each week for

15min each and they read with me. They always seem pleased to see me, somebody different perhaps giving one to one attention. I sometimes do ‘fun stuff’ which isn’t possible in a class of twenty plus students. For example today we rope skipped or jumped in the playground seven times chanting b-e-c-a-u-s-e... So there’s a bit of variation but there’s also a structure. The children really respond. It’s about developing each child.

**Mikel News: Going into a classroom might not be everyone’s idea of fun – what is the most enjoyable thing about the School Assistance Programme?**

**Frances:** I enjoy connecting with the children and watching them grow. I work with the year 1 and 2 children and they progress so quickly with their reading at these levels. I enjoy seeing the interesting classroom programmes developed by the teacher, she is amazing.

**Diana:** For me it’s meeting the children and getting to

know them. It’s great seeing the progress they’re making and also observing the children in group times acting out poems or joining in with the big book story - such enthusiasm. We sometimes see each other out in the Kelburn area too and they always have a big smile when they recognise me. It’s rewarding.

**Mikel News: Any unexpected challenges? What would you say to someone who might be interested in being part of the school assist programme?**

**Diana:** I hadn’t fully considered the effect of my English vowel sounds to the children’s NZ ears. We have some laughs over words and spelling from time to time because of my accent.

**Frances:** It is very worthwhile, fun and rewarding. I find it is particularly interesting to be part of that world. If people have the time they should go for it.

## SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS 2010

*Justine McDonald arrived at Kelburn Normal School in 2009. The school continues to develop as she reports...*

As I write this the school year is fast coming to a close, with end of year reports being written and end of year celebrations being planned. Once again it has been a busy year and the school has had plenty of opportunities to celebrate student progress and achievement. National Standards has been a hot topic but has not over shadowed the implementation of our KNS revised curriculum. This is very exciting and is allowing all students to ‘shine’ in their own way.

Our school wide topic was Biodiversity this year and saw students learning from each other,

with the highlight definitely coming in Term 3 when we held an open day and invited parents in to be part of the students Antarctica work. We were also fortunate to be included in the Wellington Zoo Bush Builders programme this year and look forward to the students efforts being published professionally and displayed in our adventure playground and gully areas. As part of the Biodiversity topic the KNS students were invited to plant 800 plants in the new Zealandia car park. It’s great having this facility on our back doorstep.

Our wonderful team of Road Patrol students and parents enjoyed taking part in the annual Road Patrol Awareness parade in central Wellington during the year and being acknowledged for their efforts by being awarded ‘Best Road Patrol Team in Central Wellington’. There are moves afoot by the WCC to slow traffic through Kelburn and if you haven’t already I urge you to sign the online petition aimed at restricting traffic speed past all New Zealand Schools. You can sign up at <http://www.school-speed.org.nz/>

Many of our other groups also experienced success

during the year from being awarded prizes, winning championships through to performing to large overseas crowds! Well done to the orchestra, the drama club, the 75 strong chess club, the Kapa Haka, all four choirs, our netball teams, water polo, touch rugby and all of our special ‘extra’ groups and teams.

The older students broke up the long winter by performing their very own original plays to packed out audiences. While the younger students enjoyed putting on ‘mini class sharing’ for their parents during the year. All students enjoyed participating in the Talent Quest which proved to be a very entertaining evening.

As well as the installation in all classrooms of interactive whiteboards, this term we started two major property developments. The first is a classroom enlargement and outdoor staging area project. This will really boost our arts programme in the school. The second project is the removal of the old swimming pool to make way for a centralised outdoor meeting/picnic area which leads down into the out-



Justine McDonald: Principle Kélburn Normal

door seating opposite the outdoor stage. Last Friday the steel beam arrived at school and was craned into place. This is a very important piece of the structure as it holds the ceiling of Room 14 and the floor of the DP and Principal’s office in place! Work is progressing as expected with this project and is still on track to be completed just before Christmas. Meanwhile music lessons continue to be held in any available space. We are lucky to have such a flexible team of music teachers!

With KNS staff I wish you a merry Christmas and a great new year.



‘Best Road Patrol Team in Central Wellington’



# PLAYCENTRE'S OUTDOOR OVERHAUL



*Playcentre's big focus in 2010 was our outdoor area. The jewel in Kelburn Playcentre's outdoor area, its 30 year old fort, was deemed unsafe and has been taken down. With due ceremony last November, mums and dads and kids gathered to say their farewells.*

The old fort had served generations of Kelburn kids well and it was sad to see it go. Built in 1980 by a Victoria University student team that included Graeme McIndoe, now a Kelburn architect, the fort was certainly in a bit of a state. While some struggled at seeing the fort dismantled, Graeme was, "just glad that it lasted as long as it did".

The good news is the have installed our new PVC curtains creating a great indoor - outdoor sheltered space so the kids can still make use of large equipment and the carpentry table regardless of the weather. Kelburn

Playcentre sends a huge thank you to our local community and business's who over the past year supported the our fundraising events to purchase the curtains.

Dedicated and enthusiastic parents have also been busy in the garden with help from the kids. Crops of tomatoes, cucumbers, pears, beans and lettuce have resulted in tasty treats being prepared for morning tea and lovely spring flowers have been brightening the wet days. To complete the cycle the Playcentre community has been composting its

biodegradable materials. These will soon be dug into the vegetable garden benefiting the next crops.

With the remainder of the outdoor area looking flash it is now the fort's turn. This is going to be a big undertaking and we are looking forward to some good discussions about what will replace the much loved structure and how we will fund it.

We wish you all a safe and Merry Christmas and New Year and look forward to and busy and exciting 2011.



## St Michaels & Kelburn Village Fair

The 2011 St Michael's and Kelburn Village fair will be held on Saturday 19th March. Watch this space for more details. If you would like a stall please email [community@stmichaels.org.nz](mailto:community@stmichaels.org.nz) in the new year.

*Jacque Holbrook*

# JULIETTE

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Ignore  
the  
homeless  
and the  
starving.

—Jesus

Wait a minute!  
That's not what  
Jesus said!

It's time to  
reacquaint  
ourselves with  
Christ's teachings.

DARRYL DREAVER

## Kelburn Butchery

KELBURN VILLAGE  
SHOPS

PHONE 475-8068

CHRISTMAS HAMS - POULTRY ROASTS  
FREE DELIVERY

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# CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

St Michael's (now traditional) all-age Xmas pageant will soon be upon us Wednesday 15th December, 6pm.

This year's production features the usual bevy of angels and shepherds but also and heap of lawyers with opinions (including a Supreme Court judge making a special guest appearance), a district nurse and an assortment of bar patrons.

Plus Christmas cheer will be on offer before the service and a small gift for the young (and not so young) at the end.



## WARM WELCOME AT ST MIC'S

*Everyone is welcome at St. Michael's. A variety of services and programmes reflects the diversity of our parish community.*

There's a warm welcome for everyone at St Mic's. See the advertisement elsewhere in this issue for details of our Christmas season worship.

Also be aware that there will be no worship on Boxing Day (which is a Sunday this year). There will be a 9:30am service only on Sundays throughout January 2011. Ka kite.

**St. Michael and All Angels Day** will be celebrated **26 September**.  
The usual business plus legions of angels in attendance...

## Report on Emergency Preparedness Community Meeting - October

Hilary Tomkins

A good number of locals from Kelburn and Highbury came along to the Kelburn School hall on a chilly wet night in October to learn more about being better prepared for an emergency both as individuals and as a community.

Dan Neely from Wellington Emergency Management office, freshly back from Christchurch, encouraged us to get to know our neighbours so we could support each other in times of an emergency, as well as to be trained as a Civil Defence coordinator. Perhaps you may have already had a visit from a neighbour in your street knocking on your door to introduce themselves to you,

or perhaps you would like to be a 'street coordinator' and help the people in your street to get to know each other?

Summer is a great time to arrange a get together or a street BBQ so you can meet your neighbours and be a community in preparation for caring for each other in the event of a disaster or emergency.

Any groups who would like to also be a 'neighbour watch' type group should get in touch with the new Police Neighbourhood watch coordinator, Li Lan Lim, who can be contacted on [LiLin.Lim@police.govt.nz](mailto:LiLin.Lim@police.govt.nz)



Christchurch Earthquake destruction. Would you have been prepared?  
Photograph courtesy of the DomPost.

## Movement and Music



Friday mornings

10am

at  
St Michaels Church Hall  
Upland Road, Kelburn

bring a koha  
(gold coin)

A singing and playing group followed by coffee and morning tea, for kids between 0 and 5 years old, with their parents and caregivers

Any questions, contact Hilary:  
021474006

