

CONCLUDING....



Sunday 4 October 2020

## Reflection

*Slide 1*

### **A Commendation** for 2020 ***whakarongo mai***

Let us Pray  
Lord of this technical age  
Where so much knowledge is stored on wikipedial  
& human minds left blank  
& hearts bereft  
Stimulate our minds we pray, & refresh us  
with the insights of your word **Amen**

*I prefer "Commendations" to Commandments.... not so distancing....*

My grandfather after whom I'm named was a feisty Irish socialist - *no comparisons please!* He emigrated to Aotearoa NZ where he worked as a seaman. His family including 7yr old Jim my Dad came with him. Ill health took him off sea life, he moved to Wellington & he died at 50. Son Jim didn't have a secondary education – he drove a petrol tanker. So you can imagine my pride when years later at 60 he graduated Master of Theology from the University of Aberdeen and @ 75 PhD from Victoria University.

But my proudest moment with my father came after his death. Slide 2 His tangi was on the Te Maungarongo marae at Ohope – the turangawaewae of the Maori Presbyterian Church. An old old elder from Ngati Kahungungu had travelled over from the Hawkes Bay to offer tribute. He spoke simply **he kororia ki te whakarongo mai** meaning "salute to the one who **LISTENED** to me and my people."

Wow! Dad would have beamed.... You see from a rough & ready background he'd had an old-fashioned but real conversion experience; joined the Baptist Church; gone to the Auckland Bible Training Institute; and became a missionary for the Presbyterian Church. At BTI he'd met Norman Perry, later the first lay Moderator of the Pres Church – they became lifelong mates. Each were strongly influenced by a book on Slide 3 Missionary Principles by Roland Allen. The first Principle was:  
*for the first months of your time with Indigenous people...*

***Listen to them.***

Yes Dad would have beamed alright. And that listening had a profound effect on him and his thinking. He learnt for instance that despite a slogan of the time Christ is NOT above & beyond culture but enhances culture. That it is NOT idolatrous to offer reverence to inanimate objects such as whenua – the land.

Dear people of St A – my **commendation** to you is make **Listening** a priority as you follow The Way of Jesus. Make **Listening** a priority as you interact within our treasured faith community. Make **Listening** a priority as you serve others.

**Yes! Whakarongo mai Listen UP!!**

Do so **NOT** because it's an indigenous thing altho that's also commendable but primarily because

***Listening is a very Jesus thing***

- ✓ He listened to understand their needs
- ✓ He listened before he spoke, before he healed/

Good People **Go and do likewise!** Within this community, with others BUT ALSO WITH YOURSELF. Here are some 2020 things you may do:

1. Listen to **tv"Origins" & tvArtefact"....** you'll learn some special features of Maori and wider Polynesian beginnings of Aotearoa. It's called **Pakehatanga**
2. As a young Hospital Chaplain I was given outstandingly good advice from a Surgeon **Listen carefully to your "patient"....** she's trying to give you your diagnosis. **THAT'S TRUE SPIRITUALLY** And it applies to **you** you don't have to be a 'Minister'
3. Not all listening brings a response let alone feedback. in this case **accept & accompany the silence** It's a gift and a blessing you offer
4. Listen yourself to the still small voice

***You and they will be changed !***

**Slide 4**

Kia ora

Let's be silent