

# WelCom

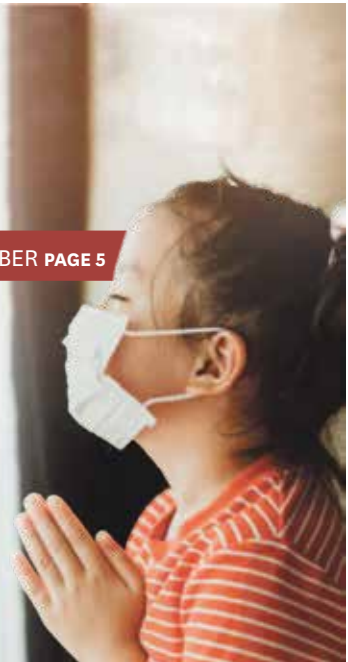
**NauMai**

A newspaper for the Wellington and Palmerston North Catholic Dioceses

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## A Gathering of the Barrett Clan



Famous All Black brothers – Beauden, Scott and Jordie Barrett – joined their extended family in Pungarehu in coastal Taranaki, for the Baptism of Charlotte. Charlotte is the daughter of Kane and his wife Amy Barrett.

Held at the Barrett family's local parish church, St Martin de Tours in Pungarehu, Fr Vui Huong from New Plymouth, baptised Charlotte with her whole family, local parishioners and friends there in support.

Kane is the eldest of Kevin (Smiley) and Robyn Barrett's family of eight children – along with brothers Beauden, Scott, Jordie and Blake and sisters Jenna, Zara and Ella. The Barretts are dairy farmers in Pungarehu.

Photo: Annette Scullion/WelCom

» The Catholic parish of St Martin de Tours, Pungarehu, and Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Joseph's School, Opunake, are featured this month in our series, *He Hikoi Whakaponu: A Journey of Faith*, pp 10 and 11.

## Bishops' Election Statement: 'Time to re-evaluate priorities'

**Mike Fitzsimons**

In their 2020 *Election Statement* – *Whakapuaki Pōti*, published in Te Reo Māori and English, The Catholic Bishops of New Zealand challenge New Zealanders to look beyond old debates and everyday politics to ask what kind of society we want Aotearoa New Zealand to be.

The experience of the unfolding Covid-19 pandemic and economic crisis have taught us many lessons and given us a chance to re-evaluate our priorities, say the bishops.

'It has brought out the best in us as we united to become "a team of five million" to protect those most vulnerable to the virus due to their age or state of health. Protecting life, especially the lives of those most vulnerable – from the beginning to the end of life – should be a cornerstone for our nation now and into the future. Life through all its stages must be treated as a sacred taonga, a sacred treasure.'

The family is the foundation of society and our first community, say the bishops.

'We hope and work for a nation that looks to ensure the sanctity and wellbeing of whānau; that ensures families have time to spend with each other; that supports all families to access

the basic human needs of food, clothing, housing, education and healthcare. We look for a country that addresses the issue of the widening gap between those families who 'have' and those who 'have not'.

**"Rather than thinking about what will benefit each of us personally regarding the election and referendum choices we face, we ask you to pray and discern what will protect the poor and vulnerable and what will uphold the dignity of creation ..."**

'We seek political leaders who will seriously consider the health of all whānau and address the worrying levels of family breakdown, depression, addictions, family violence and suicide. We seek policies that focus on alleviating the stresses within families, stresses that all too often begin with financial struggles. If our whānau are safe and strong then we will also have safe, strong communities: "Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini – our strength is not that of an individual, but that of many".'

The bishops caution against focusing on economic issues at the expense of human and environmental wellbeing. Economics must remain at the service of supporting whānau and society, say the bishops.

'We applaud those businesses, which look to the wellbeing of their staff and their families, which offer just, family-oriented working conditions and job security, and which actively embrace attitudes of social responsibility such as the living wage. We hope for a nation that values the contribution that everyone makes to the wellbeing of our society – a worker in a supermarket, a cleaner, a delivery worker, or a rubbish collector, are essential for the wellbeing of our society and should all be recognised accordingly. We strive to live in ways that will preserve and enhance the wellbeing of the environment that sustains us and that we are called to be caretakers of.'

Several times the bishops' statement references Pope Francis' Encyclical on our care of the earth, *Laudato si'*. The Pope's encyclical urges us to recognise the inter-connectedness that exists between God, humanity and the whole of creation. An approach based on this 'integral ecology' challenges us to broaden our focus of concern and points us towards

a consistent ethic of life – te kahu-o-te-ora – that connects the sacredness of human life with the sacredness of all creation.

The bishops make clear that it is not their role to tell Catholics who to vote for.

'We are called to assist in forming consciences in the light of the Gospel, not to replace them. It is our role to guide people to look to the wellbeing of everyone in our political decision-making – especially the most vulnerable – as well as the wellbeing of our planet.

'Rather than thinking about what will benefit each of us personally regarding the election and referendum choices we face, we ask you to pray and discern what will protect the poor and vulnerable and what will uphold the dignity of creation so that we create a connected future for all, without discarding any of us.'

The bishops' statement also includes guidance on the two referendum questions related to euthanasia and recreational cannabis. (See page 4.)

The full version of the Bishops' 2020 Election Statement is available online at: [tinyurl.com/Bishops-Election-Statement](https://tinyurl.com/Bishops-Election-Statement) or [catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Election-Statement-2020-web.pdf](https://catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Election-Statement-2020-web.pdf)



From the editor

Annette Scullion

As WelCom goes to print, we are just a few weeks away from the 2020 General Election on Saturday 17 October, which also has two referendums. Advance voting starts Saturday 3 October.

The two referendums invite us to vote on: whether the recreational use of cannabis should become legal; and whether the End of Life Choice Act 2019 should come into force, giving people with a terminal illness the option of requesting assisted dying.

While on paper, the referendum voting process involves simply ticking a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’ box, the consequences of each are far reaching. Before voting we are morally obliged to understand the details of the issues.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops urge voters to be well informed. An article about their 2020 Election Statement is featured on p 1. On p 4 we have run in full their guidance on the referendums. Cardinal John’s column on this page provides a deeply compassionate reflection about the privilege of accompanying the dying.

A book well worth reading before voting is *The Final*

*Choice*, recently published by New Zealand journalist Caralise Traves. It seeks to answer the question: ‘End of life suffering: Is assisted dying the answer?’

Rather than providing ‘her’ answer, Caralise interviews, in a series of chapters, the views of various New Zealand commentators and thinkers, all with a specific personal or professional interest in the issue; from David Seymour, Mary Panko and Jack Havill, who support legalising assisted death to the likes of Dr Sinead Donnelly, Professor Rod McLeod and Claire Freeman who are opposed.

The book also canvasses three religious responses to the question from Dr Mustafa Farouk, QSM, Dr David Richmond and Dr John Kleinsman, director of the Nathaniel Centre for Catholic Bioethics.

Caralise’s hope is the different accounts will assist readers to know more, think more, talk more amongst family and friends about the taboo topic of death, be better informed about the End of Life Choice Act, be a little less afraid to look at dying and be more free to live.

The very engaging book does all of these things and is thoroughly worth reading. It is available from all good bookstores.

Like the Good Samaritan, it is a privilege to accompany the dying



+ John A Cardinal Dew  
Archbishop of Wellington  
Archdiocese  
Apostolic Administrator of  
Palmerston North Diocese

Many of us know how precious, and also how difficult, are the hours we sit by the bedside of a loved one at the end of their lives.

Many priests have done this countless times. As a priest I’ve been able to witness moments of love, forgiveness, laughter, remembrance of special memories. I’ve seen words of gratitude and appreciation, I’ve heard long-awaited words of apology, I’ve seen hugs and embraces which express admiration, respect and farewell.

I also know that these are very difficult times for families. Sometimes people are looking at clocks and watches rather than into the eyes of their loved ones. Sometimes family tensions don’t resolve, and family members may disagree about decisions that need to be made. Sometimes the person at the centre feels overlooked and forgotten.

In a few weeks New Zealand will be voting in the referendum on the End of Life Choice Bill. A great deal of words have already been prepared and shared about this legislation. The opposition and concern of disability groups, medical staff, palliative-care providers, and religious leaders have been covered in many aspects of the media. All these people have worked hard and deserve our appreciation.

However, it is still very timely for us in New Zealand that a new document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Samaritanus bonus – The good Samaritan*, offers new thoughts on the care of people at the end of life.

It reminds us that true human compassion is caused not by shortening a person’s life, by causing death, but ‘in embracing the sick, in supporting them in their difficulties, in offering them affection, attention and the means to alleviate the suffering.’

Many of us look to palliative care to assist people at the end of their lives. But as essential as palliative care is to help people overcome pain and physical symptoms at the end of life, *Samaritanus bonus* reminds us that it is loving companionship and accompaniment that is important.

*Palliative care in itself is not enough unless there is someone who ‘remains’ at the bedside of the sick to bear witness to their unique and unrepeatable value.*

**“True human compassion is caused not by shortening a person’s life, by causing death, but ‘in embracing the sick, in supporting them in their difficulties, in offering them affection, attention and the means to alleviate the suffering.”**

Our society isn’t good at recognising the value of human life when people are weak and suffering. When people feel their worth is being judged as being about what they can contribute to society economically or whether they can maintain a certain level of independence or autonomy, it isn’t surprising that they themselves may start to feel worthless or a burden.

But this isn’t how we see or experience illness, disability and suffering, even at the end of life, through the eyes of love and faith. When we really look at a person

with love, and listen to their words with our hearts as well as our ears, and sit fully present at their side, we know that their lives really matter, including the living that happens in their final days, hours and minutes.

Time spent with a dying person benefits those who remain at their side. It can create family time which is unique. Sometimes it heals rifts. Sometimes unspoken words can finally be said.

*Samaritanus bonus* reminds us that ‘human life is the primary common good of society’. If we take someone’s life before God’s time, we will miss out on some very intimate and special moments. Euthanasia or assisted suicide will rob us of deep, intimate moments that we can never get again.

If you are of voting age, please vote ‘No’ in the End of Life Choice Bill referendum. But whatever the outcome of the vote, it is important for us to remember that making something legal doesn’t make it morally good. Whether or not euthanasia is legalised at the General Election, we need to remain at the side of those who are dying, as loving, watching, listening witnesses to the immense value of every moment of every human life.

Our society needs people with compassionate hearts who won’t cross to the other side of the road like the Levite and the Priest in the parable, but will stop and show care like the Good Samaritan. Each of us is called in some way to be the Good Samaritan to another, at some stage of our lives. It is a privilege to accompany the dying.

The new Letter from the Congregataion for the Doctrine of Faith 22 September 2020, ‘*Samaritanus bonus – on the care of persons in the critical and terminal phases of life*’, can be read online at: [press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/09/22/200922a.html](https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/09/22/200922a.html) or: [tinyurl.com/Samaritanus-bonus](https://tinyurl.com/Samaritanus-bonus)

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**Sending articles to WelCom**  
In its mission to communicate about news and events in the Wellington and Palmerston North dioceses, WelCom publishes information, stories and photos received from readers.

The articles should be no longer than 300 words unless by arrangement with the editor. Please send as a MS Word document attached to an email or pasted into an email message. Please include your name, address and day-time phone number. At the editor’s discretion, articles may be edited for length or clarity.

Photos should be in their original format (unedited, uncropped), at least one megabyte (MB) in size and attached to an email as separate photo files – JPEG, TIFF, GIF or bitmap (BMP). Please include names for a caption.

Email to: [welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz)

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*Views and opinions published in WelCom are those of the author and don’t necessarily reflect the policy or position of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.*



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## Religious leaders warn of dangers in poorly drafted End of Life Choice Act

Many of Aotearoa New Zealand’s most prominent religious leaders signed an open letter to voters on September 21, urging caution at the harm the End of Life Choice Act will cause. Their letter was published as an advertisement in *The Herald on Sunday*.

The 37 signatories, including New Zealand Catholic Bishops, say New Zealanders need to be aware of the considerable harm the End of Life Choice Act could do and urge them to vote ‘No’ in the binding referendum at this month’s general election.

Their primary concern is about protecting the most vulnerable and the possible unintended consequences of the Act. They also discuss the lack of safeguards, including not needing to tell a family member, and concerns about the stand-down period.

‘We, the undersigned religious leaders, speak out of our extensive experience of caring for the dying. We know the effectiveness of compassionate end of life palliative care – care that is able to address not just the physical suffering of people who are dying, but also their emotional, spiritual and psychological suffering, as well as that of whānau and friends.

‘The referendum question is not about the desirability of some form of ‘assisted dying’. Rather, we are being asked to vote on a specific piece of legislation – the End of Life Choice Act. The key consideration for all of us is the robustness and safety of this Act. **Our concerns are about the lack of safeguards in the Act and the dangers it would present.**

‘Our opposition to this Act reflects our compassion for those who will experience a wrongful premature death because of the dangers of this Act; in particular those who will feel coerced into an early death, whether because of their own feelings of being a burden or because of overt pressure from others.’

The leaders note in their letter: ‘Even those who favour some form of assisted death have many reasons to Vote NO to this Act. We are simply adding our concerns about how the Act will operate in practice to the expressed concerns of many other New Zealanders.’

The religious leaders’ letter is on the Catholic Bishops’ website at: [www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/0024-Open-Letter-Sept-20-PressPDF4.0.pdf](http://www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/0024-Open-Letter-Sept-20-PressPDF4.0.pdf)

» New Zealand Catholic Bishops, End of Life Choice Act referendum, p 4.



# Young people question politicians on climate change

Jim McAloon

Members of Wellington Archdiocese’s Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission organised a pre-election forum about climate change last month, where young people from the Archdiocese questioned political party representatives about their environmental and climate-change policies.

The forum was held at St Mary’s College Hall, Thorndon, 1 September. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, a limited number of people attended and the forum was live streamed for others to watch live online or later.

Much of the preparation and all the questions to the politicians were in the hands of Wellington Catholic students Xyryll Gayagoy, Joel Tebbs, Lewis Johnson, Morgyn Jakob, Aurélie Bray, and Sithmi Sathruwani.

Representing the political parties were Taylor Arneil, New Zealand First; Debbie Ngarewa-Packer, Māori Party; James Shaw, The Greens; Geoff Simmons, The Opportunities Party; Scott Simpson, National Party; and Angie Warren-Clark, Labour Party.

Cardinal John Dew delivered the opening address, supported by a St Mary’s College waiata group. Dr Areti Metuamate, CEO of Te Kupenga – Catholic Leadership Institute, chaired the discussion.



Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission’s pre-election forum on environment and climate-change (l–r): Areti Metuamate, Taylor Arneil, Debbie Ngarewa-Packer, Hon James Shaw, Geoff Simmons, Hon Scott Simpson, Angie Warren-Clark, Cardinal John Dew, St Mary’s College waiata group.

Photo: Mareta Tana, Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand

Cardinal John reminded everyone that climate change has the most impact on those who do least to cause it, and stressed the importance of thinking beyond a three-year electoral cycle. He urged everyone listening, to bear young people’s commitment in mind on voting day.

The students questioned party representatives on their commitment to:

- education on climate change;
  - reducing agricultural emissions;
  - policies shaped by the Māori values of kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga;
  - supporting the economically disadvantaged;
  - drastically reducing plastic waste; and
  - reforming transport policy.
- The discussion was thoughtful throughout.

James Shaw observed that the student strikes for climate last year were instrumental in the Zero Carbon Act being passed in its final form, and Scott Simpson stressed that young people were educating their elders. Science and ethics met constructively; and there was general agreement about the need to engage people and build consensus, while encouraging significant social and economic change.

The students noted that climate change is an urgent problem and that there is no shortage of information, nor of understanding about what needs to happen. They cited comprehensive reports from entities like the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment and the Productivity Commission.

In closing, Cardinal John, urged politicians to listen to ‘the active, urgent voices of today’s young people...to be very bold’.

The livestreamed election forum is available to view on YouTube at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dpog-Gva3\\_M&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dpog-Gva3_M&feature=youtu.be)

*Jim McAloon is a member of the Archdiocese Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission and Convenor of its Integral Ecology Committee.*

➤ Covid is not just a disease – it’s a symptom of the global environment crisis, pg 14.

# Covid-19 impact on schools and families



Teresa Edwards and Pauline Balm

We have the privilege in our roles – as the Manager (Teresa) and the Development Adviser (Pauline) for the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Palmerston North – to listen to diverse perspectives on many things in the education space. We do not propose to understand everything we are hearing but we understand this – the impact of Covid-19 in our school communities is significant.

It’s complex, and it has meant many of our wonderful principals and teachers are finding themselves stretched – personally, emotionally, spiritually and professionally in

ways that are impacting considerably on their hauora – health and wellbeing.

There us more fragility in our tamariki, staff and whānau with ‘resiliency’ taking on a new meaning. Schools have had a continuous juggle of planning and then altering the school calendar as priorities change. Attendance is being closely monitored as tamariki and whānau grapple with growing uncertainties of Covid-19. Additional conversations have taken place about support for Attendance Due payments as priorities have changed in some families. Schools have supported families with food parcels when required, uniform purchasing, and general pastoral care for all.

### What is helping?

What is helping, is our principals’ relentless focus on the wellbeing of their staff as well as our school Boards, as employers, keeping an eye on principal and staff wellbeing. This means being clear about priorities, being ‘OK’ to let some things slide, and providing wellbeing services such as counselling,

supervision and mental-health support for staff and every decision being aligned to the schools’ shared Vision and Gospel values.

The amazing support of organisations, such as St Vincent de Paul who are a wonderful arm to our schools, helping schools and parish communities is also a great example of the Church in action.

Prayer and reflection time, taken for staff, with a focus on gratitude is very beneficial. The Ignatian Field Hospital Spiritual Exercises have been excellent for this (contact Murray Adams, Palmerston North Spiritual Director: [m.c.adamsfam@xtra.co.nz](mailto:m.c.adamsfam@xtra.co.nz)).

Also beneficial are educators knowing that their concerns for staff, students and families are being listened to, and appropriate responses and resources from the Ministry of Education and the Diocese being provided in a timely and competent manner.

### What can others do to help?

In the Palmerston North Diocese – as with some of the other dioceses – we have

scaled back our formation programme and review schedule. We are accompanying our schools, listening to and responding to their needs. Parishes and schools can reach out, listen and gently support each other. Parents and caregivers can be understanding about expectations of reporting progress and achievement, changes to the school calendar and continue to be the face of gratitude. Planned, national-education initiatives and timelines can be extended while schools navigate their way through this unprecedented point in time.

In our Catholic schools let the focus continue to be – now even more than before – that as Christians we bring peace to others. Not only peace, but also love, kindness, faithfulness and joy.

Amid the coronavirus trials, as Pope Francis says, ‘We must not let hope abandon us. Optimism disappoints, but hope does not.’

“It’s a privilege to care for you and your family during your time of loss.”


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## St Patrick’s College Wellington

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Congratulations to the following students who were awarded Scholarships for Year 9 2021:

- Academic Excellence Entrance Scholarships – **Charles Burns** and **Sean Dimen** from St Benedict’s School, Khandallah.

St Patrick’s College Senior Prizegiving will be held on Tuesday 10 November at 7.30pm in the College hall.



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# Kua oti katoa tātou te paihere – We are all connected

The Catholic Bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand 2020 Election Statement begins with a quotation from Pope Francis’ *Laudato si’*: “Everything is connected. Concern for the environment needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.” In their *2020 Election Statement–Whakapuaki Pōti 2020*, the New Zealand Bishops urge voters to say ‘no’ to the euthanasia referendum. They ask that voters give ‘serious thoughts’ to the effect of cannabis on vulnerable young people when considering the cannabis referendum. The Bishops’ advice about the two referendum questions is reproduced here. The *Nathaniel Report* August 2020 has extensive information about End of Life Choice Act 2019 and the proposed Cannabis Legislation and Control Bill at: [www.nathaniel.org.nz](http://www.nathaniel.org.nz) Further information about both referendum questions is at: [referendums.govt.nz](http://referendums.govt.nz)

## 1. Introduction:

### Referendums with the 2020 General Election

The 2020 General Election presents voters with two referendum questions related to euthanasia and recreational cannabis. The euthanasia-assisted suicide law (End of Life Choice Act 2019) will become the law if a majority of voters support it in the referendum. If a majority of voters support the Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill referendum, the next Government would need to introduce further legislation to legalise recreational cannabis.

Both issues require serious reflection in order to appreciate their complexity and the community impact they will have. The referendum questions presume that you, the voter, have read and reflected on those two pieces of legislation. But we wonder how many people have read the legislation. We raise the question: Is this the best way to determine our future when considering moral questions that will have huge impacts on our communities in the years to come?

An informed decision requires consideration of the economic, social, whanaungatanga-kinship and cultural factors that limit many people’s freedom to choose. Well-intended laws can have significant negative repercussions because of matters not anticipated by the law or because we don’t all have access to the same choices.

## 2. First referendum content:

### End of Life Choice Act Referendum

**Referendum Question: Do you support the End of Life Choice Act 2019 coming into force?**

Facing one’s own death, or walking that journey with a loved one, is challenging. In urging voters to say ‘No’ to the End of Life Choice Act, we speak from the extensive experience of healthcare providers, chaplains, priests and pastoral workers who care daily for the dying and their whānau.

Their experience includes an awareness of people’s vulnerability at the end of life, and the knowledge that quality palliative care can effectively manage physical pain as well as emotional, spiritual and psychological suffering.

We believe that the people most at risk if we legalise euthanasia and assisted suicide are those most vulnerable to the suggestion they would be ‘better off dead’ – our elderly and disabled people who find themselves within the scope of the Act.

Our views on the morality of assisted death are well known. However, the 2020 euthanasia referendum question is not primarily about the morality and desirability of euthanasia or assisted suicide. Rather, it is about the robustness of the End of Life Choice Act 2019 – whether it is “fit for purpose”. The greatest risk posed by the Act is a premature or wrongful death from which there is no return. Therefore, we have to be confident as a society that the Act provides an extremely high safety threshold. As Bishops we believe it fails to meet that threshold.

The key questions to ask yourself before voting on this referendum are: Does the proposed law have adequate safeguards? Can the safeguards be effectively implemented in the society of today? Are there examples of safer and better laws in other countries?

**We offer the following additional points for your consideration:**

The New Zealand law is broader in scope and more liberal than one recently passed in Victoria, Australia, as well as laws in the United States. It will expose much larger numbers of people to the dangers of a premature death, people who are currently well-served by palliative care.

The End of Life Choice Act provides for only one choice – there is no corresponding ‘right’ to request quality palliative care. Recent reports from Canada and the US show that numerous patients choose assisted death for reasons related to a lack of palliative care. This will potentially affect the most socially disadvantaged amongst us, especially those living in areas where quality palliative care is

not accessible. Neither does the Act require that a person first access palliative care when it is available.

Overseas research shows that the demand for euthanasia is not driven by pain but by a range of personal and emotional factors, including the fear of being a burden and the fear of being disabled. These fears reflect negative attitudes towards the elderly and disabled that we know run deep in our society.

Existing New Zealand law already allows people to say ‘no’ to any medical treatment and to receive whatever level of pain relief they need, even to the point of being sedated if that is required. This is not euthanasia, and nobody needs to die in pain.

Key medical groups oppose the Act, including the NZ Medical Association, Hospice NZ, Palliative Care Nurses NZ and palliative medicine doctors. The Medical Association has publicly stated that it will be impossible for doctors or nurses to detect coercion amongst those requesting euthanasia.

Requests for an assisted death are typically driven by depression, something that is also extremely difficult to detect. There is already a shortage of mental-health specialists in New Zealand. The Act does not require a patient to talk about a decision to end their life with a family member or other significant person.

In Canada, what was initially promoted as an important safeguard – limiting assisted death to those facing a ‘foreseeable death’ – has been judged by the Quebec Superior Court to be an obstacle to free choice for people with long-term conditions or disabilities. There is a risk of this kind of judicial widening of the Act happening in New Zealand.

Elder abuse currently affects about 10 per cent of our elderly despite the best efforts to prevent it. Voting ‘Yes’ to euthanasia in this context is dangerous. It is also naïve to think the Act can provide sufficient protection against this risk.

*Promoted by Bishop Patrick Dunn President, NZ Catholic Bishops Conference.*

## 3. Second referendum content

### Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill Referendum

**Referendum Question: Do you support the proposed Cannabis Legalisation and Control Bill?**

The cannabis referendum is about whether or not to legalise recreational cannabis. It is not about medicinal cannabis. Regulations to provide and improve access to quality medicinal cannabis products were passed in April 2020. A 2018 law change already allows terminally ill people to use cannabis for pain relief without being prosecuted.

If a majority of people vote ‘Yes’ in the recreational cannabis referendum then, after the election, the incoming Government ‘can introduce a Bill to Parliament that would legalise and control cannabis’. A majority ‘Yes’ vote will not make recreational cannabis legal without that extra step.

Aotearoa New Zealand has 237 Catholic schools with over 66,000 students. As bishops and as the proprietors of many of those schools, we are keenly aware that our rangatahi, our young people, particularly those still at school, are the group in society most vulnerable to the effects of cannabis. Many school principals have expressed deep reservations about the wisdom of legalising recreational cannabis.

The referendum proposal sets 20 as the minimum age for buying and using cannabis. It seems counter-intuitive to believe that an age limit will stop young people using cannabis if cannabis becomes more easily available in the community. They will likely access it more easily, in the same way that under-18s currently access alcohol, tobacco, and, cannabis; primarily through friends and family.

Given these points, we think people do need to give serious thoughts to the issue, and we hope you will use your vote in an informed way that considers the impact of legalised recreational cannabis on the young and vulnerable in our communities.

*Promoted by Bishop Patrick Dunn President, NZ Catholic Bishops Conference.*

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# Men's One-Day Retreat

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Sat 31st October, 8:30am - 5pm.**

**Theme: "Don't Worry.  
TRUST in JESUS"**

**Retreat Leader is Fr James Lyons**

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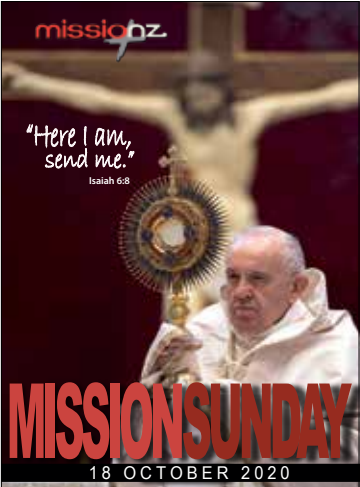


# Mission Sunday

## “Here I am, Send Me” – Is 6:8

Fr Bernard Espiritu SVD

‘We are indeed frightened, disoriented and afraid. Pain and death make us experience our human frailty, but at the same time remind us of our deep desire for life and liberation from evil. In this context, the call to mission, the invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and neighbour presents itself as an opportunity for sharing, service, and intercessory prayer. The mission that God entrusts to each one of us leads us from fear and introspection to a renewed realisation that we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others.’ – Pope Francis



This is part of the Message of Pope Francis for all, for 2020 Mission Sunday, 18 October. Mission gives us purpose and what may be produced by speculations that lead to fear can be overcome by concrete steps done with informed and measured care. What could be a fundamental attitude of a believer?

At the initial surge of Covid-19 in Italy, on 27 March 2020 Pope Francis led a Prayer and Reflection event as he stood amid an empty, dark, and rainy St Peter’s Square in the Vatican. Yet, millions were one with him through various media – television, radio, internet. Call it dramatic – I call it faith-filled. The occasion culminated with Pope Francis blessing the whole city of Rome and the world with the Blessed Sacrament in his hand. It was a moment of hope. And that moment of hope is not a moment

of wishful thinking, but a looking forward to the bright morning after a dark, cold, and bleak night in the presence of God.

The theme of Mission Sunday 2020 is, ‘**Here I am, Send Me**’ (Is 6:8). It comes from the historical book of the Hebrew Scriptures where Isaiah was invited to participate in making real the dream of God for his people. This is Isaiah’s way of declaring his willingness and readiness to encounter the surprises that life offers to create something new with God on his side. It is very much interrelated to the phrase Pope Francis coined at the beginning of his Papacy: **missionary-disciples**. One is called not only to be a follower of Jesus; the baptised needs to be co-missioned to manifest the value of being a Christian – the bearer of Christ!

The 2020 Mission Sunday posters, being circulated in churches and schools, show Pope Francis imparting the Eucharistic Blessing, and the youth and children praying.

Mission Sunday reminds us that ‘prayer, in which God touches and moves our hearts, should make us ever more open to the need of our brothers and sisters for dignity and freedom, as well as our responsibility to care for all creation.’ – Pope Francis.

Prayer is at the heart of our mission. It is our window to the heart of God. May the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of Evangelisation and Comforter of the Afflicted, missionary-disciple of her Son Jesus, continue to intercede for us and sustain us.

Pope Francis’ message for World Mission Sunday 2020 is online at: [tinyurl.com/Mission-Sunday-2020](http://tinyurl.com/Mission-Sunday-2020)

*Fr Bernard Espiritu SVD is the National Director of MissionNZ – the Pontifical Mission Societies in New Zealand.*

Collections and donations from Catholic communities around the world on Mission Sunday go in solidarity and love to support the Church’s missionary work globally and locally in churches, hospitals, schools and vocations to respond to Christ’s call to mission and to help those in need.

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# Kawenata renewed at Pukekaraka

In 1851, Māori in the Otaki area, Ngāti Kapumanawawhiti, invited the Catholic Church to use their land for a mission, and in 1854 gave land for a school as well. This partnership was initially strong, but over many decades it waned. Over the last 5 to 6 years a lot of work has gone into preparing a Kawenata – a Covenant – which would honour the original intent of the givers of the land. That work reached its fulfilment with the signing of the Kawenata on Sunday, July 26, 2020.

The Covenant is symbolised by a mauri, which has two parts that belong together. The part on the left remains at Pukekaraka in the care of Te Ngāti Kapu and the part

on the right will be cared by the Archbishop of Wellington and his Vicar for Māori.

Whenever Cardinal John Dew – or his successors – visit Pukekaraka, both pieces will be brought together so the Kawenata



is remembered at all events.

‘I found the occasion to be very moving and deeply meaningful,’ said Cardinal Jon. In signing the Kawenata and in the symbolism of its mauri we have rediscovered the beauty of relationships – between Ngāti Kapu and the Church of the Archdiocese, between all of us, the relationships we have not just of place, but in our dignity as the daughters and sons of God.’

Cardinal John was also presented with a carved tokotoko as a tribute and symbol of strength and honour. The kōrero about this tokotoko, made from black maire with a single paua inlay in the handle, will be featured in a coming edition of WelCom.

## Covenant renewed at unique place within the Catholic Church

Pā Piripi Cody sm



Signing of the Kawenata by Alex Hakaraia, Trustee for Ngāti Kapu and Cardinal John Dew, Catholic Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Wellington.

Photo: Supplied

The original agreement set up an inalienable relationship. The present Covenant renews the original agreement.

It recalled the partnership established when local Māori invited the Catholic Church to come and live there, at Pukekaraka. It marks the sharing of these lands in ‘perpetuity for the practice of the Faith’.

The original Covenant was signed by tipuna of the local hapū of Ngāti Kapu and Archbishop Redwood for the Archdiocese of Wellington.

This time the signatories were Alex Hakaraia, Trustee for Ngāti Kapu and Cardinal John Dew, Catholic Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Wellington.

Others to sign, on Sunday July 26, included Oriwia Raureti, Chair of the Pukekaraka Marae, Danny Karatea-Goddard, Vicar for Māori in the Archdiocese of Wellington, Monsignor Gerard Burns, Vicar General of the Archdiocese and Fr Alan Roberts, Parish Priest.

All those present on were invited to sign.

A unique aspect of the agreement is that it has a basis in the kaitiakitanga – the Word of God.

The document signed is based on the Covenant between God and God’s people, as presented in Leviticus chapters 25 and 26.

It is in te reo Māori and English.

There was a pōwhiri at the Marae of Hine Nui o Te Ao Katoa, Ōtaki, to welcome Cardinal Dew. Four copies of the Kawenata were signed there.

A taonga to capture the spirit of the Covenant and remind people of its significance was explained.

It is made from matai sarking from the 123-year-old Pukekaraka Mission House.

It is designed, so two pieces to fit together. Each has a stone from the Ōtaki River on it. A carved pattern link the two.

This taonga was later separated into its two parts.

Alex Hakaraia gave one half to Cardinal Dew to take to Wellington, and the other half will be kept by Ngāti Kapu ki Pukekaraka.

When there is a significant meeting to celebrate, share and pray, the two halves will be joined again.

After the signing, the Covenant and taonga were carried to the Church of St Mary’s and solemnly placed on an ancient korowai.

Eucharist took place with Ngāti Kapu and parishioners.

Cardinal John Dew said in his homily, ‘This is a new beginning, an opportunity for all to renew the Mission Pope Francis calls us to, to bring love and justice to our world.’

Parish Priest, Fr Alan Roberts, noted, ‘This Covenant is a promise from the Cardinal to guarantee respect to Ngāti Kapu who the Church will always honour as fellow Kaitiaki (Guardians) of the Word of God.’

He noted that a celebration would take place with a Mass on the Marae later in the year.

Thus the unique place of Pukekaraka within the Catholic Church was renewed.

**“I see the Church as a field hospital after battle.”**  
POPE FRANCIS

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# Pope Francis to sign new encyclical at Assisi

Pope Francis will sign a new encyclical on human fraternity at the tomb of St Francis of Assisi, at the Basilica of Saint Francesco d'Assisi, on October 3, 2020 – the day before the feast of St Francis, 4 October. It will be Pope Francis' third encyclical.



The tomb of St Francis in Assisi, Italy, where Pope Francis will sign his latest encyclical on October 3.

Photo: CNS/Octavio Duran

Mr Matteo Bruni , the director of the Holy See Press Office, said the new encyclical will bear the title *'Fratelli tutti'*, which could be translated as *'Brothers and sisters, all'*, although the Vatican has not yet given the official English translation. The words *'Fratelli tutti'* are from St Francis of Assisi, just as were the words *'Laudato Si'* which the pope chose for his second encyclical.

The title of the encyclical appears in a passage in the Admonitions of St Francis, under number six,

which reads: 'Let us all, brothers, look to the Good Shepherd who suffered the passion of the Cross to save his sheep.'

Pope Francis will celebrate Mass at the tomb of St Francis, and at the end of Mass he will sign the encyclical. Because of the Covid-19

which the coronavirus pandemic is causing great suffering to millions of people in more than 188 countries.

Since the beginning of his papacy, Francis has embraced and celebrated St Francis of Assisi as a model of social justice, particularly when it comes to the topics of poverty, peace and fraternity.

Speaking to journalists after his election to the papacy in 2013, Francis said he first thought of naming himself after the great 13th century saint when, after it was obvious he had won the necessary two-thirds majority vote, Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes, Archbishop Emeritus of Sao Paulo, hugged him and told him, 'Don't forget the poor.'

'Those words came to me: the poor, the poor. Then, right away, thinking of the poor, I thought of Francis of Assisi. Then I thought of all the wars, as the votes were still being counted,' he said at the time, adding that for him, St Francis 'is also the man of peace.'

'That is how the name came into my heart...For me, he is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation,' the pope said, calling St Francis, 'the poor man who wanted a poor church. How I would love a church that is poor and for the poor.'

Sources: America Magazine, Vatican News, Crux

>> *'Upon This Rock I Will Build My Church', tribute to Pope Francis, pg 20.*

# Catholic front-runner for Supreme Court

President Trump has selected Judge Amy Coney Barrett, the favourite candidate of conservatives, to succeed Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and will try to force Senate confirmation before Election Day in a move that would significantly alter the ideological makeup of the Supreme Court for years.

The Catholic mother of seven has been nominated as the candidate to replace US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who died last month aged 87.


Appointed a federal judge in 2017, Barrett was a professor at Notre Dame law school until her nomination was confirmed. As a nominee to the federal bench, Barrett was questioned by Democratic senators on how her Catholic faith would influence her decisions as a judge on cases of abortion and same-sex marriage. Barrett insisted she would uphold the law of the land.

Judge Barrett is known for her conservative religious views and is reportedly a member of the People of Praise charismatic community.



Judge Amy Coney Barrett, President Trump's choice for US Supreme Court.

Photo: Julian Velasco/AFP/ University of Notre Dame



**Pope Francis' Prayer Intention**

During the month of October 2020 Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for evangelisation is:

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# Priests required to break confessional seal

The legislature of the Australian state of Queensland on Tuesday 8 September 2020, has passed a law requiring priests to violate the seal of confession to report known or suspected child sex abuse. Failure to do so will be punished with three years in prison.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane has said such a reporting requirement would 'not make a difference to the safety of young people', and that the bill was based on a 'poor knowledge of how the sacrament actually works in practice'.



Bishop Michael McCarthy says Catholic priests are 'not allowed to break the seal of confession'.

Photo: Supplied/Catholic Church

The previous week the Australian bishops provided the federal government with the Holy See's observations on 12 recommendations of a 2017 report on child sex abuse in the country's institutions. In response to a recommendation regarding the seal of confession and absolution, the Holy See reiterated the inviolability of the seal and that absolution cannot be conditioned on future actions in the external forum.

Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse, which concluded

in 2017, had recommended that it be clarified whether 'information received from a child during the sacrament of reconciliation that they have been sexually abused is covered by the seal of confession' and 'if a person confesses during the sacrament of reconciliation to perpetrating child sexual abuse, absolution can and should be withheld until they report themselves to civil authorities.'

Archbishop Coleridge has also said the law would make priests 'less a servant of God than an agent of the state' and raise 'major questions about religious freedom'.

Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory have also adopted laws forcing priests to violate the confessional seal, while New South Wales and Western Australia have upheld it.

The Holy See told Australia's bishops earlier this year that the seal of confession is inviolable, and that it includes all the sins known from the confession, both of the penitent and others.

The Holy See added that this is the 'long-standing and constant teaching of the Church on the inviolability of the sacramental seal, as something demanded by the nature of the sacrament itself and thus as deriving from Divine Law.'

It added that the confessor 'certainly may, and indeed in certain cases should, encourage a victim to seek help outside the confessional or, when appropriate, to report an instance of abuse to the authorities.'

Source: CNA



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# Bethlehem University faces financial crisis

Bethlehem University, the first university established in Palestine and the only Catholic University in the Holy Land, faces major challenges to achieve financial sustainability, says Bethlehem University Vice Chancellor, Brother Peter Bray FSC.

Bethlehem University was established in 1973 and originated from the desire of Pope Paul VI to do something to help the Palestinian people. It is open to students of all faith traditions but the majority of its students are Muslim.

In a letter to supporters Brother Peter, who is a New Zealander well-known in Catholic education circles here, said the university faced a financial crisis that was triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic but not caused by it.

‘The challenge we are facing is predominantly a financial one. We were faced with a situation where we did not have any reserves left to provide funding for salaries in the current 2020–2021 academic year. In a very conservative draft budget, we were some \$1.5 million short of what we needed.



Peter Bray, FSC, EdD, Vice Chancellor Bethlehem University.

The shortfall was due to a number of factors including an increase in the salaries bill, the cessation of the \$300,000 annual contribution from the Palestinian Authority, cutbacks from major donors and the impact of Covid-19 on other donors and on the ability of local families to pay tuition fees.

‘There have been no pilgrims since early March due to Covid-19 with the result there have been



Bethlehem University Campus.

Photos: Bethlehem University

no pilgrims here since then,’ said Brother Peter.

‘With so many of the families of our students being involved in the hospitality industry, many of those families have had no funds coming into the home since then. That of course has made it difficult for them to pay their tuition, which we needed for salaries.’

With 75 per cent of the operating budget going on salaries and benefits, the university embarked on a process of restructuring, which has met with resistance from the union and staff, culminating in strike action. Intense discussions between the deans of the faculties and the union finally led to a deal, whereby the restructuring was put on hold and up to 15 per cent of employees’ salaries was withheld by the administration to be repaid within 10 years.

‘This loan from employees buys time and will mean we have the cash to get through this academic year, but it does not solve the underlying problem,’ said Brother Peter.

Brother Peter said he is very reluctant to have a major restructuring and is very conscious of the impact it would have on staff at the university with the unemployment situation in Bethlehem being so

dire. He acknowledged however a restructuring may be necessary.

‘We have started a process of review with external consultants, which will provide us with the opportunity to step back and seek to find better ways to organise, run, teach, assess, and generally serve the young people entrusted to us.

‘I am hoping this will provide a turning point in the way we respond to our wonderful students and set us up to be more sustainable.’

Brother Peter said Covid-19 had had a direct impact on the teaching and learning environment at Bethlehem University. There have been no students on campus since 5 March and the Fall semester is now online.

‘One of the big disappointments is that the 978 new students, the largest in our history, will be introduced to Bethlehem University online. This is not the best introduction and does not give them a good feel for the place.’

Peter ended his letter with an expression of thanks for the interest and support that Bethlehem University has received over many years, and asked supporters ‘to keep us in your prayers as we navigate these uncharted waters.’

## Pope calls for peaceful protests

Addressing the wave of protests that have swept around the world this summer [Northern Hemisphere], some of which have turned violent, the Pope has appealed for peaceful demonstrations and for those fuelled by hate to let go and move toward forgiveness and reconciliation. But he also appealed to those in authority to listen to their voice and urged pastors to encourage dialogue.

‘While I encourage the protestors to present their requests in a peaceful way, without falling into the temptation of aggressiveness and violence, I appeal to all those who have public and governing responsibility to listen to the voice of their citizens,’ he said, urging them to meet the ‘just aspirations’ of protestors while ensuring ‘full respect of human rights and civil liberties.’

## Return to public Masses ‘necessary and urgent’

Cardinal Robert Sarah of Guinea, Prefect of the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship, says it is ‘necessary and urgent’ to return to public Masses as soon as anti-Covid-19 measures permit. The Vatican’s top official for liturgy has urged Catholic bishops around the world not to let religious worship be relegated to a priority level below ‘recreational activities’ or treated as just another public gathering. Sarah

said that although the Catholic Church should co-operate with civil authorities and adopt protocols to protect the safety of the faithful, ‘liturgical norms are not matters on which civil authorities can legislate, but only the competent ecclesiastical authorities’. He also insisted that broadcast and livestreamed Masses are useful but are no replacement for being physically present.

## Brazilian Catholics mark annual ‘Cry of the Excluded’

The fight against poverty and social inequalities, as well as harsh criticism of President Jair Bolsonaro’s handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, dictated this year’s ‘Cry of the Excluded’ protests. Despite the ongoing pandemic, several cities had live demonstrations in September to mark the annual event, sponsored by the Brazilian Bishops’ Conference. The Bishops’ Letter to Catholics says: ‘We are in difficult times. The coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) has already killed thousands of people; thousands of families are suffering from having lost loved ones. Unfortunately, there is an omission on the part of the Brazilian government, unwillingness to resolve health issues.’ This year’s motto was ‘Enough of misery, prejudice and repression! We want work, land, housing and participation!’

Protests were held in at least 15 of the 27 Brazilian states, and many dioceses held virtual



A man sits inside his dwelling in Mato Grosso, Brazil, August 28, 2020. ‘Enough of misery, prejudice and repression! We want work, land, housing and participation!’ was the theme of this year’s Cry of the Excluded, sponsored by the Brazilian Bishops’ Conference.

Photo: CNS

events to mark the occasion, already in its 26th year. Protesters also participated in religious celebrations, held meetings with the homeless, distributed food baskets and hygiene materials and planted trees.



## National Manager Mission Integration St John of God Hauora Trust

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- Demonstrated ability to develop the leadership abilities of senior leaders and managers to align with, and promote, organisational Mission, Vision and Values.
- Demonstrated understanding and application of key theological principles to all aspects of Mission aligned leadership.

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# General Manager praised for pastoral approach

Emma Dodsworth

Tony Murphy, longstanding General Manager of the Diocese of Palmerston North, has retired after 18 years in the role.

At a farewell function in July, Tony was recognised for the outstanding professional and personal qualities he brought to the role, and the pastoral approach that was his hallmark.

Monsignor Brian Walsh, long-time Administrator of the Cathedral Parish, said that Tony's foremost quality has been his availability and his care and support for people across the diocese.

'If people were struggling in their roles, be it priests, principals or anyone in the diocese, Tony would often personally reach out to them and offer his support, take them out for a meal or a drink – things that were outside of his job description.'

Monsignor Walsh said Tony had gained the respect and admiration of countless people, both within the diocese of Palmerston North and the wider church of New Zealand as well as the wider community. He said Tony had been a source of strength for the diocese over the last few years 'which had been a particularly difficult time for the diocese.'

'... You, Tony, have led us through thick and thin with enormous cost to yourself both in time and energy, particularly leading up to and after Bishop Charles' resignation. For this we will always be grateful.'

Over the years Tony's role expanded. He became involved in several national committees, including the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) Finance Committee. Cardinal John Dew, Vice-President

of the NZCBC, said that Tony has always been talked about with the highest respect.

'Tony was often asked to step up if they had a particular project to do, and every time he said yes so generously and so willingly,' said Cardinal John.



Mons Brian Walsh pays tribute to Tony Murphy at his retirement gathering in Palmerston North.

Tony was diagnosed with cancer earlier in the year and made the decision to step down from his general management role in the diocese.

Bishop Peter Cullinane, who was Bishop of Palmerston North when Tony was employed, paid tribute to the way Tony has walked his journey since receiving his diagnosis.

'The way you've continued to meet the needs of the diocese, and even participated in the long-term planning for the future of the diocese beyond your time – you've given us an inspiring and beautiful example of living by faith, he said. 'Be assured that every one of us walks the journey with you in our prayers.'

In his farewell speech, Tony acknowledged the countless people he has worked with including clergy, principals and school staff,

diocesan staff, and members of various boards and committees.

'I've really enjoyed building relationships with you – your contribution to me and my role here has been significant,' he said. 'To you all: thank you most sincerely for everything you have done for me.'



Tony Murphy (centre) talking with Liam Greer (l) and Tony Lenton (r).

Photos: Supplied

As well as his major church responsibilities, Tony has also been very involved in the local community. He spent a decade as chairperson of Manawatu Rugby Union, and since 2016 has been a trustee for the Manawatu Community Trust, a not-for-profit organisation that offers affordable housing for pensioners and disabled.

## Sr Rita's Jubilee

Carmel Cole rndm

At St Joseph's Church in Dannevirke, on August 15 – a traditional Jubilee date for the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions – Sr Rita Snelgar rndm celebrated her Diamond Jubilee of 70 years of profession.

It was a beautiful sunny day and the Dannevirke community honoured Sr Rita's jubilee in grand style. Fr Vince Onesi was the main celebrant and was joined by Fr Michael McVerry sm for the joyous celebration recounting Rita's faithful service for 70 years.

Rita was professed in Christchurch in 1950 and began her teaching years in primary schools in Hamilton, Morrinsville, Panmure and New Plymouth. She was principal in Huntly, Melville and Hamilton. In the 1960s Rita moved into teaching secondary students at Sacred Heart Colleges in Hamilton and New Plymouth. As well as teaching Rita has been involved in many other areas of pastoral care, including teaching at Mt Eden Prison, parish work in Turangi, and through her move to Dannevirke 19 years ago.



Sr Rita receives a gift of flowers from parishioner Kevin Barrow on behalf of the parish.

Photo: Supplied

Rita has touched the lives of many people where she has lived and in return she has been loved and cared for by the people who have become part of her life.

Mission Sisters made the journey from Wellington in the south and Hamilton in the north to be with Rita for the celebration.

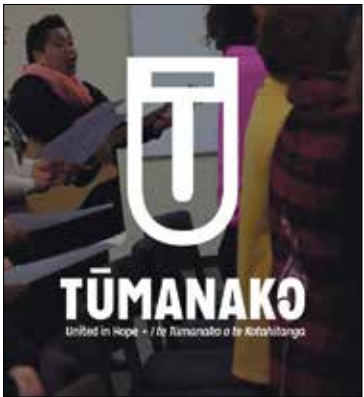
Carmel Cole rndm, is Province Leader, Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, Aotearoa-New Zealand and Samoa.

## I te Tūmanako o te Kotahitanga – United in Hope

The Palmerston North Diocese launched a new online pastoral initiative in July called: Tūmanako or I te Tūmanako o te Kotahitanga – United in Hope.

Through tūmanako – hope – the website aims to look back to where the diocesan community has come from, marking its 40th year as a diocese and exploring where to from now among local and global challenges.

The new web initiative aims to provide articles, videos and resources for people across the Diocese to be 'United in Hope' and to celebrate unity as people of God



with hope – in Christ, in faith, in love and in gifts that are given. [www.tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz](http://www.tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz)



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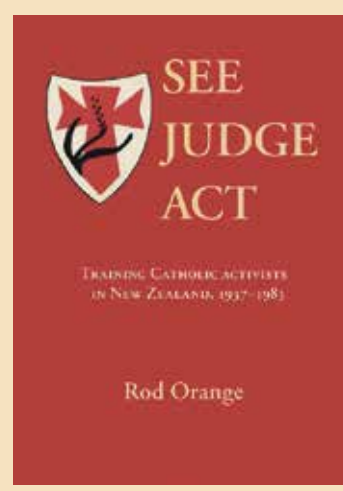
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## New Film Underway

Filming is underway for a new documentary celebrating 70 years of the Presentation Sisters in New Zealand – ‘*The Furthest Lantern*’.

The Presentation Order of nuns was founded by Venerable Nano Nagle, whose vision was to provide a sound Catholic education for children, especially young girls and the down-trodden of eighteenth century Ireland. The first five Presentation Sisters in New Zealand arrived in January 1951 and set up a school at St Michael’s, Taita, in the ‘baby-booming’ Hutt Valley.

Filmmaker Paul Davidson, who recently completed the award-winning ‘*A Test of Faith*’ about the rebuild of St Mary of the Angels Church in Wellington, was one of their first students. He remembers fondly the strict but thorough early education the nuns gave their pupils. But the biggest influence on him personally was the music they brought with them. ‘There were no *waiata* in those days,’ says Paul. ‘It was all passionate Irish hymns and ballads – and I can still sing them all today!’

A number of nuns and past pupils have already been interviewed for the documentary, with more to come. A re-creation has also been filmed of the 1950s’ railway turntable at Taita, where St Michael’s children would help turn the huge steam locomotives around.

Another special part of the film features well-known writer Joy Cowley reading a poem relating to the closure of the old St Michael’s convent in 1995. ‘It was a joy – both literally and figuratively – to have her come on board for the project’ says Paul. ‘We’re very proud that such a deeply spiritual person would support us in this special way.’

Fund-raising to complete the filming and post-production of the documentary is continuing. Full details of the project, and an opportunity to donate, can be found at the PledgeMe website at: [www.pledgeme.co.nz/projects/6595-the-furthest-lantern-documentary-film](http://www.pledgeme.co.nz/projects/6595-the-furthest-lantern-documentary-film)



1. Filming with Presentation Sister Noreen McGrath.
2. Film director Paul Davidson with Joy Cowley and past St Michael’s deputy principal Paul Irvine.
3. The Railway Children: re-creating 1950s’ Taita for the new documentary.

Photos: Barbara Gibb

## Spotlight on modern slavery

Sr Francine McGovern sm

Talitha Kum is a network of sisters, brothers and lay people that raises awareness and acts against human trafficking and slavery around the world. Talitha Kum Aotearoa New Zealand was established in 2012.

The group invited Julianne Hickey and Joanne Viernes of Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand to speak at a public meeting about how economic structures permit modern slavery. The meeting, held at St Joseph’s School Hall, Upper Hutt, on September 1, discussed where exploitation might occur locally and how to recognise and report any concerns.

Exploitative scenarios of temporary migrant workers and international students were discussed. The audience was told that industry sectors where exploitation might occur included construction, sex work, hospitality, illicit drug trade, dairy, horticulture, maritime, landlords, as well as the homestay industry. Covid-19 has meant some people on temporary work visas and ship workers are also at risk of exploitation.

A number of cases of migrant worker exploitation in New Zealand have been widely publicised. In 2019 an investigation into telecommunications company, Chorus, resulted in them blacklisting 38 sub-contracting companies to stamp out migrant exploitation among its suppliers. In July this year, a man living in Hastings was found guilty of 10 charges in human trafficking and 13 charges in dealing in slaves.

We can support migrant workers by engaging with them, listening to their stories and finding out more about their situations. The Caritas booklet, ‘*Stand up for what’s right – supporting migrant workers*’, provides useful information and includes migrant-worker experiences within the Archdiocese of Wellington.

If you are aware of or suspect someone has been trafficked, call:

- Police on 105 or 111 (in an emergency) or go online to [105.police.govt.nz](http://105.police.govt.nz)
  - Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111 or fill out a form at [crimestoppers-NZ.org](http://crimestoppers-NZ.org)
- To report worker exploitation call: Employment New Zealand on 0800 20 90 20.

## CSS appoints new chaplains

### Hospital Chaplain



Catholic Social Services has appointed **Kate Sanders O’Connor** as the second Catholic Chaplain for Wellington Hospital. Kate has studied theology and has worked as a Music Therapist. Kate also has several years’ experience in pastoral and youth ministry.

### Prison Chaplain



**Falefou Sio** has been appointed as the new Catholic Prison Chaplain for Rimutaka and Arohata Prisons. Falefou has worked in mental health and is very involved in the Catholic community. He serves on the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council and is a volunteer with the Samoan Chaplaincy.

# Parish and Vinnies collaborate during Covid-19

Tina Quidilla and Annette Bridgman

Covid-19 has brought opportunities, inspiration and new insights for St Vincent de Paul Society’s Holy Trinity Eastern Suburbs Conference in Wellington. These have helped new and existing clients, through collaboration and coordination between parish, Conference members and Vinnie’s staff in Newtown.

With the onset of Level 4 lockdown in March, our

Conference used client lists, parish office referrals of elderly and isolated parishioners, Vinnies social worker referrals and Conference-member knowledge to identify 180 clients to check on.

We used members, associates and prospective members to check-in through phone calls and assess specific needs such as food supply, clothing or child/baby needs, bedding, advocacy, or on-going check-up calls.

Overall there was positive feedback with Vinnies seen as representatives of a caring parish.

We identified nine households needing weekly food parcels, which were delivered by Vinnies vans from nearby Newtown. These services continued into Alert Levels 3 and 2, and sometimes by Conference members.

As parishioners heard about our combined initiative, more food, household items and money were donated to help. Under Level 1, one of our members was able to take families shopping for their children who needed school items and clothing.

Also during Level 1, an elderly

parishioner living alone and in financial hardship rang the parish office for help. Our Conference purchased a new microwave; the Vinnies social worker provided a new bed and dining furniture; members provided new bedding; and a referral was made to the parish priest about receiving communion.

The most effective services require coordination to fulfil a range of needs and require more than one person or group to achieve the best outcomes. Covid-19 has given us an

opportunity to showcase the value of our parish office staff, priests, parishioners, our Conference members and Vinnies Welfare Centre staff working together. This has been inspiring for all involved.

*Tina Quidilla and Annette Bridgman are members of Holy Trinity Eastern Suburbs Conference, St Vincent de Paul Society, Wellington.*

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## Okato Subdivision – expressions of interest

The parish property committee of The Catholic Parish of New Plymouth – Te Parihi Katorika ki Ngāmotu, has advised parishioners of an opportunity soon to be presented to the market.

According to the parish newsletter, 30 August 2020, ‘The block opposite St Patrick’s in Okato (see scheme plan) has been identified as surplus to parish requirements and will be offered for sale as residential lots. Currently the land is grazed, and returns are minimal.

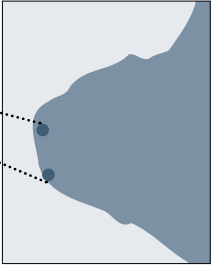
‘As part of our strategy to make our property assets work better for us and to achieve the wider development goals of the parish, the proceeds from the sale of the land will be added to our cash reserves to help fund the building of the new presbytery and the development of a revitalised parish centre at St Joseph’s.

‘Please register your interest by emailing [manager@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:manager@catholicparishnp.nz) and information will be sent to you as it becomes available.’





# He Hīkoi Whakapon



Our journey of faith this month visits the rural parish of Pungarehu and Opunake, home for several farming settlements and marae at the foothills of Mt Taranaki, on Taranaki's west coast. Pungarehu (ash) and neighbouring Rahotu (long for the sun) are on Surf Highway 45, about 40km south of New Plymouth and 5km in from the coastline. Parihaka Pā is located in Pungarehu. Opunake (prow of a canoe), 23km further south, is the local dairy industry centre and popular for its rocky surf beaches of volcanic black sand. The area was the site of conflict between Māori and British troops over land disputes, confiscations and Crown sovereignty in the 1860s and the 1881 military invasion of Parihaka Pā. The parish was served for many decades by resident priests and sisters from Ireland, New Zealand, and more recently priests from India and the Philippines. Today the parish is attended by priests from New Plymouth. Parishioners share their stories with WelCom.

## BRIEF PARISH HISTORY

**1852:** Fr Jean Pezant sm first Catholic priest to visit Taranaki province, 53 Catholics.  
**1865:** Fr Rolland sm, sole Taranaki priest, visited Māori and European settlers along Coast Road via Okato and Opunake.  
**1866:** First Mass in Opunake.  
**1881:** Māori Mission established at Okato by Society of Mary. St Patrick's Church.  
**1884:** Fr Mulvihill, pp South Taranaki, oversaw St Patrick's Church build, Opunake.  
**1889:** Archbishop Redwood established coastline parish from Oeo Rd in south to north of Okato. Fr Cognet sm of Okato Māori Mission, pp.  
**1901:** Sisters of Missions introduced; school in church, 36 children.  
**1903:** Fr Cognet moved to Opunake; St Patrick's presbytery built. New convent opened by Archbishop Redwood.  
**1909:** Fr Louis Menard pp, initiated build of St Martin de Tours, Pungarehu. Built 1911.  
**1915:** Rev James Kelly, pp, began fundraising for new Opunake church.  
**1917:** Fr Doolaghty, pp, fundraised for school, added to convent, increased new church fund, developed churches at Pungarehu and Okato.  
**1923:** Archbishop O'Shea opened new school; Fr Kennedy pp, visited parishioners throughout extensive parish and state schools for catechism classes; first communion and confirmation classes at Convent.  
**1924:** Frederick de Jersey Clere created plans for new, large gothic church in Opunake.  
**1925:** Archbishop O'Shea blessed and opened new Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, 600 attended.  
**1932:** St Martin de Tours Church, separate parish. 1933, Rev Dr James Kelly pp; presbytery built next to church.  
**1935:** Fr Francis Vernon Douglas curate at Opunake. Joined Columban Missionary Society in Philippines. Killed by Japanese WW2 occupation, 1943.  
**1939:** Fr Eugene Carmine pp initiated several Catholic societies. Strong interest in Māori and learned te reo, won plaudits from local tangata whenua.  
**1940:** Fr Wall and Fr During established Māori Mission in South Opunake, Mass and Catholic instruction at Oeo Marae. Continued until 1950. Masses shifted to Pihama Hall. Edwards family, descendants of Hone Pihama, paramount chief of area in late 1800s, ensured local people had opportunity to attend Mass regularly at Oeo Marae. Many of his descendants brought up as Catholics.  
**1945:** Fr Barr Brown pp developed Convent rugby ground; school frequently won McLeod Shield.  
**1947:** Fire destroyed Okato Māori Mission house; Mission based temporarily at Pungarehu, then Waitara.  
**1952:** Fr Uhlenberg, pp, fundraised across Taranaki parishes for Francis Douglas Memorial College; first Chaplain to FDMC in 1958.  
**1955:** Pungarehu-Okato branch of Catholic Women's League formed.  
**1961:** Diamond Jubilee of Sisters in Opunake. School roll 175.  
**1963:** Opunake church demolished due to unsound construction and building materials.  
**1965:** Archbishop McKeefry blessed and opened new Our Lady Star of the Sea Church; new presbytery 1969.  
**1973:** New St Martin de Tours Church opened and blessed by Cardinal McKeefry.  
**1980:** Convent demolished; smaller residence built for remaining sisters. Chapel donated to Orimupiko Marae, Eltham Rd, Opunake.  
**1987:** Fr Brian Walsh appointed pp until 1992.  
**1996:** Changes in Taranaki population, shortage of priests led to closure of Pungarehu parish; absorbed into Opunake parish; Okato into New Plymouth.  
**1999:** Opunake parish centennial.

## St Martin de Tours, Pungarehu

### Kevin Barrett, Parish Chair

The original St Martin de Tours Church in Pungarehu was built in 1911. The existing church building was built in 1973. In the late 1800s it was mainly the Irish who were the first settlers to populate the Taranaki coast from the other side of the world, as well as Swiss, Dutch and Polish settlers who made Pungarehu area their home. They brought with them their strong Catholic faith and a desire to look for a better life to raise their families, while developing the coastal land and turning it into productive pastures. In the last 10 years the congregation has been bolstered by the Filipino community who have moved here for the same reasons.

Today, four generations of different nationalities have made St Martin's their place of worship. Sunday was a day of rest and to celebrate the Mass. After Mass we would go as a family and visit our cousins. Times have changed. In the 70s there were between 90 to 120 parishioners at Mass on a Sunday – now we have around 20 faithful.

I can remember the Catholic Women's League movement that would have euchre card-playing, fund-raiser evenings in the 70s when I was about 10. They were great evenings and very popular. We had four Family Passionist Groups set up in the late 90s, which had monthly outings, also really popular.

Our resident priest would celebrate Mass in Pungarehu and St Patrick's in nearby Okato, 10 minutes north, alternating 8am and



**The Pungarehu/Okato Rosary Group started on August 19, 1992, and have since had 28 years of weekly gatherings to pray the Rosary. The group meet every Tuesday morning at a member's home and finish the morning with coffee and fellowship.**

## Rev Dr James Joseph Kelly: Irish parish priest



It is recorded that James Kelly, 'regarded himself first as an Irishman, then a Catholic, then a Christian'.

The controversial clergyman was born on 11 November 1887 in New Ross, County Wexford, Ireland. He was sent to Rome for seminary training where he excelled, staying to complete a doctorate in philosophy. Rev Dr Kelly PHD moved to New Zealand in 1913 and among his first appointments were as parish priest at Opunake. The presbytery was an Academia for priests to visit for learned discussions. In February 1917 he was appointed editor of the weekly Catholic newspaper, *The New Zealand Tablet*. This gave the outspoken academic and

passionate Irish nationalist the opportunity to promote his strong anti-British opinions that were notably controversial in early 20th century New Zealand. Rev James Kelly resigned from *The Tablet* in 1931 and returned to Taranaki. He spent the final years of his life as the parish priest at Pungarehu; he died on 1 February 1939 in Hawera Hospital. His funeral service was held at St Martin de Tours in Pungarehu. The concelebrated Memorial Mass was the largest gathering of clergy in the history of the Taranaki coast. Dr James Kelly was buried near his 'beloved Mountain', in the historic Okato cemetery.

Source: *Te Ara, Encyclopedia of New Zealand*

*Rev Dr James Kelly penned this poem, right, on the eve of his departure as parish priest of Opunake, 1917, inspired by his impressions of the mountain above the parish area he served.*



**St Martin de Tours Church, Pungarehu – parish church to generations of coastal Taranaki Catholic families.**



**Fr Vui Hoang celebrates Mass with assistance from Kevin Barrett, Eucharistic Minister and Parish Chair.**

10am every other week up into the late 90s. Then our resident priest was moved to Opunake, 23km further south along the coast, so Okato was served from New Plymouth. Pungarehu would have a mid-week Mass on a Wednesday and an 8.30am Mass on a Sunday. As we know, the decline in priest numbers along with declining attendances at Masses has led us to the situation we have today where parishes have been amalgamated and some churches not having a Sunday Mass. We were very fortunate to have had two priests from India to serve our parish needs until recently – Fr Vijay Dung Dung and Fr Sanjay Pradhan. Fr Sanjay went back to India two years ago. Now our parish has been amalgamated with New Plymouth and we have an 8.30am Mass every second week alternating with St Patrick's, Okato, usually celebrated by Fr Vui Hoang or Fr Tom Lawn who come down from New Plymouth.

### Opunake

*The moon looks down on the mountain  
Silent over the sea.  
And a host of faint, far voice  
Seen whispering to me.  
Somewhere in the bygone ages  
The heart of the mountain broke,  
And the face of the moon was hidden  
In a veil of fire and smoke.  
A hundred rivers murmuring  
Go down to their ocean graves,  
On beds that were ploughed by the lava  
Long cooled by the restless waves.  
The ghost of primeval forests  
Keep guard above the plain,  
And the night winds passing through them  
Are tremulous with pain.  
The moon looks down on the mountain  
Now clad in a shroud of snow,  
For the fires of the dead volcano  
Have long since cease to glow.*



# Opunake: A Journey of Faith

## Our Lady Star of the Sea, Opunake

Paul Bourke

As a child I just remember a bulldozer wincing over the front wall of old church to make way for a clean site for building our current church. This was 55 years ago. Priests who have served our congregation over the years have included Fr Kavanagh, Fr Kenny, Fr Garty, Fr Walsh, Fr Rickard, Fr Rice, Fr Crowley, Fr Casey, Fr Vijay. The convent next door was a large two-story building that boarded girls, and St Joseph's School was and remains further along the road. Around 1980 Jim Fearer, Stan Barrett and John Pool organised a substantial working bee to dismantle the convent to build a nice home for our remaining four nuns. I can still see Jim standing on top of a stepladder swinging a sledgehammer to bring big timber down! This was long before health and safety regulations came along. That beautiful Irish woman, Sr Veronica Keaveney rndm, was our last nun to leave Opunake and now lives happily at a retirement village in New Plymouth. She helped in the school right up until she left for the city in 2018. Sr Veronica was born in County Roscommon in Ireland and entered the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions in 1952. Three months after her first profession in 1955 she was missioned to New Zealand and, apart from a few years teaching in the aboriginal missions in Western Australia, has been here ever since. Some years ago, we were up



in the remote Kimberley region of north western Australia and going for a morning stroll along a seldom-used vehicle track. We came across an elderly Aboriginal man who used to be a teacher's aide to Sister back in the 90s. Strong Irish families built the parish but with today's smaller families and the move to the urban areas for employment and retirement we have fewer parishioners here. Active parishioners have sadly dwindled in numbers and from three Masses a weekend, we are now down to one on Sunday. However, the Filipino community are relative newcomers to our parish, being employed in farming and industry sectors, and we are also now seeing a drift away from the more urban environment back to more relaxed smaller-town living, especially in this new Covid environment. We are very grateful to be serviced from New Plymouth by Frs Tom Lawn and Vui Hoang.

*Paul Bourke is a parishioner and farmer in Opunake, who has done a lot to help set up support groups for farmers dealing with mental health.*

**Photos:**  
1. Our Lady Star of the Sea Church.  
2 & 3. Fr Vui celebrates Mass.  
4. Reading by Donna Mellow.  
5. Some of Opunake's longstanding parishioners meeting after Mass.  
Photos: Annette Scullion; Carol Lamain

## St Joseph's School

Clare Andersen-Gardiner, DRS

St Joseph's School in Opunake is nestled under Mt Taranaki, along Surf Highway 45. We have a dedicated staff of 11, including support staff and currently 86 children from Yrs 0 to 8. The Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions founded the school in 1901. The Sisters taught here for many years and maintained a vibrant presence in the parish and wider community until 2018. Sr Veronica Keaveney was the last Mission Sister to reside in the Whitcombe Road convent. Our school values of Faith, Integrity, Humility, Respect and Excellence, came out of the Mission Sisters' charism. The school offers students a



Growing vegetables to share.

wealth of artistic, sporting, cultural and academic opportunities and we have tutors coming into the school to teach music and Kapa Haka. Our biennial school productions are keenly anticipated, with Yrs 7 and 8 students taking lead roles. Students are involved in stewardship within the community, such as helping with planting along the walkway and with riparian zones. The children have been



Celebrating First Holy Communion. Photos: Supplied

learning to grow vegetables in our school gardens to share with the community and we regularly support Opunake Foodbank with donations of food. Our choir, led by Stephanie van Vuuren, regularly entertains residents at the local Rest Home. Although we no longer have a resident priest our school is lucky to have fortnightly Friday Masses

with Fr Vui Hoang or Fr Tom Lawn. Being a rural community, our Agriculture Day is an annual highlight and includes fundraising for our Mission Sisters. Sport is a big part of life on the Taranaki coast and at St Joseph's, with the school fielding netball, rugby, basketball and touch rugby teams. Recently our students have been delighted with the installation of a bike track around the outside of the school fields, thanks to the hard work of many of our parents. Our wonderful Board of Trustees and PTA work hard to support our students. St Joseph's School is proud of its history and the charism on which we were founded, and these along with the faith and supportive community will enhance its future.

### Something in the Soil

Some of the many famous and high-achieving New Zealanders who share a connection with Opunake and Pungarehu include Lord Ernest Rutherford, who split the atom and won the Nobel Prize for chemistry; Olympic gold medallist Sir Peter Snell; former prime minister Jim Bolger ONZ; All Blacks Graham Mourie, Mark Robinson, Roger Urbahn, Don Clarke, Carl Hayman and the Barrett brothers – Beauden, Jordie and Scott; New Zealand cricketer Matthew Walker; New Zealand cyclist Glen Chadwick; opera singer Dame Malvina Major ONZ; writer Jacqueline Sturm; and Catholic nun, school principal and historian, Mary St Domitille Hickey, who in 1925 was awarded a doctorate in literature, the first woman in New Zealand to achieve this distinction.

## The parish of my childhood

Karen MacLean

I feel blessed to call Our Lady Star of the Sea, Opunake, the parish of my childhood. All the important steps on my faith journey were celebrated in this special place in coastal Taranaki. I celebrated baptism, reconciliation, first communion, confirmation and marriage within the four walls of the church. There was a strong sense of community within this rural parish while I was growing up. Families got involved in parish life and never needed to be encouraged to stay after Mass to get to know each other better or to support each other through challenging times.

There were a lot of farming families, including mine. My family – the Mullins – were known for being the last to arrive and the last to leave. The Mullin family have lived in and around Opunake since the 1930s when my grandad Arthur Mullin and many of his brothers and sisters immigrated here from Ireland. Arthur, my beautiful Irish grandad felt blessed to be part of this special parish. My dad, Bernie Mullin and my mother Margaret are still actively involved. My family always sat on the left-hand side in the church, three rows back from the organ. I remember as a child watching the birds flying in and out of the wall outside and visible through the blue stained-glass window behind the altar. Then



The glass window above choir loft depicts Our Lady facing out to sea.

as I returned from communion, I remember admiring the stunning glass window above the choir loft, that depicts Our Lady facing out to sea, and which can be seen from all around Opunake.

I remember the priests who helped build my faith. Fr Garty, Fr Crowley, Fr Walsh and Fr Casey all made an impact on my life as a child in this parish. Fr Crowley used to call in to our family farm for a cup

of tea and some company. Fr Walsh helped set up a youth group in the early 90s where us teenagers had a lot of fun and laughs. In 2001 Fr Casey married my husband and I. After leaving school I trained as a teacher and have taught at several Catholic schools in New Plymouth. I love being part of the special character of Catholic school life. My husband, Craig and I are active members of the Catholic parish of New Plymouth. My childhood at Our Lady Star of the Sea has certainly shaped my life journey. I still feel a strong sense of belonging when I walk into our church. I enjoy taking my own children to Mass there and take care to sit in our family seat. Our Lady Star of the Sea holds a special place in my heart.



# Young Catholics

## Blessing of Tomokanga and Facilities at St Peter’s College

Kevin Shore

Kia ora koutou,

On September 10, St Peter’s College, Palmerston North, hosted a special event to re-dedicate our Tomokanga (entrance carving), which was recently restored by carver Craig Kawana at Massey University, and to bless our new Administration Centre and acknowledge the completion of a long cycle of re-building at the College.



Tomokanga re-dedicated at St Peter’s College on a special morning.  
Photo: Supplied

The origins of our Tomokanga began in 1998 when Pā Doug Mohi, Pā Wi Kaipuke, Craig Kawana, Rex Begley, Tari Matenga and then-principal Ron O’Leary created the concepts for a beautiful Tomokanga to sit at the entrance of our College. The carving incorporated

many integral elements of our Catholic faith as well as key Māori missionaries of different iwi who were responsible for spreading the Word of God in Aotearoa. The Tomokanga is uniquely Rangitāne and of our place. It incorporates the concept of ngā hau e whā (the four winds) to highlight that St Peter’s students come from, and go into, all parts of Aotearoa. Cardinal John Dew was very gracious in agreeing to come up to Palmerston North to participate in the re-dedication

ceremony of the Tomokanga and to lead the blessing liturgy in the new Administration Centre. Wiremu Te AweAwe and Hohepa Isacc-Sharland of Rangitāne facilitated the ceremony starting at 5.30am on a very damp morning, followed by a whakatau

in the whārenui before breakfast. It was a beautiful occasion where love, connection and partnership were significant themes in the mihi. The College is very grateful to Craig Kawana for restoring our wonderful taonga and for the generosity of the Rangitāne iwi. After breakfast, the blessing liturgy started with unveiling the ‘Legacy Wall’. It was created by builders who saved a section of an exterior wall from one of the College’s oldest original buildings, demolished in the rebuild. The wall section was plastered and affixed with the College’s original foundation stones from 1974. Cardinal John Dew blessed the Legacy Wall and completed the Blessing Liturgy in the Administration Centre. The beautiful liturgy involved scripture reading, reflections from Cardinal John and Mons Brian Walsh, waiata, prayers of the faithful and student participation. Actively involved in the liturgy were Mons Brian, Mons David Bell, Deacon Danny Karatea-Goddard, Vicar for Māori Pastoral Care, head students Lily-Rose Fraser and Jared Jackson, Br Doug Dawick representing the Marist Brothers, past-principal David Olivier, Yr 13 student Klem McJarrow-Keller and Korty Wilson our Kaiwhakarite Māori Apostolate. I thank all of our guests, whānau, parents, past and current board members, staff and students who all contributed to making this a special morning in our College life and a day to be proud of our legacy in Catholic education. Ngā mihi nui.

## School community welcome teacher into Church

Lisa Small

On Wednesday 2 September, St Bernard’s School were lucky to be part of a special day as junior teacher, Lisa Stratford, was welcomed into the Catholic Church, being Confirmed and making her First Communion. Lay pastoral leader Joe Green had prepared Lisa for the sacraments and Fr Doug Shepherd celebrated the Mass for her. The children led the Mass and the school community provided a shared lunch for Lisa’s Communion breakfast. Lisa said, ‘It was a truly memorable day and to share it with the community of St Bernard’s School couldn’t have been more perfect. In the words of St Mother Teresa, “Let us always meet each



Teacher Lisa Stratford (r) made her First Communion and Confirmation with the support of St Bernard’s School community. Lisa is pictured with her friend Jane Regan, DRS, Sacred Heart Cathedral School. Photo: Supplied

other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.”

Lisa Small is Principal, St Bernard’s School, Brooklyn.

## Matariki at St Anthony’s

Marg Hyslop

At St Anthony’s School, Pahiatua, we had a big turn out of school families, parish and Marae whānau for our Matariki celebrations on the evening of July 23. Our Yrs 1–8 students and a team of helpers, including staff, parents, parishioners and Board of Trustee members, made delicious soup to share at the start of the celebrations. The evening involved prayer, waiata, soup and bread, consultative ideas, and a lantern display, made by students in class the week before. The large sky lanterns didn’t fly quite as well as expected due to the wind conditions. But it was a beautiful evening where the students and school whānau enjoyed being together in celebration. The event embraced a number of Catholic Social Teachings, especially Subsidiarity Mana Whakahere – empowering our community where everyone was able to have a say. Marg Hyslop is Principal, St Anthony’s School, Pahiatua.



St Anthony’s School students enjoyed celebrating Matariki with their community in Pahiatua. Photo: Supplied



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# Rangatahi Katorika

## St Mary's College Young Entrepreneurs

### Kiwiana

Orla Moss

Kia Ora! We are Kiwiana, a group of Year 12 students at St Mary's College taking part in the Young Enterprise Scheme. This scheme has allowed us to set up and run a real business and bring our product, which we have designed and are passionate about, to market.

Through research and surveys, we have discovered that many New Zealanders don't know enough about our wonderful home, Aotearoa, and there is a real knowledge gap. For example, less than a third of New Zealanders know when the Treaty of Waitangi – Te Tiriti o Waitangi – was signed!

We have created a board game to educate people about New Zealand in an interactive and enjoyable way. Our game, Kiwiana, is a combination of Snakes and Ladders and Trivial Pursuit but with a distinctly New Zealand twist. There are four categories of questions: history, sport, culture and nature.

We believe the younger generation



Kiwiana team (l-r): Francesca Walsh, Orla Moss, Ciara Fenwick, Kyla Dey and Alyx Honeyman. Photo: Supplied

in particular should be more knowledgeable about Aotearoa as they are the future of our country, which is why our game is aimed at primary school-aged children and their families. However, Kiwiana is a game suitable for all ages. Our entertaining and inclusive game helps fulfil our vision, 'To help New Zealand children to feel proud and knowledgeable about the foundations of Aotearoa.'

Our mission is to help this occur throughout New Zealand.

We are a Social Enterprise and so we will donate all our profits to 'Belong Aotearoa', an organisation that works with immigrants and refugees to help them feel more at home in New Zealand.

Continue to be a part of our journey! Contact us through our email: [stmwkiwiana@gmail.com](mailto:stmwkiwiana@gmail.com) or website: [kiwiana.mystorbie.com](http://kiwiana.mystorbie.com) or follow us on our social media, Kiwiana Board-Game on Facebook or Instagram, [@kiwiana.board.game](https://www.instagram.com/kiwiana.board.game)

### Up in the Clouds

Jennifer Connolly

Our innovative group of Year 12 students is on a mission to encourage children to dream big for the future! Our Enterprise Scheme, 'Up in the Clouds' is selling environmentally-friendly ballpoint pens to raise funds to purchase inspirational books for disadvantaged children in the Hutt Valley and Wellington.

The pens are inscribed with inspirational words, such as 'to be a creator', 'to be a leader', and 'to be an adventurer', to represent and encourage dreams among young children. Some pens have been left blank for children to write their own dreams on! The pens are packaged sustainably with recycled kraft paper decorated inside with children's drawings about dreams.

Profits made from sales of the pens will be used to provide



St Mary's 'Up in the Clouds' team. Photo: Supplied

young children with books, such as 'Taking the Lead' by David Hill, a new book about Jacinda Ardern, as well as other books from the series including 'Hero of the Sea' a book about Sir Peter Blake.

'We thought about what inspired us, and that's the tale of someone else's success! So we hope to inspire

all children to dream big!' says Marisa Raymond, Up in the Clouds CEO.

For enquiries or if you'd like to place an order for the pens please email: [up.in.the.clouds.nonprofit@gmail.com](mailto:up.in.the.clouds.nonprofit@gmail.com) or go to: <https://up-in-the-clouds.mystorbie.com/?mode=live>

## Mass Readers of the Future

Joan Woods

Students at St Francis Xavier School, Tawa, recently had great success at the Interschool Scripture Reading Competition, held at Our Lady of Kāpiti School, Paraparaumu. Our school are all extremely proud of our students who represented us.

Each year seven schools in the Kapi Mana area hold a Scripture Reading Competition for children in Years 5 and 6 reading in English and for reading in Māori and Samoan.

Children are provided with a selection of Bible texts they prepare to read as if reading in Church.

St Francis Xavier School came first in the Māori and Samoan sections, first in the Year 5 and second in the Year 6 English sections.

Congratulations to Meleane 1st in Māori, Deajah 1st in Samoan, Kenta 1st in Year 5 English and Jethro 2nd in Year 6 English. It is an amazing success.

Our students were so excited with their success and considerable credit has to go to our teachers for preparing them so well.

Joan Woods is Principal, St Francis Xavier School, Tawa.



Congratulations to (l-r) Deajah, Meleane, Kenta and Jethro, with their teacher and Director of Religious Studies, MC Peters, for their 'amazing' success at this year's Kapi Mana Interschool Scripture Reading competition. Photo: Supplied



Cullinane College student, Victoria Arrowsmith, has once more had a short story published in the Young New Zealand Writers' book. Photo: Supplied

## Student writer gains national attention

Sue Seconi

Whanganui's Cullinane College Yr 10 student, Victoria Arrowsmith, has again had a short story published in the Young New Zealand Writers' book. The annual competition invites writers from across the country to submit stories and the best 30 are assembled into a book – this year called 'Scary Tales'.

'It's the academic equivalent of Victoria being selected as one of our sports students for a New Zealand rep team,' said Principal Justin Harper.

Victoria's 1,500-word story, 'The Awakening' is about a woman called Tamzin who can no longer ignore her subconscious voice to address the places in her life that aren't at peace. It's time to mend her broken history.

Victoria says she knew at primary school sports weren't her 'thing' and found in the written word an avenue to let her imaginative mind run wild. Her parents always encouraged her to read and write, she says.

'I like to write about emotional-type experiences that pull at the heart strings. To find the right words I may browse other books but once I get them everything else comes naturally.'

Victoria wants to become a fulltime writer when she leaves school.

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# Pope urges respect for Paris climate accord, says ‘creation is groaning’

Speaking from the Vatican on September 1, 2020, Pope Francis urged nations to fight global warming according to the 2015 Paris climate accord. Modern society has pushed the planet beyond its limits and the time to fix a climate emergency was running out, he said. ‘Our constant demand for growth and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting the natural world. Forests are leached, topsoil

erodes, fields fail, deserts advance, seas acidify and storms intensify. Creation is groaning!’ Pope Francis made his call in a message on the day Christian Churches mark the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. Pope Francis said biodiversity loss, climate disasters, and the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the poor and vulnerable were all a ‘wake-up

call’ in the face of our rampant greed and consumption. ‘We need to do everything in our capacity to limit global average temperature rise under the threshold of 1.5°C enshrined in the Paris Climate Agreement, for going beyond that will prove catastrophic, especially for poor communities around the world,’ he said.

# Covid is not just a disease – it’s a symptom of the global environment crisis

We must not squander this wake-up call. We must take action now to avert a climate catastrophe, write **Dr Mike Joy** and **Dr Catherine Knight** of the Better Futures Forum, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington ([bff.org.nz](http://bff.org.nz)).



Dr Mike Joy and Dr Catherine Knight.

Many New Zealanders will likely be feeling very uneasy about the resurgence of the coronavirus in our community. Just when we thought we were out of the woods, the threat of this pandemic is again very real. But as a colleague of ours recently quipped, ‘We are not out of the woods, because we have destroyed all the woods!’ Because at the root of the pandemic is the unprecedented destruction of indigenous forests, rapid urbanisation and population growth, bringing wildlife and human activities into constant and dangerous proximity and making wildlife-to-human transmission of new diseases increasingly likely. We have been warned repeatedly that the Covid pandemic, like climate change, the global biodiversity catastrophe and many other ecological and social crises, are all symptoms of our exceedance of planetary boundaries. The tens of thousands of scientists in the Alliance of World Scientists ([scientistswarning.forestry.oregonstate.edu](http://scientistswarning.forestry.oregonstate.edu)) couldn’t have made it more explicit with their blunt admonition: ‘If the world doesn’t act soon, there will be catastrophic biodiversity loss and untold amounts of human misery’. Well-respected UK environmentalist and author Sir Jonathan Porritt, who has spent much of his life cajoling

politicians and industry leaders to take action to the protect the environment, is now warning that the window of opportunity to avert humankind from catastrophic climate change is fast closing; he says the time for polite persuasion is over – civil disobedience may be the only means to spur our political leaders into action quickly enough.

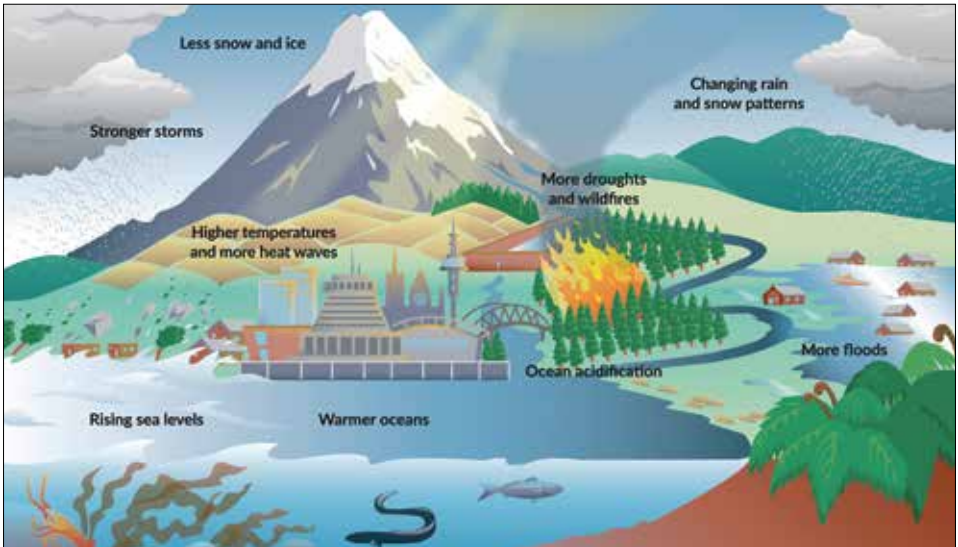
grappling with the unprecedented experience of lock-down. For the first time in many New Zealanders’ lives, we experienced overnight how different life could be. We saw the opportunity – to not go back to ‘normal’ after the crisis was over. Some may accuse us of being radical in our quest for fundamental change. But we would argue the contrary; it is the way we are currently

act now to avert the climate and ecological catastrophes we face, we have proposed a number of actions that can be taken immediately to take us towards a better future, including legislation requiring all government bodies or publicly-owned enterprises to meet zero carbon targets, the protection of our best food-producing land and central government direction for achieving walkable cities.

In a recent survey of Aotearoa youth ([youth19.ac.nz/publications](http://youth19.ac.nz/publications)) anxiety around climate change was a prevalent theme. Many young people see the future as bleak and feel that their generation is inheriting a broken world. They also expressed the sense that older generations had created a mess and were leaving it to young people to find solutions. Many of these young people stated they wanted action for a brighter future, including immediate action to address climate change.

There will be those that say: ‘But even if New Zealand steps up and does its bit, it is all pointless unless the rest of the world does it too’. We say, just look at the recognition that our government’s handling of the coronavirus pandemic has garnered across the globe. Imagine if we could do the same by tackling the biggest existential threat that we are likely to face in any of our lifetimes – and the rest of the world said ‘If New Zealand can do it, we can too’.

We have an election coming up. Let’s demand a brighter future. Not in a few decades. Not in a few years – but now.



From the August 2020 National Climate Change Risk Assessment, an infographic showing the effects of climate change on New Zealand – many of which are now unavoidable. Image: Ministry for the Environment

Right now the Covid pandemic is foremost in everyone’s minds, but it is crucial we realise that as bad as it seems now, Covid is just a gentle warning. Much worse will come if we fail to heed this warning and make fundamental changes in the way we live. The pandemic is just one facet of a wicked set of problems all potentially devastating but with a common cause. All these converging crises stem from humankind having gone through a period of unprecedented growth powered by a one-off fossil fuel bonanza, based on the false conviction that we can have limitless growth. We have outstripped all the natural limits, and for many reasons this will not and cannot continue. We either accept this and manage the change, or it will be forced on us in with more ecological disasters and pandemics.

The Better Futures Forum was founded earlier this year, just as the country was

living – our over-consumption of non-renewable resources and our huge ecological and energy footprints – that is radical, but not in a good way. We don’t want to return to the ‘old normal’ – we want to prosper in a world where we live within planetary boundaries and working to restore the damage of the past. This cannot be achieved by small, incremental changes. We need fundamental, system-wide change in the way we live and interact with the world. Our manifesto sets out how we must act immediately to transition to a climate-neutral, zero-waste economy, in which our land, water and oceans are protected and restored. We must create an equitable society that prioritises wellbeing over monetary wealth. We make proposals across all areas of our mission: including the economy, Te Tiriti, transport and urban planning, land use and energy. In recognition of the fact that we must

*The Better Futures Forum manifesto – ‘Towards a More Resilient Aotearoa’ can be viewed at: [bfforgnz.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/bff-manifesto.pdf](http://bfforgnz.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/bff-manifesto.pdf)*

*Dr Mike Joy is a freshwater ecologist, widely respected for his sustained advocacy for the environment. He is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Governance and Policy Studies, University of Victoria, Wellington.*

*Dr Catherine Knight is a policy professional at KHM Consulting and an environmental historian. She is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute for Governance and Policy*

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Youth strikers gather in London to protest against the government’s lack of action on the climate crisis. Photo: Getty Images



The **Survivors Network** of those **Abused** by **Priests** (SNAP) Aotearoa-New Zealand is an **independent**, grassroots, non-binary peer-support network among victims and survivors of clergy, religious and institutional abuse.

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**Tel: 021 118 1043**  
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# Catholics Thinking

## Creation, the Universe and Ecological Conversion

**Sr Patricia Powell rsm** of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea, spoke about creation and ecological conversion at the Australasia Catholic Press Association conference in her hometown of Bathurst, NSW, September 2019. Coinciding with The Season of Creation, 1 September–4 October, Patricia's presentation is republished in two parts: Part 1 was in last month's WelCom; and the concluding **Part 2** is below.

The first experience I would identify as significant for my own personal journey towards ecological conversion or the shift in consciousness that it involves, was back in the 1960s when I was teaching secondary school in Orange, NSW. It is 50 years this year [2019] since a human being first walked on the surface of the moon. Crammed into the community room at the Orange Convent, over 100 spell-bound students and I watched the adventure unfold on a grainy TV picture. The focus of our celebration this year has been man's achievement. But perhaps even more importantly, this achievement gave us a new perspective on our planet Earth – a new image to ignite our imagination. The astronauts coined a phrase to describe the transformation of consciousness this new perspective gave them. They called it 'The overview effect'. Here is what some of them had to say when they saw Earth from space.

*'We came all this way to explore the moon, and the most important thing is that we discovered the earth.'* – William Anders, Apollo Astronaut.

*'From space I saw Earth – indescribably beautiful with the scars of national boundaries gone.'* – Muhanned Ahmed Farzis Syria.

*'The first day or so, we all pointed to our countries. The third or fourth day we were pointing to our continents. By the fifth day we were aware of only one Earth.'* – Sultan Bin Salman al-Saud, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

*'The view of the Earth from the Moon fascinated me – a small disk, 240,000 miles away. Raging nationalistic interests, famines, wars, pestilence don't show from that distance.'* – Frank Borman, Commander of Apollo 8.

*'For the first time in my life I saw the horizon as a curved line. It was accentuated by a thin seam of dark blue light – our atmosphere. Obviously this was not the ocean of air I had been told it was so many times in my life. I was terrified by its fragile appearance.'* Ulf Merbold, ESA Astronaut.

**“We can no longer think of Earth merely as a collection of nations.”**

That now iconic image of Earth from the moon – that blue and white jewel suspended in the blackness of space – reinforces the view that Earth is one organic whole. We can no longer think of Earth merely as a collection of nations. Weather patterns, ocean currents, feedback loops that balance temperature variations, tectonic plate activity of the continents – these can't be controlled by national border security. This image of Earth altered my world view forever but I am still grappling with the practical implications of this knowledge.

The second significant experience in my ecological conversion or shift in consciousness came in the 1980s when I was appointed to Dubbo in response to a request from the Wiradjuri Elders for Sisters to assist Aboriginal people access educational opportunities made available by the Whitlam Government. These years in Dubbo were the also the years Aboriginal Australians were actively engaged in the struggle for land rights.

I was entirely out of my comfort zone in land rights marches, and protests at Parliament House in Canberra. But I was committed to the people I was serving and the causes they espoused. And this particular cause immersed me in their felt connectedness and spiritual relationship to land.

Associated with the Land-rights Movement was the setting up of Land Councils, funded by the Federal Government. The neighbouring Barkandji Land Councils pooled their money and bought a sheep station called Winteriga on the banks of the Darling River. This was a momentous occasion and called for celebration. Like all Aboriginal people, the Barkandji maintained a deep connection to their traditional land. So this was a spiritual as well as a legal affirmation of that relationship.

Sr Miriam and I joined a convoy of cars, which set out from communities all around the Western area arriving at Winteriga just on nightfall. We shared a festive meal and then set about pitching camp for the night. We had brought our tent, but to our dismay, we realised we had left our tent pegs behind. So we slept on top of the tent rather than inside it. Oh happy accident!

Looking up at the night sky, the stars seemed to envelope us. I lost all sense of orientation in terms of whether I was looking up or out or down at the stars. They were so close, I had the urge to reach out and grasp a handful. I felt totally immersed in the Milky Way, not just an objective on-looker.

A world view does not depend entirely on mental constructs. It is also informed by how we feel about what we know. Traditional Aboriginal people organised their societies and relationships on the basis of their felt connection with the natural world. There is an urgent need for us post-modern human beings, to reinvent ourselves and our societies with a feel for how our planet actually functions, and a commitment to working with its finely balanced systems and within its limits and capacities. That would be a respectful relationship with creation. We can't be in right relationship unless we know and can appreciate what is before our eyes, whether we are speaking about another person or the planet itself.

**“There is an urgent need for us post-modern human beings, to reinvent ourselves and our societies with a feel for how our planet actually functions, and a commitment to working with its finely balanced systems and within its limits and capacities. That would be a respectful relationship with creation.”**



**Sr Patricia Powell resm, at Rahamim, Ecological Centre, Bathurst, was awarded an Order of Australia(OAM) Medal in 2018, in recognition for services to the Catholic Church in Australia and Diocese of Bathurst.**

Photo: Jacinta Carroll, Western Advocate

My third significant experience was in Canada at the end of the 1980s. I was on sabbatical. The primary focus of my studies was to deepen my understanding and experience of my own Catholic spiritual tradition. But I also hoped to be able to communicate with my Aboriginal friends more meaningfully at a spiritual level, across our cultural divide. One of the courses I enrolled in was called eco-spirituality, which was an introduction to Catholic teaching about creation and the natural world down through the ages. My time span for this, of course, was the time span of Christianity – two thousand years. I could never have anticipated finding myself in a time zone that reached back 13.7 billion years to what is popularly called the 'Big Bang'. But that is what happened. This is when I was introduced to the New Universe Story emerging out of the discoveries of Western science. As I reflected on the scientific data, a new way of looking at the world and understanding reality was becoming something I could not avoid taking into account.

The following examples are by no means exhaustive.

*The Universe is expanding. We used to think it was static and unchanging. But that is not what has been discovered. Scientists, with the help of the Hubble Telescope, have been able to see and measure the speed of galaxies moving away from each other in every direction. Run this process backwards, and the age of the universe can be calculated: 13.7 billion years. The way this knowledge impacts our world view is to challenge political and religious assumptions and dogmas we thought were beyond question. If reality is a process, at what point can we be sure we have nailed something down forever? Are there any absolutes?*

*Life is evolving by means of a process that involves chance and probability. We used to think that the human was of a completely different order from other life forms. But all living organisms store genetic information using the same molecules – DNA and RNA. Written in the genetic code of these molecules is compelling evidence of the shared ancestry of all living things, both animal and plant. We are all kin and every part of creation has*

*intrinsic value – not just for its usefulness to us. That information has the potential to modify the way we relate to the rest of creation. Moreover, all life functions within eco-systems. To destroy one part of the eco-system has repercussions throughout the eco-system. Is it possible we also share a spiritual connection that has reached a complexity and subtlety of expression in the human species? That we are more connected than separate?*

*The chemical elements in our bodies are found throughout the known universe. We are literally made of stardust, while at the same time we have emerged out of the dynamics that have shaped Earth. We had no idea that other planets and stars were composed of the same chemical elements and molecules as Earth. We had no way of knowing that the universe was as big as it is, or that Earth began as a bit of debris left over from an exploding star on the outer edge of the Orion Arm of the Milky Way Galaxy five billion years ago. Our concepts of space and time have been enlarged beyond anything we imagined and both space and time continue to expand with the expansion of the universe. When asked if he believed in God, Einstein replied 'Your God is too small'. Does our theology do justice to the God of the Universe?*

As a woman who brings the lens of faith to all reality, my automatic reaction to this new scientific information was, 'Goodness, God is cleverer than I ever imagined'. Not for a moment did the New Universe Story constitute for me a conflict with the Genesis story of Creation or challenge my faith in God. But it has evoked in me a shift in consciousness and changed the way I look at the natural world. I feel wonder and awe as I reflect on the story and contemplate the geology of mountains or the biodiversity of landscapes. I feel frustration and sadness as I witness the Amazon rainforest – the lungs of the planet – burning or being destroyed for palm oil plantations, hamburgers or throw-away tissues. I feel anger and despair as the rivers of the Murray Darling Basin dry up because management plans are sabotaged. I feel fear and outrage as record hot temperatures and record low rainfall and other catastrophic weather events are documented, and still global warming is denied and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are side-stepped by our Government.

And just as the New Universe Story is changing the way we look at creation and challenging us to rethink our way of being in the world, the universe brings forth Francis as Pope who sees the world within an emerging new world view and addresses a Letter to the whole world *Laudato Si': Care for our Common Home*, which gives us something of a blueprint for right relationship or being reconciled with creation and each other. He sees clearly the connection between destruction of the environment and injustice and oppression of people, particularly the poor. And he promotes an integral ecology of environment, society and economy as a way towards a mutually enhancing human-earth relationship. Such leadership inspires hope in an Age of Indifference bordering on Despair.



# Preserving Mission’s French heritage

The next time you visit Mission Estate in Greenmeadows, or savour a glass of Mission sauvignon blanc from your local supermarket, take a moment to ponder the rich church history that lies behind New Zealand’s oldest winery.

Mike Fitzsimons

Marist missionaries from France were the first Catholic missionaries in New Zealand, arriving in the Hokianga in 1838, just two years after the Society was founded. In 1851 a group of Marists came to Hawke’s Bay and established a mission to Māori in Pakowhai where they ran a balanced farm property with fruit trees, cattle and a vineyard. When war broke out between rival Māori tribes, the ‘Mission’ was re-established in Meeanee, Taradale. It was here the pioneering missionaries were joined by Suzanne Aubert, who worked among local Māori and walked great distances to care for the sick. Suzanne Aubert, who was French like the Marists, went on to found New Zealand’s only indigenous religious order, the Daughters of Compassion. Vines were planted in Meeanee to make both sacramental and table wine and in 1870 Brother Cyprian Huchet, the son of a vigneron from the Loire, was Cellar Master and oversaw New Zealand’s first recorded commercial sale of wine.



In 1870 Brother Cyprian Huchet, the humble son of a vigneron from the Loire Valley rose to the position of Mission Estate Cellar Master and oversaw New Zealand’s first recorded commercial sale of wine.

Brother Cyprian was one of New Zealand’s first qualified winemakers, says current Mission winemaker Paul Mooney. Mission’s icon ‘Huchet’ wines are named after him. ‘Brother Huchet introduced a press house, a grape-crusher, achieved New Zealand’s first international medal at the Paris Wine Awards in 1889 and was also responsible for the commercial sale of wine at the Mission in the late 1800s,’ says Paul. Over the years the Mission site at Meeanee became vulnerable to flooding and in 1911 the seminary was moved to higher ground at Greenmeadows. From 1911 to 1992 the Mission trained a steady stream of Marist priests and brothers who

served the Church in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. At its peak a community of more than 100 priests, brothers and seminarians lived and worked at Greenmeadows.

## French influence

Throughout this time Mission vineyards continued to support the seminary enterprise, never losing sight of its French heritage. The brothers travelled back to France to learn French viticulture and wine-making skills. Current winemaker Paul Mooney was trained by the brothers who had trained in Bordeaux, strongly influencing Mission Estate’s wine style today. Mission Estate was the first New Zealand winery to use the traditional French techniques of whole-bunch pressing and barrel-fermented chardonnay in the 1980s and was also the first winery to make sparkling wine using the Methode Traditionelle technique – learned directly from France. Brother John Cuttance began experimenting on a bottle-fermented sparkling wine in 1961, called Fontanella, which was released two years later.

## 40 years as winemaker

Last year winemaker Paul Mooney notched up 40 years in the job, almost a quarter of Mission

winery’s entire history. His tenure has seen a huge development in the Mission wine-making enterprise. The seminary buildings have been transformed into a modern restaurant and cellar-door complex, premium vineyards have been purchased in Hawke’s Bay and Marlborough and the winery has been rebuilt to become one of New Zealand’s most energy-efficient winemaking businesses. Industry awards are won regularly, attesting to the quality of the wines as among New Zealand’s best.

Sustainability plays a strong role in the Mission enterprise, says Paul Mooney. ‘Mission Estate has been committed to the industry standards of sustainability for over 20 years. We were 100 per cent Sustainable Winegrowing NZ certified since the programme’s inception in 1995 and ISO 14001 certified since 1998. ‘With a heightened awareness and desire from consumers for environmentally responsible practices, sustainability and even organics, there will be a strengthening of environmental practices already employed. We are committed to that.’ Paul is very enthusiastic about new world wines but says it’s still very early days for the New Zealand



Mission winemaker Paul Mooney, 40 years in the job



In 1880, a new two-storied house was built. It was known as La Grande Maison or the ‘big house’.



A seminary for Marist priests, was set up at Meeanee, in Hawke’s Bay, in 1890. Because of flooding, it moved to a site nearby at Greenmeadows in 1911, and vineyards were planted around the seminary buildings. By the 1920s, when this photograph was taken, the mission vineyard was already well-known and the seminarians spent long hours working on the vines as well as on their education. They are shown here celebrating a day off from their studies.

Photo: Society of Mary Archives: Reference: GM Alb C. 1910-1930. p.21/4

industry compared to old world wine regions. ‘Overall we’ve come a long way in winemaking and viticulture in a very short time. In the last 10–15 years we’ve made significant progress, our wines are getting better and vineyards older, and our winemakers and viticulturalists more experienced.’ After 40 years Paul still loves coming to work every day. He says it’s the challenges and variety of the work he does that keeps him motivated and inspired.

‘The grapes that grow here in Hawke’s Bay just get better and better with age. The older vines grow better grapes, which make the best wine and some of the vines here are 20+ years old,’ says Paul. Though the Marist priests and brothers are no longer directly involved in the running of Mission estate, the Mission is still owned by the Society of Mary. Returns from the winery are used to support the Society’s works of charity, social justice and pastoral care in New Zealand.



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October – Month of the Rosary

Keeping the Rosary Relevant

Ko Whiringa-ā-Nuku-te Marama o te Rōhārio

Kia whaitake te Rōhārio

Fr James Lyons

When Pope John Paul II introduced the *Mysteries of Light* into the Rosary in 2002, he was completing ‘the mysteries of Christ’s public ministry between his Baptism and his Passion’ ensuring the Rosary would be a more complete ‘compendium of the Gospel’. [Apostolic Letter on the Rosary, n.19]

The Joyful Mysteries provided meditations on the early years of Jesus’ life, while the Sorrowful followed passion and

death and the Glorious his triumph. John Paul II felt the need to highlight the public life of Jesus, enabling the truth of Jesus as ‘light of the world’ [John 8:12] to shine out in the very person of Jesus.

The Pope suggested we could make the Rosary more relevant if we concluded each mystery ‘with a prayer for the fruits specific to that particular mystery...to better express its connection with the Christian life.’ [Apostolic Letter, n.35]

For many years, the traditional conclusion in most places

has been the prayer: *O my Jesus, forgive us our sins. Save us from the fires of hell, and bring all souls to heaven, especially those who most need your mercy.*

Following John Paul’s initiative, individuals or communities could write their own prayer, applying it to their own situation and ensuring greater relevance. Below is an example of such a change.

The Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is 7 October.

Rosary prayers – after each *Mystery*

Joyful Mysteries

1. **Annunciation:** Mary, we give thanks for your ‘Yes’, for showing us the way of trusting God’s presence and power. Help us when we hesitate to give of ourselves. Share with us your gift of joy.

2. **Visitation:** Mary, Elizabeth’s greeting eased your worry and restored your joy. May our hearts be kind and generous in welcoming others, especially anyone anxious or troubled.

3. **Birth of Jesus:** Mary, the birth of your Son was a time of wonder and overwhelming joy, though you were far from home and strangers were the first to greet him. Sharing this wonder and joy, may we grow in friendship for the Child of your womb.

4. **Presentation:** Mary, the joy in your heart would have to make room for the sword. May our hearts be pierced with the fire of love, that in sharing your pain we may share in your joy.

5. **Finding the child Jesus:** Mary, you know the anguish of losing a loved one. Hold us close as we grieve our own loss and, with Jesus, restore the joy for which our hearts were created.

Mysteries of Light

1. **Baptism of Jesus:** Mary, your blessing was apparent as Jesus took his place in life. Be with us as we step alongside Jesus, your Son, in our baptismal commitment to love and to serve.

2. **Wedding at Cana:** At the Cana wedding you showed your great trust in the caring love of Jesus. Bind us more closely to him, that we too might trust his love and his care.

3. **Proclamation of the Gospel:** Mary, your own missionary zeal gave Jesus his impetus to serve and his pastoral vision. Help us never to doubt the power of the Gospel to heal and to save.

4. **Transfiguration:** Mary, you are the model of trust and boundless hope. When we cannot see clearly the way ahead nor understand our purpose, help us to listen to Jesus with minds wide open and hearts eager to love.

5. **Institution of the Eucharist:** Mary, you gave life to the Bread of Life. The Eucharist is our sharing in your gift. Through this great Sacrament may we become bread for others.

Sorrowful Mysteries

1. **Agony in the Garden:** Mary, like Jesus we too encounter darkness and doubt when we are anxious or afraid.

2. **Scourging:** Mary, violence in word or action is too often our response to what annoys or upsets us. May we learn from your example of patience and tolerance to work for harmony and peace.

3. **Crowning with Thorns:** Mary, the Passion of Jesus was for our salvation, yet we continue in our cruelty to one another. Help us to repent, to do penance and to sin no more.

4. **Carrying the Cross:** Mary, Jesus accepted his cross with quiet dignity and as a loving servant. Help each of us to take up our cross and follow Jesus, wherever he may go.

5. **Crucifixion:** Mary, the death of Jesus crowned Simeon’s prophecy and the sword split your being. We weep with you, dear Mother, and for ourselves and for our children.

Glorious Mysteries

1. **Resurrection:** Mary, the friends of Jesus were slow to believe he had risen from the dead, but you knew in your heart that death could never lay claim to love. The Resurrection of Jesus is our hope, and you are its vessel.

2. **Ascension:** Mary, all that you treasured and pondered over many years is fulfilled in the Ascension of Jesus. The time to gaze in awe is over. His mission and yours becomes ours.

3. **Descent of the Holy Spirit:** Mary, you prayed with the Apostles and others awaiting the gift of the Spirit. You were the means of their healing and reconciliation. Heal and unite us, the People of God, that we might be one in the Spirit of love, pardon and peace.

4. **Assumption:** Mary, your Assumption honours your goodness as it blesses humanity. In the presence of the Trinity you are our joy, our hope, our crown. In your Assumption, Mother of Mercy, intercede for us.

5. **Queenship:** Mary, Queen of heaven and earth, you are wonderfully and uniquely placed to guide our steps, and to bring us to recognise the reign of God already among us. Ease the path before us with your gentleness, your compassion and your maternal strength.

James Lyons is a priest of the Archdiocese of Wellington.

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Gospel Reading: Sunday 4 October

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

GOSPEL, MATTHEW 21:33-43

<sup>33</sup> Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: ‘Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went on a journey.

<sup>34</sup> When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. <sup>35</sup> But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup> Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way. <sup>37</sup> Finally he sent his son to them thinking, “They will respect my son.”

<sup>38</sup> But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, “This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance.” <sup>39</sup> So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

<sup>40</sup> Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants? <sup>41</sup> They answered, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him at the proper time.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this is the Lord’s doing and we marvel at it? <sup>43</sup> I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.’

Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen\*

A reflection on Matthew 21: 33-43

Tom Gibson

This parable is told by the three synoptic evangelists during Holy Week. Matthew includes it in chapter 21, verses 33-46. A strong recurring theme throughout the gospels is one in which Christ scorns the well-to-do, instead favouring the poor. Christ is a representative and leader of this group. This parable is no exception. It is about a group of wicked farmhands who reject the servants of the landowner, including his own son. The farmhands represent the Pharisees and scribes who were supposed to be the spiritual leaders of the Jews. The son represents Christ who the Pharisees (farmhands) rejected. Christ quotes an Old Testament reference which likens the Jewish leaders as masons who reject what appears to them to be an ordinary stone, but later – unbelievably and contrary to all expectations – becomes the corner stone of the whole building. Clearly Christ is the cornerstone.

Who do we represent? Are we like the farmhands who allow their worldly values and expectations to prescribe what God’s servants should look like, how they should act and indeed what God’s work should consist of? How do we see our own vocations? Do we accept that the many roles we

play in society, whether in paid or voluntary work, belong to God? If so, how do we measure the effectiveness of our work?

My wife Val and I owned our farm for 54 years. Farming the land and bringing up six children was work we considered to be our life’s vocation. We realised the land was never truly ours – or the bank’s – and believed our duty was to produce as much food as science would allow. Frequently we overreached our ability to identify our limit, but we never stopped striving to do better. We realised we were God’s tenants, there at His pleasure. We sold the farm five years ago, before retiring into Stratford.

We learned early of our good fortune. Farm ownership for a couple so young was unusual. There were of course many appeals for funds from many worthy organisations. Val encouraged a policy of never turning an appeal down. Kaponga then, was a new Catholic parish, established in a rural village with a new Town Hall, a pub and TAB as well as two dairy factories, two schools, two garages, three banks and two stock and station firms, that enjoyed a youthful population. Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists had their own well-attended churches. Our new farm had a new house, but our first parish priest had to board with a generous parishioner. World

War Two had ended 15 years earlier and the population was changing rapidly with several enthusiastic young people working to bring the district into the post-war era. The one aspect the people shared was generosity and we enjoyed being part of that.

I write this reflection during Social Justice Week noting that during the lockdown, the richest 20 per cent of the population made money, while the other 80 per cent were worse off. What is the true meaning of wealth and what is the meaning of true wealth? That we can even ask these questions suggests we have more than enough to give away to those who are physically struggling. Do they have spiritual gifts for us and are we prepared to listen to them? Given that the Synoptic gospels show Jesus’ empathy for those least respected in our community, how are we including them in our circle?

What is our church doing and how is it helping us to recognise true and meaningful cornerstones in the spiritual sense? Cornerstones which the world might otherwise see as rubble and unnecessary debris, but which God considers essential for building His Church here in Stratford? Could we be criticised for being like the husbandmen of this parable who had no appreciation for the contributions of others who were sent to help them?

\*Husbandman: a person who ploughs and cultivates the land; a farmer.

Parting Shot

“In God alone is my soul at rest. God is the source of my hope.”  
–Psalm 62:5



Whitebaiters at dawn on Waikanae Beach. Photograph by Mike Fitzsimons

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## Fundraising concert features lockdown songs



Singer-songwriter Fr Chris Skinner sm.  
Photo: Supplied

Acclaimed singer-songwriter Fr Chris Skinner sm will give a concert at the end of this month as a fundraiser for the restoration of Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Chris has recorded more than 20 albums, the latest being *Light in the Lockdown*, which features ten new songs composed during the Covid-19 lockdown earlier in the year.

‘I was the designated shopper for our community during lockdown so I wrote songs about the people I was seeing and of course I had time to write.

‘The songs on the album celebrate the tireless work of supermarket workers, the wonderful gesture by 100-year-old Captain Tom Moore supporting the essential health workers in England, and the volunteers who prepare food parcels for those needing help. Several

songs were inspired by times of prayer and my ministry as a priest during those months.’

During lockdown Fr James Lyons, who has collaborated with Chris in the past, sent Chris some lyrics which he turned into the song *You just came*. Chris says the song has ‘a great New Orleans-jazz feel to it’. It was Fr James who suggested the fundraising concert.

The concert will feature songs from the lockdown album as well as some well-known numbers that people in Wellington will be familiar with. Chris did a concert at Our Lady of Kapiti parish last month – with a limit of 100 attendees – and is scheduled to do another concert in Hastings in November.

‘I’ve always had a soft spot for Wellington having worked there for 11 years first as chaplain at St Patrick’s College Wellington and then at St Mary of the Angels,’ says Chris.

Chris now works in formation in Auckland and continues to use his musical talents in the service of his priestly ministry. His uplifting Christian music has been widely appreciated over many years by audiences in the Christian world and beyond.

‘My songs are greatly influenced by my faith, by Marist spirituality and by my sense of God in the beauty of creation,’ says Chris. ‘Retreat experiences and my relationships with people have also inspired many songs. I’m motivated by writing songs that can encourage and inspire others in their lives and faith.’

Chris says he rarely receives comments on his preaching but he does on his singing. A Marist brother once told him, ‘Chris you don’t need to preach. All you have to do is sing.’

The concert will be held on **Saturday 31 October from 2pm to 3.45pm at St Mary’s College Hall in Guilford Terrace, Thorndon**. Concerts tickets are \$25 and are available from Josie at email: [31octconcert@gmail.com](mailto:31octconcert@gmail.com)

## Church at Kauwhata turns 125

St Peter and St Paul Church at Kauwhata Marae, near Feilding, turns 125 in October this year. The church was opened on October 20, 1895 with Archbishop Redwood celebrating at the first Mass.

Chief Executive of Te Kupenga, Dr Areti Metuamate, of Ngāti Kauwhata, says the church has had a special place in the heart of his iwi since it was first built.

‘Many generations of our people have been baptised in this church. I grew up going to miha (mass) there alongside my kuia and kaumatua, most of whom are no longer with us. Our iwi still has a large number of Catholics, although now they are based all across the country (and the world) rather than just in and around Feilding.’

The people of Ngāti Kauwhata are planning an event for **20 October** to celebrate this special milestone.



### DATES AND EVENTS – WHAT’S ON IN THE TWO DIOCESES

Readers are invited to share information about what’s on in the dioceses. Listings are free. Please email information of around **50 words** to: [welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz) formatted as below. Listings for November WelCom due **Monday 12 October**.

#### Sunday 4 October

- Venerable Suzanne Aubert – day of dedication and celebration. Videos and letters sent to parishes for Sunday Masses.
- Collection for Peter’s Pence – due to Covid-19, collection has been transferred this year to the 27th Sunday of Ordinary Time, 4 October, memorial of St Francis of Assisi.
- Holy Cross Church, Miramar – 60th Anniversary Mass 8.30am, 90 Miramar Ave. Contact parish office (04) 388-6953 or [holytrinity.wgtn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:holytrinity.wgtn@xtra.co.nz) for more information.

#### Thursday 8 October

Quiet Day with Suzanne Aubert – ‘Silence the most beautiful voice in the world’, 10am–2pm, Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay. Simple lunch provided or bring own. Registration required, email [sr.sue@compassion.org.nz](mailto:sr.sue@compassion.org.nz) or ph (04) 383-7769. Koha.

#### Saturday 10 October

Bingen to Becker Concert – Baroque voices, Robert Oliver, bass viol, 25th birthday concert, 12th to 21st century work from Europe and Aotearoa New Zealand, 7pm, Futuna Chapel, Karori. Email: [baroquevoicesdirector@gmail.com](mailto:baroquevoicesdirector@gmail.com) to book tickets \$20/\$10, internet banking or cash on night.

#### Monday 12-Friday 16 October

‘Be Holy, for I am Holy’ – Ignatian-based retreat with Brian Cummings sm: ‘What does it mean to be “holy” in a Covid-19 World?’ Pa Maria Marist Spirituality Centre, Hobson St, Thorndon. Cost \$200. Registration required: [bgcummings@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bgcummings@xtra.co.nz) or ph (04) 212-4691 or (021) 703-580 by 5 October.

#### Tuesday 13 October

Kāpiti Dove Fellowship for Women – 7.30pm, Our Lady of Kāpiti Parish Meeting Room, Presentation Way, Paraparaumu. Speaker Anne Lovell on The Gifts of the Holy Spirit – The Gift of Faith 1 Cor 12:4-11. All women welcome. Further info: Anna (04) 902-6330.

#### Sunday 18 October

Farewell to Capuchin Friars – parishioners invited to farewell and thanksgiving Mass for Capuchin Friars who are withdrawing from work in Wellington Archdiocese at end of year. The friars have been involved in parish and mission work since 1958. Mass 10.30am, St Patrick’s Church, Childers Tce, Kilbirnie, Wellington.

#### Sunday 1 November

- All Saints Day – congregation of Sacred Heart Church, Rongotea, celebrating Quasiquicentennial , 125th anniversary. Contact parish office: (06) 358-3667, [office@lourdesparish.nz](mailto:office@lourdesparish.nz) or Facebook.
- Open Day, Home of Compassion as part of Wellington Heritage Day, 10am–3pm – tours, children’s craft activities, talk on Old Home, 10am; walk to Historic Reservoir and BYO picnic, midday. Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay. Ph (04) 282-1953 or email [heritagecentre@compassion.org.nz](mailto:heritagecentre@compassion.org.nz) for information.

#### Friday 6 November

Taizé Prayer – Reflective time with simple songs and scripture to brings stillness and silence, 7pm–8pm, The Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay. Ph (04) 383-7769.

#### General events

**Christian Meditation** – Mondays 7pm–8pm, and Thursdays, 11am–12pm. The Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay, ph (04) 383-7134 or (04) 383-7769.

**Craft Gathering at Home of Compassion** – bring your handheld craft project and own lunch, or Cloister Café open, 12pm, Suzanne Aubert Heritage Centre, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay, contact [heritagecentre@compassion.org.nz](mailto:heritagecentre@compassion.org.nz) or phone (04) 282-1953.

**Miha – Māori Mass**, Sundays 11am, The Chapel of Our Lady of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay, ph (04) 383-7769.



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# ‘Upon This Rock I Will Build My Church’

## ‘Ka hanga e ahau taku hāhi ki runga ki tēnei kāmaka’

On Sunday 23 August 2020, 21st Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A, **Bishop Peter Cullinane** spoke to parishioners at St Joseph’s Church in Dannevirke. Drawing from the Gospel reading, Matthew 16: 13-20, Bishop Peter honours Pope Francis as St Peter’s successor, and the ‘humanness’ Francis brings from Jesus to his ministry. Bishop Peter’s homily is republished here.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 16:13-20

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, ‘Who do people say the Son of man is?’ <sup>14</sup> And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ <sup>15</sup> ‘But you,’ he said, ‘who do you say I am?’ <sup>16</sup> Then Simon Peter spoke up and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ <sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, ‘Simon son of Jonah, you are a blessed man! Because it was no

human agency that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup> So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church. And the gates of the underworld can never overpower it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.’ <sup>20</sup> Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to say to anyone that he was the Christ.

The gospel we have just heard features Jesus giving a special ministry to Peter: ‘You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church; I give you keys of the kingdom, whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; whatsoever you loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.’ From elsewhere in the New Testament we see this in context: the Church ‘is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus himself as the cornerstone’ (Eph.2:20).

Let us imagine ourselves there with the disciples, standing in awe of the tremendous authority Jesus gave to Peter. But let’s remember also that this gospel was written some years after Peter had died – the Christian community knew that the ministry given to Peter lives on, beyond Peter’s own life-time, in Peter’s successors: today, Pope Francis.

To him we owe the same respect that was due to Peter – not based on any merits of Peter, or of Francis, but based on what Jesus had spoken.

Let us also stand with our grandparents or whoever first

taught us to appreciate this treasure of Catholic faith. But we remember too, that just as there are differences between how our grandparents said and did things, and how we do, so too, popes of different generations have different styles – it all belongs to being human.

**“Pope Francis knows that it’s through questioning and dialogue and walking the journey together, that people grow to maturity, and don’t get stuck in infantile dependency.”**

For centuries we have been used to popes who spoke mainly to give answers. Suddenly, we have a pope who also asks questions! Not about revealed truths, of course, but about human behaviour. Some take fright at this – especially people who look for order, clarity, predictability,



Pope Francis greets a child in St Peter’s Square for the general audience, December 9, 2015.

Photo: Daniel Ibanez/CNA

and someone to tell them what to do. They think that if a Pope asks questions it suggests uncertainty, or causes ‘confusion’. But no: Pope Francis knows that it’s through questioning and dialogue and walking the journey together, that people grow to maturity, and don’t get stuck in infantile dependency.

Pope Francis has good reason for his different style: over recent decades there has emerged a greater appreciation of the respect due to persons, and to people’s consciences. This requires that people be given the information they need to make informed judgments, and the space they need to freely choose what is good and right – rather than it being simply imposed.

Some of Pope Francis’ critics like to contrast him with Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI. But they conveniently overlook that Pope Francis is building on what Pope St John Paul II had already taught. It was John Paul who said ‘the Church’s teaching authority is at

the service of conscience’; in other words, it upholds the sovereignty of conscience, it doesn’t render conscience superfluous.

**“While on the journey, people are not sinning if they are doing the best they can for now, and praying for better.”**

It was also Pope John Paul II who taught what he called ‘the law of gradualness’; this means recognising that people’s ability to fully comply with the moral law develops gradually; for some faster, for some more slowly. This is why Pope Francis often speaks of taking people where they ‘are at’ – not starting from where they should be, but from where they are – and accompanying them on the journey to where they should be. And while on the journey, they are not sinning if they doing the best they can for now, and praying for better.

So when Pope Francis asks

whether Eucharist is for people not yet fully complying with the moral law – who would if they could – he is not questioning the Church’s teaching, but simply taking account of gradualness in their ability to comply fully, and asking whether Eucharist is only for those who already comply fully, or also for those who are trying to get there.

It is rather Pope Francis’ critics who question, and even reject, Church teachings – especially people who are protecting their own business or ideological interests. Some of them even say: ‘the Church’s job is to save souls; people’s social and economic lives are none of the Church’s business’. Here too, Pope Francis’ teaching is in line with the teaching of his predecessors. His critics are also very selective in what they accept from the social encyclicals of Pope John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Perhaps it is the gospel itself that they need to look at more closely.

When it comes to the tone of their criticisms, sadly, the bitterness, divisiveness, deceptiveness and scapegoating are all tell-tale signs that their agenda are not from the Holy Spirit. There is another spirit at work. The same gospel we heard says the gates of the underworld will not prevail. But they will try! Take this as a sure guide: wherever evil is at work, sooner or later it overreaches, can’t hide its ugly face, and discredits itself. That’s why Pope Francis doesn’t always bother to respond to his critics. But he prays for them. Many are good people, sometimes troubled people, but people in need of compassion.

Today, let us honour Pope Francis by praying for him, and praying with him for those who misrepresent him.

## Walking in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi

In February last year, when Pope Francis made his historic visit to the United Arab Emirates, on the Arabian Peninsular, to meet with Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed al-Tayeb of Egypt to sign the joint statement, *The Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living*, he was walking in the footsteps of his namesake St Francis of Assisi.

In 1219, in the midst of the disastrous Fifth Crusade, Francis of Assisi, who opposed warfare, decided to sail across the Mediterranean and visit the court of the great Sultan of Egypt, al-Melek-al-Kamil, as a ‘messenger of peace between Christians and Muslims’. He was allowed to go through the enemy lines and he



met with the sultan, who was so impressed by Francis that he asked him to stay for a week of religious and theological conversation. The two discussed interfaith conflict, war and the search for peace.

The sultan, himself a genuinely religious man, recognised in Francis the same qualities, and was very impressed by his courage in coming so far. Francis found a real friendship with the sultan.

Eight hundred years later in 2019, His Holiness Pope Francis made his own historic Apostolic Journey to the UAE to meet with Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed al-Tayeb, to sign the joint document, which calls for universal peace and to advance a culture of ‘mutual respect and understanding’.

*The Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living* opens with a series of invocations: the Pope and the Grand Imam speak ‘in the name of God who has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity’, ‘in the name of innocent human life that God has forbidden to kill’, ‘in the name of the poor’, ‘orphans, widows,

refugees, exiles...and all victims of wars’ and ‘persecution’. Al-Azhar, together with the Catholic Church, ‘declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard’.

It is because of St Francis of Assisi’s encounter with the Sultan of Egypt, al-Melek-al-Kamil, that the Franciscan order has had an ongoing presence in the Holy Land.

St Francis of Assisi’s feast is 4 October.