



*When he had finished eating, he said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch".*

*Luke 5: 4*

# LAUNCH OUT LETTERS (LOL)

April 2021

Welcome to the April issue. This month I have to 'walk the talk' and lead the reflection for the last Sunday of the month, which is about Jesus, the Good Shepherd. LO Candidates are also encouraged to write on a topic of interest, so for this issue, we have Jude McKee who wrote a poignant piece about caring for her elderly mother with dementia. She also wrote a lovely poem to go with it. On 20 March the Candidates had a Prayer Day with Ronnie Parton which unravelled the poetic gifts of the Candidates, giving birth to a new section on "Prayer and Poetry". We invite LO graduates, mentors, spiritual directors and supporters to gift us with your own prayer and poetry for future issues.

We have Bridget's usual corner where she writes about the 'Vocation and Ministry'; as before, it goes with the Quiz. We also republished a 11-year old article by Fr Alan Roberts in Tui Motu about the priesthood. Reading it you would think he wrote it recently, which makes us realise how old our questions are (or how little we have gone to answer them). Thanks to Sharon Penny who shared this article with me. Fr Alan promised to share with us another article for a future issue—watch this space! Finally, we can't leave April without remembering Easter, we have excerpts of Mary Kay's homily during Easter at the Our Lady of the Kapiti Parish.

— Maya Bernardo, Launch Out Formator and Manager

## Jesus, the Good Shepherd (Jn 10: 11-18) Gospel for the last Sunday of April

By Maya Bernardo  
Launch Out Formator and Manager



Copied from <https://itch.world/the-world-of-italian-women-shepherds/>

The Gospel of the Good Shepherd brought me back to childhood memories of accompanying my father in our hometown of Tanay, Rizal, east of Manila during the Lenten week. My dad is a GP who had to keep his centre open for emergencies, and if it's Good Friday, there is one emergency he watches out for. In the Philippines there are men (I heard nowadays women have joined in), who have themselves literally crucified on Good Friday, as a religious devotion. (Click [here](#) for the CNN coverage). The Vatican does not support this practice and I have heard some parish priests discourage people from doing this. It is fair to say that some have noble motives, but there are those, who as my father refer to as 'Jesus by lent and thugs for the rest of the year'. It was a small town after all.

This Gospel highlights the kind of leader Jesus is—a Good Shepherd. The verses before (1-10), describes the different roles of the Good Shepherd: gate keeper, gatherer (caller), guide. It also underpins who is not the Good Shepherd (thief and hired help). This Sunday's specific reading is a reiteration and a deepening of who is the Good Shepherd, by revealing the most important role of all—that is to 'lay down his life for the sheep'. 'Laying of one's life' is an allusion to His imminent passion and death. The Gospel also says that such 'laying of life' is Jesus' choosing and that he has the power to raise it up. What does Jesus mean about 'to lay one's life'?

*To be continued to the next page*

### *Continuation of Good Shepherd from p.1*

The passion of Jesus underpins the different aspects of what it means for him to lay his life for us---to be betrayed, rejected, stripped, mocked, abandoned, and ultimately put to death. The example of the martyrs shows that we could be graced to the same. However, I must confess, their narrative feels as distant to me as the gore of the Good Friday theatrics of my hometown. What is '*laying of life*' means in context of an ordinary person like me? A Jesuit theologian from Boston College, Thomas Stegman, S.J., puts it into words that made '*laying one's life*' closer to my personal reality. The passion and death of Jesus is God's way of showing us, that God's love does not hold back. To '*lay down one's life*', is **to love without holding back**. This also refers to the love of God the Father, who gave his only Son as sacrifice. When God loves, God loves with all of Godself.



Copied from <https://ericdevine.org/2013/01/03/on-letting-go/letting-go-open-hands/>

My reaction to this revelation is both awe and trepidation. Awe at the beauty of such gift that is given to me and the rest of humanity. Trepidation of what this would ask of me, as the years of adulthood have taught me to protect myself from—failure, betrayal, abandonment, rejection, humiliation, etc. To love without holding back is to lose control. To love without holding back makes me vulnerable. To love without holding back is just not good psychology! I suddenly feel less judgemental of my hometown folks for choosing to be literal about the idea of laying down one's life. The radical call to love by the Good Shepherd is only possible by God's grace. It is a lifetime journey to grasp the meaning of that kind of love.

The Gospel further underpins that it is important for Jesus that we see the difference between he, the Good Shepherd and those who pretend they are. Thus, the need for us to recognise the voice of the Good Shepherd from among the many voices that will call us. The word we have for this is 'discernment'. The Holy Spirit helps us to recognise the voice of the Good Shepherd.

Unconditional love, a love that does not hold back, is the hallmark of the Good Shepherd. We pray for the grace to recognise it. We pray for the grace to follow it.

*'I am the Good Shepherd, who will lay down my life for the sheep' (Jn 10:11).*



In the spirit of ANZAC, we'd also like to remember and pray for the men and women who have laid down their lives for a higher cause. And for their families, who like Mary, have to grieve the lost of their loved ones.



1. What is the origin of the word 'vocation'?
2. What does the catechism say is 'the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being'?

[Hint – see CCC 2392.]

*See Page 4 for the answers*

# Living with a Treasure

By Jude McKee  
Launch Out Candidate

*Reflection on caring for an elderly parent with dementia.*

"But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some return to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God." (1 Timothy 5:4).

You could ask me to write this three times in one week and each day you would get a different article, because no two days are the same.

It is almost beyond fathom. How has the mind that was so very alert and aware, and the person with that mind was so strong and yes, opinionated, recessed into a person who is reliant on others for the majority of their daily needs and cares? And that will only recess further.

I'm told that in some cultures it is a privilege to be looking after one's elder/s. And there is an immense inner feeling of that love I grew up with wanting to give back. But the reality does not feel like a privilege on some days. Today has been one of those days.

All the other things in my life – my paid employment – my ministry with my faith family – our home chores – and for me – my studies. All these things still need to be done, and there are only the same number of hours in each day. I try to convince myself that sleep is over-rated, but I do still have to fit that into my daily routine. And as for leisure and socialising, those things have become limited, but it is important that I find some time for those things as well.

As for today: Mum has not had a good day. I knew that by our telephone conversations earlier. By the time I got home and needed to prepare the dinner, my agitated 'flatmate' was almost unable to be calmed. All the things that worry her had all come up on the one day. The wallet – someone has taken her money. The lawns – when is the man coming? The cleaning – who will do the cleaning? Should we sell the house? Should she go into care? Where are her earrings? Do we live in this house? Who else lives in this house? Am I staying here tonight?

You just have to work through them one by one ... and often ... again and again. As for answering the same question over and over – I have been graced with a patience to calmly respond with the same answer again and again. I would not have called myself a patient person so I know Jesus is in this and working alongside both Mum and I. I have to put my trust in this because I cannot do it alone.

I wouldn't change a thing however. The good days are worth 3 or 4 bad days. The lucid moments when we can still have a joke together are worth a week of bad days. The little voice in the dark when the light goes out that says "thanks for today" are the most humbling words I hear, and I believe they are also a prayer. I even say that prayer myself now, when I remember, as I lay my head down to sleep.

My father, who for years had been unable to physically speak or move his body made a huge gesture with his whole body as he died. I am sure my father's dying 'word' was Mum. He said it several times. And he was looking right into my eyes at that moment. His last concern on this earth was his wife – my mother. He had, throughout his illness, always said the greatest regret he had was that he was not going to be able to look after his wife. Never mind what was going to happen to him. He asked us – he asked me – to look after Mum. He reminded me of that request in that moment of death. Honour your father and mother (Ephesians 6:2). It is a simple commandment.



We don't have to look very far for our inspiration to continue to love our elders. Pope Francis reminds us that no elderly person should be like an "exile" in our families – the elderly are a treasure in our society. He also said that a population that does not care for the elderly, and of the children and the young, has no future because it abuses both its memory and its promise.

I realise that not every daughter could live with their mother. So to be able to cohabitate is a gift in itself. Add in the care factor, and often I think – this lady looked after me with such love. I am privileged. This lady gave me life. She taught me to walk, to talk, to dance, to sing. I will miss her terribly when she is not here, but for now, she continues to teach me every day something new, new traits, and new levels of patience and love that I need in my kete for my life.

Believe me – I am no saint! I lose my temper sometimes. But in caring for my mother and honouring my father - am I privileged? Yes – more than I will ever understand in this lifetime – of that I am sure.

## *The Trek to Old Age*

*by Jude McKee*

Climbing to independence is a lifelong trek

Talk    Walk    Learn    Live

To old age we aspire and the risers get higher and higher

Can she arrive? Can she stop climbing? Can she put independence to the side?

Allow aid

Allow herself to be

Can she rest from her trek?

Allow You to be her climber

Allow You to be her sherpa

But this climb defines her

This climb enables her

When is the right time?

to Rest ...

to Accept ...

to Allow ...

to Resign ...



Copied from <https://www.hindustantimes.com/fitness/slow-walking-speed-in-elderly-could-be-an-indicator-of-dementia-risk/story-9tB7NqOrSTsWFcQ8XE1mIN.html>

You have held her throughout. You reach out

Let her take that hand now out stretched for her

Your servant the care-giver waits

As she debates make her risers lower

You love her

You know her

# Ministry and Vocation

By Bridget Taumoepeau  
Launch Out Mentor

La Croix recently published an interesting article on 'Recovering our sense of the real difference between life in Christ, vocation and ecclesial function.' I thought this would be a good topic to reflect on this month.

There is no doubt that ministry and vocation overlap, but are, nevertheless, distinct. If we look at people we know in service to the church, we can see that their ministry may change over the years, but they still retain a vocation unique to them. An example given is bishops who now are required to offer their resignation at age 75, but may well continue in other service thereafter, in fulfilment of their vocation. Gone are the days when a job, or assignment was for life, and so got identified with the person's vocation. An interesting example of separating these two things was the resignation of Pope Benedict. And all Launch Out candidates have had, or still have, other jobs or careers and are now taking a different direction in their lives. This reminds us of the fact that each one of us is uniquely called to the service of the Lord according to our gifts, situation, strengths and weaknesses.

When we are identified as having a vocation, we may well become 'classified', and expected to fit into certain moulds or roles. This has the risk of minimising the individuality and gifts of the person. Yet ministry depends on the relationship between the 'minister' and the one who is receiving the 'ministry'. It is not simply the performing of a job, or falling into a preconceived role. We all instinctively know this, in that we have had experiences of good and not-so-good 'ministry-relationships'.



Copied from <https://www.thepolyglotgroup.com/blog/ikigai-unlock-the-secret-to-your-true-life-purpose/>

The author of the article, Fr Thomas O'Loughlin, points out the dangers of not distinguishing vocation and ministry – it turns ministry into a job; it reduces the uniqueness of the person; it depersonalises the ministerial encounter; it ignores the reality of the Spirit working differently in each person; it is a recipe for workaholism and guilt at perceived failure; it ignores that all Christians are united, not by functional relationships, but as brothers and sisters in baptism.

He goes on to say, "Vocation is personal, individually-sized and as distinctive to each of us as our facial features. It will change and evolve as life changes. It will take on new forms every new day. What God called us to be 20, 30 years ago is not as important as what God is calling us to do today...and tomorrow.

Food for thought, dear LO candidates.


# Answers to the QUIZ

Copied from <https://harlowallianceparty.org/answers-to-quiz-3>

1. Vocation comes from the Latin word 'vocare' - to call, or 'vocatio' - a call. It means being called to an occupation to which one feels particularly drawn. It originated in Christianity, although is now more widely used to describe a decision to take up a particular career etc.
2. The catechism states that 'Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being.'

## ONLINE RESOURCES

If you are into e-books, I'd recommend the following books, these are short and easy to read. These are all available in Amazon:

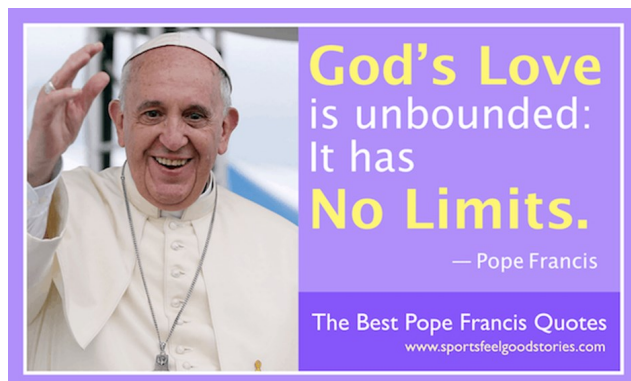
- **Called and Chosen— Toward a Spirituality for Lay Leaders** *Edited by Zeni Fox and Regina Bechtle*. It gives a perspective of the challenges lay leaders face that is unique from religious counterparts. It gives good suggestions for the formation of lay leaders. This It is an excellent resource for all of us who are trying to pursue the Synod Out of “Go, you are sent to find leaders”. USD9.99 in Kindle
  - **Forming a Community of Faith—A Guide to Success in Adult Formation today** *by Jane Egan*. I think this is a must—read for all of us who minister to parishes. Egan proposes that there are three goals of adult formation: relationship with Jesus Christ, affiliation with the faith community and participation in the mission. USD 34.00 in Kindle
- 



Copied from <http://beamcountypriaryschool.org/online-subjects>



Copied from <http://clipart-library.com/church-cartoon.html>



Copied from <https://www.sportsfeelgoodstories.com/117-best-pope-francis-quotes/>

# UPDATES

## Celebrating a beloved Catholic Leader

Last 07 April the ADW hosted a farewell and thanksgiving morning tea for Mary Ann Greaney for her years of service to the diocese. The quintessential Launch Out Graduate, we would definitely see Mary Ann still very much in active ministry in the future. For now she takes the time to rest and reflect on where God leads her next. This was followed by a lunch gathering by many members of the Launch Out Family, where she was gifted by a pounamu necklace by Joan McFetridge. We thank Sharon Penny and Joan McFetridge for organising the lunch-gathering.



## Moving...moving....moved !

The last weeks of March has been a frantic rush to pack and move the former PLM from Level 2 to its present location with the newly formed Church Mission. Launch Out was given its own office space. Feel free to drop by for a visit, a cuppa, check the books, a place to leave your stuff if you have business at the Catholic Centre or have a chat with the fabulous Formator.



## Other Updates:

- Thank you to RONNIE PARTON for leading us in the last 20 March Prayer Day, which unravelled many creative gifts
- Upcoming retreat on 07-09 May with REGINA DALY at the Home of Compassion

## Nau mai haere mai !

We welcome BONITA TASELE who begins her formation this April. She and the lovely Cecily, her mentor are already enjoying the new LO space. We'll know more about Bonita in the next issue.

## Priesthood Today

By Fr Alan Roberts  
Parish Priest, St Mary's Hata Mere

This article was published in Tui Motu last December 2009. Permission from both Fr. Alan Roberts and Ann Gilroy, Editor-in-Chief were secured to republish this. He seemed to have written this for today's times.

*Alan Roberts looks at recruitment in NZ to the diocesan priesthood, and suggests a reason for the so-called 'vocations crisis'*



About six years ago, I accepted the position of Vocations Director for the Archdiocese of Wellington. In that time, I have overseen the entry into the seminary of three people, all New Zealand citizens. Two of them were in their 20s and one in his 50s. One of the younger ones has since left the seminary and the remaining two are both converts to Catholicism. They will be the only ordinations of New Zealanders for Wellington in the next seven years. There is currently no New Zealander on the books as a prospective candidate for Wellington.



Does this present state mean that the Holy Spirit is trying to say something to us? Certainly, we would be foolish not to examine that question, for it seems strange to me that this crisis is happening when our understanding of theology, Scripture and spirituality has never been so mature.

Or have we to travel further in our understanding of some aspects of theology, such as priesthood, because as this current situation is taking place there seem to be plenty of young people around very committed to their faith and interested in ministry. Yet the priesthood for them is not an option. Is this because, as Fr Darragh, says "New Zealanders born Catholics don't really like us much the way we are...they don't see us as role models" (Nov. Tui Motu).

One has to remember that the influx to seminaries in the 1950s and '60s was huge. My class and the surrounding classes had an entry of 40 students. The Catholic culture no doubt contributed to this, as well as the subtle ideas sowed in one's mind that a vocation was the greatest thing we could do please God, that priesthood and religious life was 'higher' than marriage, and think most of us believed, there was something 'not quite right' about sex!

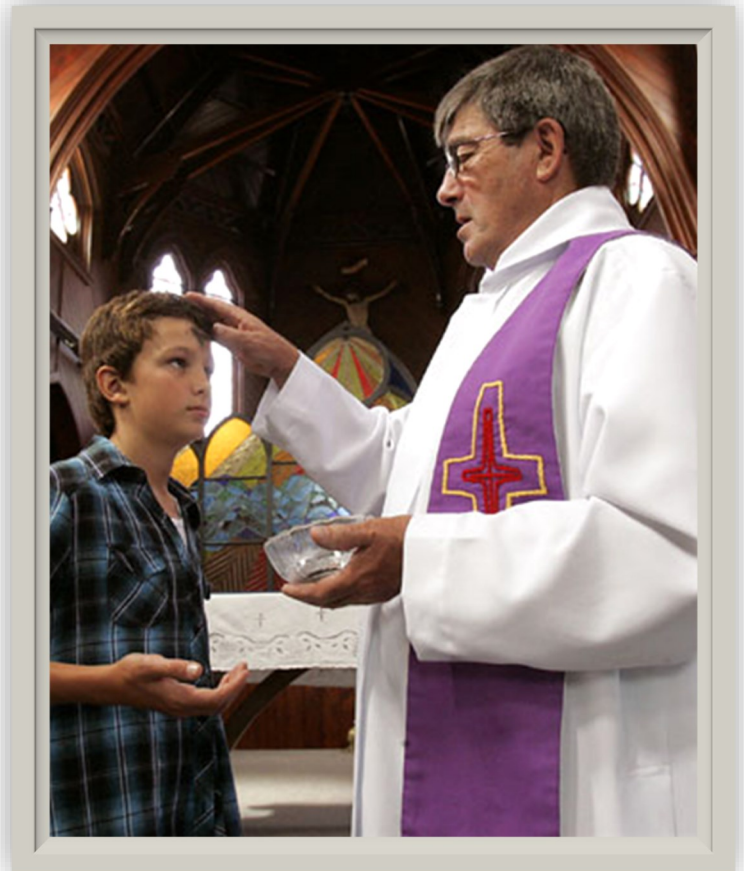
Today, young men and women are very aware of their bodies and emotions, and even if they were to consider a vocation, they would most likely regard celibacy as too difficult. So, is there any hope?

Fr Darragh made the distinction in his article between the *omi present priest* and the *priest as part of a team*. I have absolutely no doubt that the team method is the only way to go. Catholics in New Zealand have had unbelievably awful

experiences of coping with their priests, and I suspect that every time shifts are made it costs a parish a lot in personnel. A letter in the November Tui Motu by Frances O' Leary makes reference to this. After all our renewal, the sad thing is that a priest can still go into parish and demolish it.

What is dying is not the priesthood, but our method of operating. The growth in lay ministry in the years of my priesthood is phenomenal, and a new way of carrying out our mission is on the way, but bishops are going to have to make major adjustments soon, or it may be too late.

What is lacking in parishes is a collective sense of mission among ordinary parishioners because the priest still 'owns' the parish, and everything is referred to him. The situation will remain until we do something about the 'power of the priest'. When a priest belongs to a team, his ego has to go, otherwise he will demolish the team.



Copied from <https://www.stuff.co.nz/marlborough-express/news/community-papers/6182973/Farewell-Father-Roberts>



# Poetry and Prayer

Last 20 March, the Launch Out Candidates held a Prayer Day led by Ronnie Parton. The sharing surprisingly unravelled the creative side of the Candidates. Below are some of the poetry and prayer composed during that day and a poem contribution by Fiona, one of the Launch Out Graduates.

## Breath Prayer

By Bernadette Patelesio

Thank you  
O Holiest of Holies  
In and out breath  
Welcome  
Fill me till I am soaked  
In and out  
Yahweh  
Yah \_\_\_\_\_ weh

You are here in this place  
In the sounds and smells  
I find you here as I breathe  
Yah \_\_\_\_\_ weh  
In the swirl, you are deeper than breath  
Deeper than the deep  
Cellular  
Look, the Lamb of god awaits  
Come and see  
Receive  
Now feel  
Breathe in and out.

Smell  
Yah \_\_\_\_\_ weh  
See  
Yah \_\_\_\_\_ weh  
Hear  
Yah \_\_\_\_\_ weh  
Lead and follow with John

In the Swirl, I love, share and invite  
I know The Way  
It wasn't, isn't and never will be You that leaves me  
Holy One  
You remain in breath  
You remain  
You are  
I will stay  
Yah \_\_\_\_\_ weh  
In \_\_\_\_\_ And out \_\_\_\_\_

## Jesus I Trust in You

By Telesia Alaimoana

Lord, I love you and desire to seek you in all things.  
Help me to be aware of the ways in which you  
speak to me day and night.  
Help me to be attentive to your voice and to be led  
by your gentle hand.  
I give myself to you completely my Lord.  
I love you and wish to know you more fully  
Jesus I trust in you.

## The Forgotten Words

By Fiona Rammell

Ever noticed in life  
That it's the little words that count  
Like thank you and please  
Love you and hello

And so it was with Jesus  
Who on being asked  
What is the greatest commandment  
Replied with these words

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and soul  
and love your neighbour as yourself.

As yourself  
Two little words often forgotten  
But Jesus knew exactly what he was saying

For this Trinity dance between loving God, neighbour  
And self  
Requires all to be in step  
Because then and only then  
Will we bear ample fruit for the harvest.

So if you have never taken the time  
To love that person that is around you always  
Take some time to get to know  
The amazing person you were created to be

And once secure in the healthy love of self  
And anchored in the unfailing never-ending love of God  
Loving neighbour flows

And in this space  
The peace that we yearn for from the world  
Is found  
Within  
Always present

We have within us everything we need  
For we are beautifully made  
Abundantly blessed

All we need is awareness to wake up to who we truly are and  
to  
Fall  
In love  
With the wonder and beauty of  
The creation we are  
The creator who made us and  
The created we live alongside.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind  
and  
Love your neighbour

# Easter Vigil Gospel Reflection

By Mary Jackson Kay, RC  
Cenacle Sister, Launch Out Mentor

*Mary's Easter reflection has woven together the events of the lockdown, the closing of church buildings and the opening of the new one in the Kapiti parish, with the message of hope of the Resurrection.*



This Liturgy has been so rich already I ask you to pause and go into your own hearts and ask "What's God saying to us already? Remember the sadness we lived through Easter last year with the whole world in lockdown. The knowledge that our Parish Church was built, complete, ready to welcome us and locked was very frustrating.

Now a year on we are very blessed, unlike many people in our world who are still in lockdown, we have been able to celebrate together Lent and now the Easter Triduum. In this time of pandemic, in this dangerous, violent and challenging world we live in, Mark's Gospel is a

perfect choice for the Resurrection Story tonight. He wrote it never wasting a word, because the early Christian community were being persecuted and Mark wanted to give them courage and hope. As I was praying tonight's Gospel the last few days I particularly noticed the anxiousness of the two Marys and Salome as they were heading to the Tomb discussing: *"How can we move the large stone? It's too heavy for us to move! Will there be anyone to help us?"*

I can certainly identify with worrying about the future: the times when we are grieving for someone we love, or letting go of something. The times I feel panic, stuck in the past, regretful, paralysed, and worrying! When they arrived at the tomb the stone was already moved! Then when something actually happens often it doesn't seem to be as bad as I imagined! In this moment God gives me the grace to live through the situation. When they enter the tomb it is empty. Jesus has gone...what now? Then they look up and see the young man who tells them Jesus has been raised from the dead. I think this young man is someone to give them hope and point them in the right direction. (For those of us who are older, I often think that young man represents our wise brave younger self.) The young man then says:

*"Go and tell his disciples and Peter 'Jesus is going before you to Galilee and there you will see him, as he told you!'"*

I was intrigued to find out why Jesus wanted them to return to Galilee. What came to my mind was that that was where they had first met Jesus. Where they had been called to leave and follow Jesus and learn with him. To be at his side as he talked to people, healed and freed people. Then I went on the Web asking *"Why return to Galilee?"* I found what Pope Francis says:

*"For each of us, too, there is a 'Galilee' at the origin of our journey with Jesus. 'To go to Galilee' means something beautiful, it means rediscovering our faith and our Christian experience. To return to Galilee means above all to baptised as a living fountainhead, drawing new energy from the sources of our return to that blazing light with which God's grace touched me at the start of the journey. From that flame I can light a fire for today and every day, and bring heat and light to my brothers and sisters. That flame ignites a humble joy, a joy which sorrow and distress cannot dismay, and a good, gentle joy."*

So tonight let us hear this as a call to discover again our own sacred story where God has spoken to each of us Our Parish sacred story that has already begun in this new place...

*Image above copied from <https://cruxnow.com/commentary/2019/04/resurrection-an-invitation-to-see-beyond-pain-sorrow-and-suffering/>*

*To be continued to the next page*



On Thursday night we sang the refrain *"We remember how you loved us to your death, and still we celebrate, for you are with us here..."*. There is a verse of this song that is very apt for tonight *"See the face of Christ revealed in every person standing by your side. Gift to one another and temples of your love."* There are things we need to remember personally and communally. Some things we can leave in the tomb and others we need to take with us. For example the other night I was talking on the phone with my sister in law in the South of England. Elaine is 80 and has *been* in lockdown alone for over a year now and has only been able to have Mass twice face to face in that time. She is inspiring, full of faith and courage...many of you could repeat such stories of Family and friends overseas. Elaine in spite of her isolation and challenges asked what has happened to the Waikanae Church. I said the building has gone. She said "so sad so many memories". Our Lady of Fatima was a place of many special memories for our Kay Family.

I said "Yes but now there are several new homes on the property where new life will happen." And now we have this beautiful new church full of new life. This is our first Easter together. Already since we came out of lockdown we have created many new memories.

We are still finding our place! When we had the two churches in the Parish many of us tended to sit in the same seat on weekdays and Sundays. I find I have been moving around trying to find where I feel comfortable. This has been challenging but also a blessing! I am meeting new people as we search together. As I look out at you tonight I know so many of you now by name. That's really exciting. So let's focus on what we have in common and welcome our differences! Think about all the new memories already in this beautiful church full of light... Already we have had many poignant funerals, Baptisms, Weddings. So tonight let us ask for the grace to relish these new memories.

Our Church is not perfect, especially with all we have been experiencing and hearing of late regarding abuse. We need to keep working for justice and forgiving one another. What is perfect is the fact that we are each loved and cherished by God and all are welcome in this place.

Pope Francis sums it up

*"The Gospel of Easter is very clear: we need to go back there, to see Jesus Risen, and to become witnesses of his resurrection. This is not to go back in time; it is not a kind of nostalgia. It is returning to our first love, in order to receive the fire which Jesus has kindled in the world and to bring that fire to all people, to the very ends of the earth."*

We could say much more and still fall short, to put it concisely, **"God is the All."** (Ecclesiastic 43:27)

