



*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)

## July 2021

Welcome to the July 2021 issue.

In this month's issue we have **Vicky Raw** leading the reflection for the last Sunday Gospel on the feeding of the 5000. I am moved by her emphasis on the power of 'littleness'. Jesus underpins this in the other parables (i.e. mustard seed, salt, yeast, children, etc.). We are a Church built on little acts of love. For a change, **Bridget Taumoepeau** on her regular section, succinctly unpacked the Eucharist. This came as a response to the controversial stand of some American bishops to ban Joe Biden from receiving the Holy Communion. Another issue that is in the news is the production of the movie about the Christchurch massacre. This points to the need to foster greater interfaith understanding. Timely enough we have **Nick Polasheck**, the Catholic representative of the Abrahamic Council share what he has learned from the Jews and the Muslims. **Kevin Crighton** shares his journey after graduating from Launch Out. It was not a bed of roses; a meandering path of finding his calling within the church. In the end, as in most cases, it found him.

July LOL is a tapestry of the different changes and challenges that we are facing as people of God. The theme that weaves the articles together is service—as the heart of our calling, service great or small, service as Pope Francis puts it, "the only authority we have".

— *Maya Bernardo, Launch Out Formator and Manager*

## The Abundance of Grace that Feeds Us All Gospel for the last Sunday of July 2021

By Vicky Raw  
Launch Out Candidate

This outstanding miracle, of the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish, performed by Jesus appears in all



four Gospels. This is one of the most famous miracles that Jesus did. Many of his other miracles were on individuals; on those who were sick, those who were possessed by evil spirits and even on the dead (Jairus' daughter and Lazarus). However, this time he performed a miracle on a large scale. It was for everyone. Jesus did not ask what they needed – he knew that they were hungry, tired and had no food. In the Gospel of Luke, we read that it was getting towards the end of the day that this miracle took

place, so any food that they may have had with them would have been eaten already.

Jesus is meeting the needs of everyone at the same time – namely that of their hunger. Jesus revelled himself to those present, so that they could recognise that he was not just a prophet but that he had the power to perform miracles that could only come from God.

The disciples probably almost laughed at Jesus when he took the five barley loaves and two small fish. How were these ever going to feed 5000 men, not including women and children? Honestly, he must have been dreaming!

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But out of this little amount of food came more food than people could eat – there were 12 baskets of leftovers. Nothing was to be wasted. What exactly did Jesus do? How did he do this? Nobody had the answer other than they realised that through the hands of Jesus, he had provided the very thing that they needed in abundant amounts. This was a grace-filled moment. It was freely given by Jesus for all to receive.

Hunger is both a physical need that must be satisfied and it is a spiritual experience when one longs for God, whether we are aware of it or not. If my spiritual hunger is not fed properly, it too will cause me to die eventually a slow and painful death. This kind of death has serious consequences, as it will separate me from God.

What good can come from the simple barley loaves and fish and how can they feed me? In the quiet of my soul I need to reflect on what 'spiritual food' I consume to feed my spiritual hunger? What is it that sustains my relationship with God, others and the natural environment in which I live on a daily basis? Is it in the morning before the day fully begins when I can take the time to read and ponder on the Gospel of the day? My full participation in the Mass that opens me up to the full reality of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus? Is it the reading that I do for my assignments that opens my eyes to new understandings? And what about those random conversations at work, in the supermarket or over a cuppa? The smile exchanged with the person sitting opposite me on the bus? These are times of grace that God lavishes on me and that feed me. These are moments that can also be shared with others – they may not be big but they are still important. How do I share my small gifts that I have with others? We can learn from the words of Pope Francis himself:

*"Whatever we have can bear fruit if we give it away...The Lord does great things with our littleness...The Eucharist teaches us this: for there we find God himself contained in a piece of bread. Simple, essential, bread broken and shared, the Eucharist we receive allows us to see things as God does " (Homily on Loaves and Fishes, 23 June 2019)*



1. What does the word Eucharist mean?
2. What is the definition of transubstantiation?
3. What do we mean by the Blessed Sacrament?

*See Page 3 for the answers*

## Lord I am not worthy

By Bridget Taumoepeau  
Launch Out Mentor



You may be aware that there is controversy raging in the US, and the wider church, over the US Bishops' decision to issue a document on the Eucharist, and whether someone can be denied communion. This came from a working group concerned about President Biden's political position on abortion. In the many comments and opinions that have followed, some interesting issues have emerged. A poll determined that many Catholics did not believe that the Eucharist is truly the body and blood of

Christ, which is a key Catholic doctrine. Also, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston and a member of the Pope's Council of Cardinals, has written very thoughtfully of the changes in the way we prepare for communion.

Cardinal O'Malley describes the pre-Vatican II requirements for preparing for the Eucharist, from fasting from midnight to having been to confession. Many were deterred from receiving communion if they thought, for example, that they had swallowed some water while brushing their teeth on Sunday morning. At that time the priest was the only one allowed to touch the Host and the Chalice was not given to lay people.

After The Vatican II Council there were many liturgical changes, but often with little explanation or teaching about the reasons for such changes. The Council document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, encouraged active participation by the faithful in the liturgy, which, as well as mandating celebrating in the local language, stated they all 'should be formed by God's word, and be nourished at the table of the Lord's body.' Furthermore, the document requires 'full participation of all God's holy people in the Eucharist', including communion under both kinds, as well as encouraging 'a sense of community within the parish'.

Cardinal O'Malley goes on to say that he would welcome good catechesis about how to prepare to receive the Eucharist worthily. This would include a true understanding of this most precious sacrament. Pope Francis has described himself as 'a sinner' and others have commented that none of us, from the Pope to the lowliest parishioner are really worthy to receive. But Francis has told us in *Evangelii Gaudium* that 'the Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak.'

Lay pastoral leaders may well be involved in catechesis on various levels – perhaps sacramental programmes for children; RCIA; parish adult formation; preparation of Eucharistic ministers etc. All these are opportunities for teaching the understanding and beauty of the Eucharist and its scriptural origins. Meditation on one's own preparation for receiving communion will deepen one's spiritual experience of participating in the celebration of the Eucharist.

Most important of all, we have the knowledge of a merciful compassionate God and the beauty of the prayer before communion – 'Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed'. Sincerely said, asking for mercy, and having truly examined our conscience, we are assured that God will grant that word of healing and that we, albeit imperfect, are welcome at the Lord's table.



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## BIRTHDAYS

July

04 Chris Duthie-Jung

08 Chris Walkerdine

28 Sue Cosgrove

# Answers to the QUIZ

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

1. What does the word Eucharist mean? 'Thanksgiving' from the Greek *eucharistia*.
2. What is the definition of transubstantiation? The change by which the substance (but not the appearance) of the bread and wine becomes Christ's real presence at the consecration.
3. What do we mean by the Blessed Sacrament? This is a devotional name for the body and blood of Christ in the form of consecrated sacramental bread and wine.

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## ONLINE RESOURCES

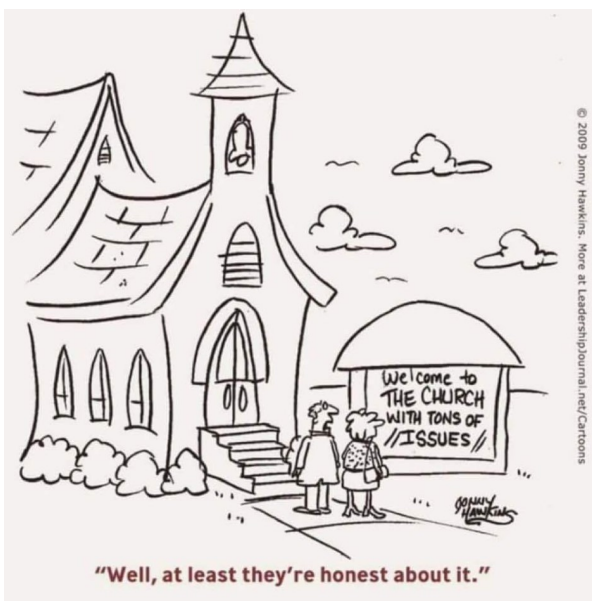
- I chanced upon these 3-part videos of Ron Rolheiser on Generative Discipleship: The Deeper Secrets Inside the Gospels

[Part 1: Some Deeper Invitations inside the Synoptic Gospels](#)

[Part 2: Some Deeper Invitations inside the Gospel of John](#)

[Part 3: Two particular invitation—To Ponder and To Bless](#)

- This is not a religious resource but I think it has significance to our ministries. Check out the [State of the Global Work Place Report](#) from Gallup (this company was cited in the book Divine Renovation by James Mallon). The report is 191 pages long, I suggest you look at the summary and head straight to the Australia and New Zealand report. The findings provides useful suggestions for leaders in any organisation on moving forward in the new "Covid" world.
- Synodality in the life and mission of the church. This outlines the definition adopted by the Vatican on synod and synodality. This would be useful as we prepare ourselves and our parishes for the upcoming Synod that will start on October (see Updates) [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti\\_documents/rc\\_cti\\_20180302\\_sinodalita\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20180302_sinodalita_en.html)
- Vicky Raw shares these videos on the Gospel of the feeding of the 5000. [Video 1](#) is a short film of the miracle and [Video 2](#) is a theological analysis from Catholic Productions that suggests that this gospel points to the new exodus of Israel.



"Well, at least they're honest about it."



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

Copied from <https://cartoonchurch.com/content/cc/church-is-empty-20/>



# UPDATES



## SYNOD OF SYNODS

That's what the Vatican says about the upcoming Synod in 2023. Pope Francis will commence the Synod process on **9-10 October** in Rome, and every diocese in the world will celebrate a mass on **17 October**. According to Cardinal John, the Synodal process for the Archdiocese of Wellington will follow. Soon after. He will be communicating to the archdiocese in the days to come on the information about the Synodal Process. In Cardinal John's newsletter last 10 June, he states:

*He (Pope Francis) is promoting a synodal process that will involve the whole Church. It will focus on listening to one another and to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.*

*The Pope has said that this should begin with a bottom-up full diocesan-level process of consultation, which "will require patience, work, allowing people to talk so that the wisdom of the people of God will come forth...". He is also very clear that this is a PROCESS of discernment. He went on to say "A Synod is nothing more than making explicit what 'LUMEN GENTIUM' says..." (Lumen Gentium, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, is one of the principal documents of the Second Vatican Council.)*

If you want to know Pope Francis's thoughts on what it means to be Synodal Church and what a Synod Process is, get hold of the book "Let us dream" (See June issue for link to e-book purchase).

We anticipate that this will have an impact on your Pastoral Projects as this will be the priority of the parishes. How or the shape of that is yet to unfold. I will keep you and your mentors posted.

We will provide more information and resources about the synodal process in the following issues.



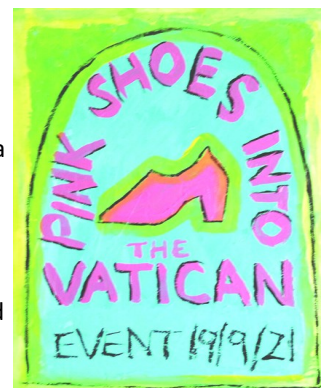
Thank you to **Brian Cummings** for a powerful session on Leadership and the Ignatian Spirituality, held at Pa Maria on 10 July 2021. Brian has masterfully presented what Ignatian Spirituality is all about and how we can derive practical wisdom for our own leadership practice.

I will be getting in touch to schedule with you times when I can observe your **Pastoral Projects**. Please don't forget to take pictures and email me if you need the evaluation form. Hope everything is chugging along well?

Good luck on your class with Dr Areti Matuamate on TH609 He Turanga Whakaaro.

Sunday 19 September is the 128th anniversary of women's suffrage in this country. New Zealand was the first in the world to enable women to vote in parliamentary elections. **Cecily McNeill**, LO Mentor, is part of a group of Wellingtonians who are creating an installation to highlight the fact that the Church is 128 years behind this recognition of women's leadership potential. **The installation will consist of women's old shoes placed in a walking pattern on the street approaching the cathedral.**

Women are encouraged to send in their old shoes with a note saying how they have worked (and walked) for the church over the years perhaps cleaning, arranging flowers, or playing music and in other ways supported the church community. Even if the cathedral is closed, as it is at the moment for strengthening, the message will be just as powerful. Check out Mary Thorne's article in the June issue of [Tui Motu](#) about it. If you are interested, get in touch with Cecily [mcneillcecily@gmail.com](mailto:mcneillcecily@gmail.com)



# Life after Launch Out

By Kevin Crighton  
Launch Out Mentor

## Background

In 2008 I embarked on a life changing journey by applying to join Launch Out the following year. I had heard about Launch Out some years before when then Cardinal Tom Williams and Archbishop John Dew came to Lower Hutt to talk about Lay Pastoral Leadership. At the time I thought that is for me, but did nothing about it. Later I read that Barbara Rowley, Cushla Quigan and someone else had completed the course and were the first people to be appointed Lay Pastoral Leaders. Again I thought that is for me, but did nothing about it. Then in 2008 I undertook a “retreat in daily life” programme where I met someone on a daily basis, was given a scripture reading to ponder on as I went through my day, reflect on in the evening and talk over the next day before receiving my next passage of scripture. This continued for 5 working days and culminated with all those taking part in getting together on the following Sunday for the first and only time where we shared our experience. This was in mid 2008 and later in the year when I saw Launch Out being advertised in the *Welcom* I decided this time I would act. Late in 2008 I was accepted as a Launch Out candidate and I recall saying at the interview that although I was hoping to start on this journey I had no preconceptions as to where it would lead me.



## Formation

2009 saw my journey start in earnest with the commencement of information, formation and transformation. As you will know it is not easy trying to fit in prayer, work, family and now the additional study, prayer and pastoral projects into your life but somehow we manage it. By the end of 2017 I had completed 20 academic papers, and so received my Diploma of Pastoral Leadership, from TCI. I had also successfully completed my pastoral projects, prayer days, spiritual direction, and retreats, so I was endorsed as a Lay Pastoral Leader by Cardinal John Dew.

## Post Graduation

So now I am a Lay Pastoral Leader but there is no position currently available for me. This is not an issue as it was always said that employment could not be guaranteed, and I had always said that while I was on this journey I had no idea where it would lead. Twice I applied for a Hospital Chaplains job and twice I was unsuccessful, I was asked to consider Prison Chaplaincy and after talking it over with the incumbent decided it was not for me. I was also asked to consider a position in a parish and after prayerful discernment decided that was also not for me. So what am I doing and why do all this training you may well ask. After I was unsuccessful in applying for the first Hospital Chaplains role I asked Fr David Orange who was the current Hutt Hospital Chaplain if I could be with him

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as he carried out that role to gain experience. Initially he said yes but later in the day phoned me and said he had been thinking about it and had had second thoughts. My heart sank! However a few seconds later it was rising again as he explained that he needed someone to help him out visiting people at a retirement village who were in the hospital wing. He took me down and introduced me to those he wanted me to visit and so started my ministry. Sometime later he asked me to take communion to a lady at home who was unable to attend Mass. This lady has now gained confidence so I now pick her up and take her to a mid week Mass prior to going to the retirement village and taking communion to those people there. It was because I was fulfilling this role that I declined the Parish role I was asked to consider.

In this role I am able to build relationships with those I visit. Unlike in a hospital these people are here long term whereas in hospital they are moved out as quickly as possible. I have some wonderful conversations with the residents sharing stories of their past, their families and of course their faith. I get to pray with them and for them and also for their families. It is amazing that even though they are nearing the end of their life here on earth they are still concerned for their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Being a parent never ends just as God's love for us never ends.

Naturally life comes to an end but having shared their stories I am confident they will enjoy eternal life with their Lord. What I do find hard is when a funeral is on the same day as I attend the retirement village but I find consolation in that I have spent my time with those who have died and although I may not have said goodbye my responsibility is to serve those still alive.

I also work at the Home of Compassion, Island Bay two days a week with the Congregational Leadership Team. This came about through prayer and good timing. Perhaps this is a story for another time but needless to say my time in Launch Out and the annual retreats at the Home of Compassion built an affinity in me for it.

Launch Out has helped tremendously in fulfilling these two roles. I have become more confident in expressing my opinion about matters of faith due to the educational side of LO. I have come to understand that leadership is not just about commanding but more importantly it is about serving. I believe that these two aspects have transformed me into a Lay Pastoral Leader, which is what the Launch Out programme was designed to do.

*"I have come to understand that leadership is not just about commanding but more importantly it is about serving".*



<https://catholic-link.org/images/we-do-not-serve-ideas-pope-francis/>



# Belonging to the Abrahamic family

By Nick Polascheck  
Catholic Representative in the  
Wellington Abrahamic Council



Up until I retired I had only got to know one couple who identified as Jewish. No Muslims at all. That's because we naturally tend to move in our own circles. I think I assumed that these religions were sincere but limited in comparison to Catholicism that I belonged to. I did not recognize them as profound spiritual traditions, along with Christianity constituting three branches of the tree whose common ancestor was Abraham, from which I could learn, and my Catholic faith potentially be deepened. Getting to know some members of these other Abrahamic faith traditions through the Wellington Abrahamic Council has been both enriching and challenging in various ways.

In the recent document *On Human Fraternity* from 2019 Pope Francis and the Muslim leader Sheik Ahmed el-Azhar, Grand Imam of al-Azhar, said "The pluralism and the diversity of religions, colour, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom through which He created human beings". This statement, extending the groundbreaking text *Nostra aetate*, from the second Vatican Council, implies that God is, despite human ignorance and evil, in a profound though obscure way present and active in the faithful responses of people living within the various religious traditions of humanity.

Personally, I have found that the example of commitment to following the divine Word to them as they understand it, manifested in Jewish and Muslim religious practice (for example adherence to Jewish religious dietary restrictions or to Islamic fasting over the month of Ramadan) challenges us to ask how distinctively countercultural in our contemporary NZ secular society is our own Christian faith practice. For example, our Lenten practice seems rather anaemic by comparison. Likewise, they have clear ethical guidelines on many issues, developed through sophisticated reflection, that motivate action as a response to the divine Word to them in their tradition. Sometimes I wonder if our complex and diverse views on some issues can enervate our actual practice.

Hearing of the experience of members of the Jewish and Muslim communities who are disadvantaged in their lives (compared to Christians in our society) in being subject to periodic random discriminatory acts here in this country (especially Muslim women with their distinctive attire) helps one to appreciate the actual situation of different groups who are oppressed for their religion or ethnicity. This includes Christians who are persecuted in other parts of the world. But, as Christians, we should be just as concerned with religious discrimination here in NZ against those of other faiths as we are about Christians in certain countries overseas.

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The occasional opportunity to participate together in worship practices of our different traditions (something not possible in some other parts of the world) I have found enriching. In both Jewish and Islamic services one can appreciate anew the transcendence of God, as divine Mystery beyond our human understanding, a sense that can be eroded within our familiar anthropocentric Christian symbolism. At the same time, in contrast to the relative austerity of formal Jewish and Islamic worship, one can appreciate anew the richness of our Catholic sacramental symbolism in reminding us of the divine Intimacy with us as human beings. This richness I have found paralleled in Jewish religious celebrations in their homes, the sacred Passover meal itself of course being the source of the Eucharist.

Working with people whose lives are strongly oriented by their response to the gracious divine Word to them as they understand it in their traditions, that has certain profound similarities but is also very different in many ways than ours, we are challenged to reflect more deeply about the character of our own faith response to the divine Word to us in Christ. Appreciating what we share with each other as Abrahamic peoples not only helps us to understand others from different traditions, even beyond the Abrahamic religious family, but also appreciate more deeply the divine gift we have been given within our own tradition.

In our increasingly ethnically and religiously diverse country, recognizing, collaborating with and celebrating difference, both within our own Church and beyond it is important, if we as Catholics are going to play a positive role in the development of our local communities. A real contribution can only be based on respect and appreciation for the various faith traditions living among us as a country, even while recognizing we do approach some questions differently than other religious groups.

To learn more about our Abrahamic family visit the Wellington Abrahamic Council Website [abrahamic.nz](https://abrahamic.nz)



Some of the members of the Abrahamic council during their retreat in Kopua monastery. Image copied from <https://abrahamic.nz/2021/06/kopua-monestary-visit/>