

DAYLIGHT
SAVING
ENDS



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
ENDS

SUNDAY 2 APRIL – CLOCKS BACK ONE HOUR

KANOHI
KI TE
KANOHI



FACE TO FACE IN HAWKE'S BAY

PAGES 10, 11 AND 12

CLIMATE AND
DEBT CRISES
COLLIDE



CARDINAL SOANE MAFI, TONGA

PAGE 15

WelCom

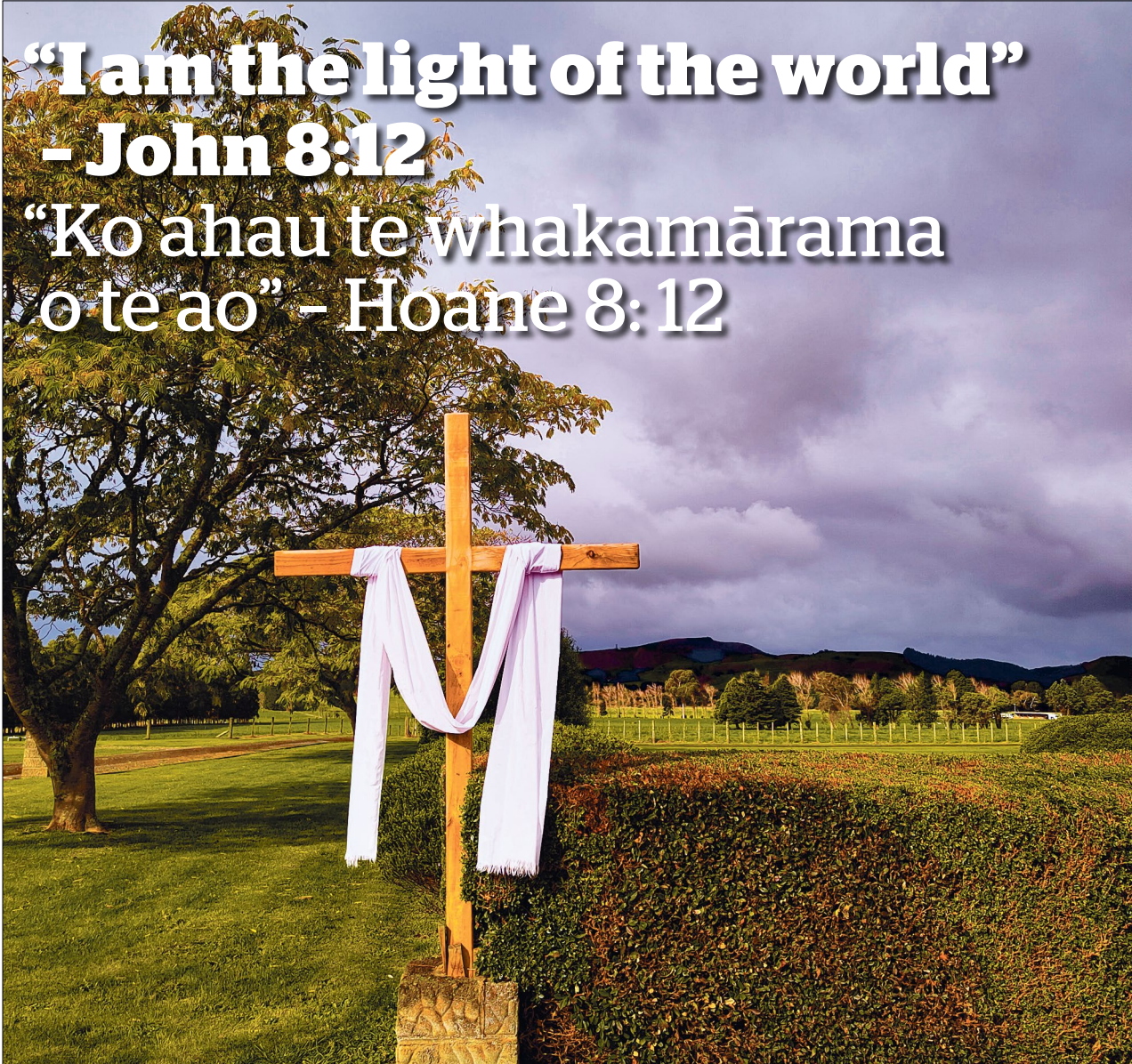
NauMai

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APRIL 2023
ISSUE 412

FREE



“I am the light of the world”
– John 8:12
“Ko ahau te whakamārama
o te ao” – Hoane 8:12

The Way of the Cross

‘I am the Light of the world’, is the theme for Lent 2023.

In his message for Lent, which began on Ash Wednesday, 22 February, until Easter 2023, Pope Francis invited us to set out on the Lenten journey. In his message, the Holy Father says, ‘Lenten penance’ is a ‘commitment, sustained by grace, to overcoming our lack of faith and our resistance to following Jesus on the way of the cross. This is precisely what Peter and the other disciples needed to do.

‘In this sense to understand and embrace the mystery of his salvation, accomplished in total self-giving by love, we must allow ourselves to be taken aside by him and to detach ourselves from mediocrity and vanity,’ Pope Francis stressed.

Holy Week, leading up to Easter 2023, begins with Palm Sunday – also known as Passion Sunday – on 2 April. Good Friday is on 7 April.

The Stations of the Cross, found in churches and in some churchyards as a series of 14 small images depicting the main scenes of Christ’s sufferings and death, are prayed as a pilgrimage during Lent and especially on Good Friday, the day of the year on which the events occurred.

Easter Sunday, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus bringing new life and hope, is on 9 April.

Easter Cross at Southern Star Abbey Kopua Monastery, Central Hawke’s Bay. Photo: Kopua Monastery

‘Hope, light and human kindness in traumatic times’

In the aftermath of the devastation Cyclone Gabrielle brought in February to the Hawkes Bay region and beyond, Sacred Heart College Napier principal **Maria Neville-Foster** shares a Catholic faith and leadership response.

Maria Neville-Foster

Hawke’s Bay has experienced a disaster of immense proportions and we are all still struggling to come to terms with the devastation caused by Cyclone Gabrielle.

No matter how little some of us may have been affected, Hawke’s Bay will never be the same again.

But while life here has changed, we will recover, and we will be okay. It is important during this time that we show love and sympathy to each other.

We all have had different experiences, with some in our community having the inconvenience of not having power, while some lost everything. Many

of our families are traumatised and struggling. Many are feeling upset and sad.

We need to acknowledge how people are feeling regardless of the level of their involvement. Those who have suffered need words of support, kindness and understanding right now. This includes what we are posting and saying on social media.

In this painful time, we need to have hope and we also need to focus on human kindness. That value of hope needs to continue to be at the forefront of our thinking, because as a faith community, we are a hopeful community and we must not allow the darkness that can come with times like this, to

overwhelm us.

We must not ignore the darkness, but rather attempt to overcome it with the value of hope. Because through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have hope. The theme for Lent 2023 has been ‘I am the Light of the World’ and this reminds us that Jesus brings light to a world often darkened by disease, disaster, violence, lies and hypocrisy. Jesus’ life, and his proclamation of the truth, is a challenge to each of us to lead our lives following his example.

This theme is for us. We have been darkened by disaster, by violence, by lies and hypocrisy in the aftermath of the cyclone. Now more than ever we need to be the light of the world. The Gospel of

Mathew says: ‘You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.’

When we listen to the words of Jesus, we understand what it means to be a Catholic leader. We are the light, we guide others, we bring hope to others when they feel they are surrounded by darkness. We do this because the light of Christ still burns within us. As Catholics we do

not hide our faith away. We lead with it. We become the light of the world.



Sacred Heart College Napier principal Maria Neville-Foster Photo: Supplied

» Continued on p 3

From the editor

Annette Scullion

Tēnā koutou

Greetings to all.

This month we feature stories from members of Catholic communities in Hawke’s Bay and Wairoa, a few weeks on from the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle that caused horrific destruction to so many areas.

WelCom visited people in several parishes, schools and Catholic communities in Hawke’s Bay and Central Hawke’s Bay to connect and to let them know that those of us living outside the devastated regions are thinking of them and want to continue to do what we can to help.

People said they want to be heard, and to know that they are not forgotten, once the headlines die down. Many said the challenges are ahead as the reality of the situation becomes more clear.

Overwhelmingly, people said they are so grateful for the support and prayers they have been receiving and ask us to continue to keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

Their resilience is inspiring and like so many in times of adversity, through this event, we see the strengths and best of people. We invited people to share their stories with WelCom, which

we feature on pp 1, 10, 11, 12.

As we near Holy Week and Easter we are drawn to messages of hope, light and resilience. I had the privilege of attending a Choral Concert on Saturday, 26 March, featuring Bach’s St Matthew’s Passion.

It was performed superbly by The Tudor Consort in Wellington with the Chiesa Ensemble. The music told the story of Passion of Christ from Palm Sunday leading up to his crucifixion and death. The performance was magnificent and communicated this most important of Christian messages at this time of the year as we enter Holy Week and prepare for the Resurrection.

Ngā mihi.

‘Keep alive the hope’



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

This year the Easter Triduum will be very different for me. I am hoping it will be more reflective than usual – I will be recovering from some surgery and will have time to ponder. There will not be the necessity for me to prepare homilies, and to make sure that all is well and in order for the liturgies.

We will hear in the reading of the Passion from St John on Good Friday: ‘Near the Cross of Jesus, stood his mother...’ I am wondering if this Good Friday, I will be able to be there with her. Maybe I will just ponder what thoughts were going through Mary’s mind. Perhaps I will see her grief in a different way

because I will have more time to ponder. Maybe I could pray with the image of Michelangelo’s Pieta and see the tortured soul of Mary with new eyes.

I often find Holy Saturday to be a very strange and quiet day. Tradition tells us that Mary kept vigil on Holy Saturday in prayerful anticipation of Jesus’ resurrection. She had hope beyond hope. Her faith was certain. We know there are a number of places in the Scriptures where we are told Mary pondered the mysteries of her Son’s life in her heart. I hope I can ponder in the same way she did, thinking of her standing by him in his agony

and death, holding his dead body in her arms, and maybe thinking, wondering where his spirit had gone.

I think Holy Saturday is an ideal day to ponder the pondering heart of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and to remember that from the cross, she was also given to me, to all of us: ‘This is your Mother’. This will be the opportunity for me to ponder her pondering heart, and to try to unite my heart with hers, to try to understand what she was thinking

and hoping. I hope while this Easter will be different for me, that it may also be different for the many people in our world who walk in despair and confusion. I know many people have lost hope in the new life that awaits them; so many have their own kind of interior death, and they’re not open to allowing God to draw them into the new life of his resurrection.

I think of all those people throughout the world who are crucified in different ways, in whose lives there have been many kinds of deaths. I think of people in Ukraine, people who have lost their lives trying to sail on flimsy boats to a new life, people who have lost everything through cyclone Gabrielle, people who suffer and die because of their belief or their ethnicity. I hope this Holy Saturday will be a holy day for me and that I and others will be able to keep alive the hope that was so vibrant in the heart of Mary on that first Holy Saturday.

May you all have a holy and a blessed Easter.

“We know there are a number of places in the Scriptures where we are told Mary pondered the mysteries of her Son’s life in her heart.”



In a letter to staff and pastoral leaders, Cardinal John notes: ‘I have greatly missed my early morning walks and the beauty of the harbour in its many changing moods.’
Photo: Cardinal John Dew

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

Contributed 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 including your name, address and phone number. Articles may be edited for length or clarity at the editor’s discretion.

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

Email to: welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz

Deadline for May 2023 issue: Monday 17 April 2023.

WelCom is published monthly and is available free at parishes and schools in the two dioceses.

Member of Australasian Catholic Press Association (ACPA).

As part of the global Catholic Church, WelCom sources a range of news, articles and opinions from local, national and international sources. Views and opinions published are those of the author and don’t necessarily reflect the policy or position of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.


Cardinal convalescing

Cardinal John Dew is convalescing following surgery to address spinal issues which caused him pain for many months and made walking difficult. The Cardinal had surgery on March 21 which went well and he is in recovery for 6–8 weeks. He has since thanked people for their many prayers.

In Cardinal John’s absence Archbishop Paul Martin sm is in charge of the day-to-day running of the diocese with help from Vicar-General Mons Gerard Burns.

Cardinal John turns 75 on 5 May. Canon Law requires bishops to offer their resignations


prior to their 75th birthdays. The Cardinal tended his resignation in January but is yet to receive a response from the Holy Father. Once his resignation is accepted, there will be a formal installation of Archbishop Paul Martin as the 8th Archbishop of Wellington.



Pope Francis’ Prayer Intention

During the month of April 2023 Pope Francis’ intention is:
for a culture of peace and non-violence.

We pray for the spread of peace and non-violence, by decreasing the use of weapons by States and citizens.



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>> Continued from p 1

At Sacred Heart we are that ‘city on the hill’. We stand proudly as leaders of the Catholic community. Sacred Heart has a strong pastoral care in place anyway, but we made this a real focus after the cyclone. We contacted every single family either through email or phone. We have continued to support those in the greatest needs and have also been giving out food parcels, petrol vouchers and water so that there is one less thing for people to worry about. These are practical ways in which we have been able to show kindness and to give them hope. As a school, we have also been overwhelmed by the support we have received from the Catholic community in New Zealand, especially Palmerston North Diocese and other Catholic schools. Special mention must go to St John’s College in Hastings, with whom we have a strong connection. I want to acknowledge the support that St John’s has given our community by collecting items and sending them over to us. Other schools like St Peter’s College,



Sacred Heart College students India Connell and Cherise Pretorius and House Dean Henrietta Hillman preparing care packages in the immediate aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle floods in Hawke’s Bay. Photo: Supplied

Palmerston North and St Joseph’s Primary, New Plymouth have held Mufti Days to raise funds to donate to our Cyclone Relief Fund. We’ve had Bidfood who donated a load of food in the first three days we opened, so that we could give free food and lunches to all of our students. The relief fund is being used to pay for food parcels, lunches, water, petrol, computers and whatever else is needed. I’m extremely grateful and almost overwhelmed with people’s generosity and the actions of many, including our students, in the communities.

It’s heartwarming in a time when we’re also feeling devastated. It’s the human kindness that we continue to see and that’s what we need to continue to focus on. We continue to hold those who have been affected in any way by the cyclone in our prayers. We are not alone and will get through this together by showing care, compassion, understanding and kindness towards each other. >> ‘We pray for our brothers and sisters’, p 10–12.

Milestone agreement for social agencies



Representatives of Catholic Social Services, Wellington archdiocese, and St Vincent de Paul’s Kapi-Mana Conference signed an MOU in March to formalise a joint and supportive approach to their work in the Levin area. Pictured (l-r) are Kamau Holland, Bernie Hanaray, Gerry Stevens and John Prendergast. Photo: WelCom

Annette Scullion

Wellington Catholic Social Services and Kapi-Mana St Vincent de Paul representatives signed a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ (MOU) last month to bring together the strengths of both organisations for the greater benefit of the people they serve in the Levin area. The MOU signing took place on St Patrick’s Day at the Levin Vinnies shop and community centre in Prouse St. Signatories were Kamau Holland, Kaiarahi/Director CSS, John Prendergast, General Manager for the Archdiocese of Wellington, Gerry Stevens, Area President, Kapi Mana SVdP and Bernie Hanaray, President of the Vincentian Conference Levin. Staff from Vinnies Levin and CSS also attended the milestone occasion.

We are really excited about this development Kamau Holland said. ‘Gerry and I have been working towards this for about 18 months. The details of the agreement will give CSS a base with which to support the Levin community and the Vinnies staff and volunteers. ‘Vinnies in Levin is a thriving organisation that provides many excellent services to the community’, she said. ‘CSS will bring with it to support Vinnies, our social workers, community facilitation, our men’s parenting programme called “Game On”, as well as coaching support for Vinnies volunteers.’ Gerry Stevens said people’s problems today are far more complex. ‘They are not simple such as just supplying a load of bread. The conditions we live in now, have an uncanny resemblance to the world

our founder Frederic Ozanam lived in when he started the organisation in Paris in 1833. ‘Today we recognise Vinnies don’t have all the answers and we need to work alongside others who can provide specialist help – physically, materially and emotionally – that is our mission in this area. ‘My dream is that SVdP cannot just be behind closed doors, but out in the streets. And together we will make a major effort to achieve this. It is really good we can bring our work together today – so thank you.’ Bernie Hanaray added, ‘I believe Vinnies shouldn’t be trying to duplicate or increase the skills we don’t have or try to reinvent the wheel. Getting this MOU signed is just the beginning to support our shared work ahead.’

Cyclone Relief Appeals

The Catholic Church launched two relief appeals in February for donations to support those who have suffered damage in the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle.

To date the National Cyclone Appeal, organised by the Diocese of Auckland through its Catholic Caring Foundation, has raised \$226,000. The funds are being distributed to the dioceses of Palmerston North and Hamilton, through which their agencies and networks have identified the areas of greatest need. Both dioceses are finding the recovery will be a long and painful one for so many in their dioceses. Some of the initial funds have already been distributed to help with the immediate relief efforts of both dioceses. Funds will be released for the second phase of the cyclone recovery in coming weeks. The Auckland flood appeal set up separately in January after Cyclone Hale, has closed. It raised \$339,094. Palmerston North Diocese The Palmerston North Diocese, which includes the flood-stricken areas of Hawke’s Bay and Wairoa, launched a Cyclone Relief Appeal through its Catholic Charities Foundation. ‘Funds raised to date for this appeal are just over \$150,000 with grateful support from the Auckland and Dunedin dioceses,’ says Palmerston North diocese’s general manager Liam Greer.

‘Immediate financial assistance has been provided to ten groups comprising schools and partner agencies. The predominant use of the funds is for pastoral care, supporting our students, staff and whānau to get themselves back on their feet and cope with the after effects of the impact of the cyclone. And to promote mental well health and help prevent the development of mental health problems. ‘The diocese is in discussion with faith communities about how the funds can further support long-term rehabilitation,’ he says. ‘The duration of the appeal is being reviewed with a decision to be made this month as to the future needs of the communities. ‘There has been overwhelming gratitude from the school communities with the immediate support of students, staff and whanau,’ Liam Greer said. ‘The response has been awe-inspiring. Many people made donations and some were very generous. This included the initial food appeal, which we estimated to be around five tonnes of food transported to Hawke’s Bay to help address immediate food and essential supplies shortages.’ The appeals are still open as both diocesan teams continue to assess the depth of need.

CYCLONE RELIEF APPEALS

National Appeal – you can donate online at: <https://caringfoundation.org.nz/donate-3/> or online to the Catholic Caring Foundation’s bank account: **BNZ 02-0100-0242648-00** Please use your surname and initials as reference, and Cyclone as a particular. To receive an emailed receipt please email: info@caringfoundation.org.nz

Palmerston North Diocese Cyclone Relief Appeal – to donate, payments can be made online to the Catholic Charities Foundation by direct bank transfer. **Bank Account: 02-0630-0237950-010** References: ‘Cyclone’ and ‘your surname and initials’. To receive an emailed receipt please email: reception@pndiocese.org.nz



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Christchurch’s new Catholic cathedral under review

Plans for Christchurch’s new Catholic Cathedral are now under review, says Simon Thompson, the diocese general manager.

‘Bishop Michael (pictured) just wants to make sure he gets it right.’

He said the new cathedral precinct would be a fantastic addition to the city, a place where people, including tourists, would be able to ‘bump into Catholicism’, but change – including rebuilds – takes time.

In a written statement, Bishop Gielen said: ‘I have a steadfast commitment to creating thriving parishes and building a worthy cathedral within the diocese of Christchurch.

‘I am conscious the cathedral is a large financial commitment for the diocese.

‘It will be a legacy of my tenure as bishop of Christchurch, and as such, I want to be as comfortable as possible with any decision on the development project, as anyone in my position would.’

Thompson said the Church was committed to the central city and is having a good hard look at the project’s size, scale and financial implications.

‘We have also looked at other sites as part of this process, including the Barbadoes St site,’ he said.

Thompson says no decision has



Image: Catholic Diocese of Christchurch

been made to ‘can’ the current plan. ‘It is about certainty of investment. If you are sinking tens

of millions of dollars into a project you don’t want key things changing.’

The Council confirmed that the resource consent for stage one is on hold, awaiting further information from the developer.

The Catholic Bishop of Christchurch, Michael Gielen, inherited an ambitious \$500m plan when he took over as bishop last May.

The plans had been negotiated between developer Philip Carter and the then Bishop of Christchurch Paul Martin sm.

They include a \$40m cathedral on Colombo Street to replace the Barbadoes St Blessed Sacrament

Basilica, which was destroyed by the February 22, 2011 earthquake.

At the time, resource consent was expected to be lodged within a few months. It was predicted the cathedral might be completed by 2025.

Two months later, Bishop Gielen was appointed, and he has now paused the project.

No resource consent application has been lodged.

Thompson said there is no date on a cathedral decision and that it remained at the pleasure of the bishop.

Source: Star News; Stuff

Marist Messenger closes

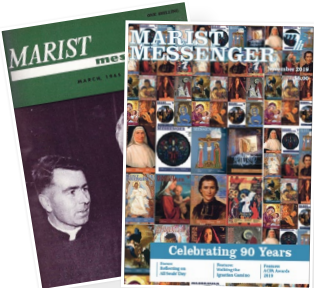
The *Marist Messenger* monthly publication has come to an end. The editorial in the March edition informed subscribers that it was the final issue.

‘Unfortunately the Society of Mary has not been able to find a suitable editor to replace Fr Pat Brophy, who late last year was appointed to the Society of Mary General House in Rome as Bursar General,’ said Thige O’Leary sm, Assistant Provincial, Society of Mary New Zealand.

‘With the decline of readership generally, and increased costs,

the magazine has been facing mounting pressures. Subscribers who have current subscriptions have been advised they may apply to be reimbursed for the period that is remaining,’ he said.

Now in its 94th year, the *Marist Messenger* was founded by Fr Kevin McGrath as a parish newsletter called the *The Empire Fetelist* in St Heliers, Auckland, in November 1929. ‘The old-fashioned term “fetelist” meant something like “an advertisement for a fete”, in this case, the “Empire Fete”, which was to be held on 14 December 1929,’



Thige O’Leary said.

After two issues readers were advised *The Fetelist* would become the *Marist Messenger* for its next issue, and subscriptions at the rate of 2/- per year post free were solicited. And so the *Marist Messenger* began.

Pope extends decree to counter lay and clerical abuse

Pope Francis has permanently decreed an updated version of *Vos estis lux mundi*, his landmark legislation to counter sexual abuse in the Catholic Church.

The decree promulgated 25 March extends the Church’s norms for handling of abuse to cover lay leaders of international associations of the faithful recognised by the Vatican.

Vos estis lux mundi (‘You are the light of the world’) reaffirms an obligation to report cases of ‘vulnerable adult’ victims of abuse, including violence against religious women by clerics and cases of harassment of adult seminarians or novices by a superior.

It also includes protections for people who witness acts of abuse, in addition to those who submit reports of alleged abuse, stipulating that no ‘obligation of silence’ may be imposed on those who report, witness, or are victims of abuse.

The new norms will go into force on 30 April 2023 and replace the pope’s previous provisional version of *Vos estis lux mundi* published nearly four years ago.

The norms regard what are called, in canon law, ‘delicts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue,’ consisting of sexual

acts with a minor or vulnerable person; forcing someone to perform or submit to sexual acts through violence, threat, or abuse of authority, and the production or possession of child pornography.

In the apostolic letter signed on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, Pope Francis wrote that it is ‘good that procedures are universally adopted to prevent and combat these crimes that betray the trust of the faithful.’

The Pope said the updated version of the norms takes into account the comments he received from bishops’ conferences and the Roman Curia on *Vos estis lux mundi* since it was published.

Pope Francis first promulgated *Vos estis lux mundi* in May 2019 on an experimental basis for a period of three years.

The norms for the Church’s handling of sex abuse placed seminarians and religious coerced into sexual activity through the misuse of authority in the same criminal category as abuse of minors and vulnerable adults.

Source: CNA

➤ ‘Safeguarding’ workshop held in Wellington, p 9.



Te Huinga o ngā Pīhopa Katorika o Aotearoa

New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

Executive Director

- Diverse, stimulating and rewarding role
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About the Organisation

Te Huinga o ngā Pihopa Katorika o Aotearoa/the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) is the assembly of the Catholic Bishops of New Zealand. It coordinates national activities and ministries of the Catholic Church including, social justice, international aid and development, Katorika Māori, education, communications and engagement with the public, liturgy, seminary formation, ecumenism, bioethics, interfaith relations, pastoral work in prisons and hospitals, and more.

About the Role

The Executive Director is responsible for working with NZCBC agencies in implementing the decisions of the NZCBC across three principal areas: firstly, supporting the meetings and decisions of the NZCBC; secondly, providing oversight of the financial, human resources and compliance requirements of the NZCBC; and thirdly, supporting the NZCBC agencies in their work and supporting the forward planning and future-watch of the NZCBC.

Specifically, the Executive Director is responsible for:

- executive coordination for the bishops as they prepare for and undertake their meetings and in the carrying out of decisions;
- ensuring all financial, human resources and compliance requirements are met, and that all NZCBC employees operate within a safe, professional, and positive work environment;
- fostering the work of the NZCBC by supporting staff and leadership of agencies and committees; and
- assisting the Conference in carrying out strategic planning and change management.

About You

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- demonstrated experience in team leadership and/or senior management and the ability to role model a positive and collegial workplace culture;
- a personal commitment to the vision, mission and values of the Catholic Church in New Zealand;
- superb interpersonal and communications to reach a very diverse range of stakeholders;
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- an understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

This is a very diverse role, it provides a lot of intellectual stimulation and personal reward and would suit a person who seeks an opportunity to bring their skills, experience and values to the good work of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

There is a comprehensive Position Description available. To apply or have a discussion, please contact Chris Gilchrist on 027 5552074, or alternatively at gilchrist@ocg.co.nz

The closing date for applications is **17 April, 2023.**



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Restoring ‘Little Lourdes’ in Wellington

It’s not often in modern times an artist can say he has spent his days painting the Virgin Mary but at the beginning of this year Island Bay artist Ian Logan was doing just that. Together with sculptor Jenny Hartley and her husband Robin, they were working to restore the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes in the grounds of the Home of Compassion in Island Bay. Until recently Jenny and Robin also lived in Island Bay and now live in Ōtaki.

The restoration was completed over a week at the end of the school holidays in January. The sculpture itself is part of a garden area and shelter near the back of the Home of Compassion complex with the Our Lady of Lourdes statue set about three metres above the ground on a concrete bank and a ‘grotto’ replicating the renowned site at Lourdes.

The work involved scraping down the old paint layer, filling in any defects then matching the old paint with a modern equivalent. As with any paint job the preparation was quite laborious as the statue is set into a niche on a wall and couldn’t be taken down.

In the process the team also looked at the historical background to the statue – it was made by the famous Pellegrini company and given to the Sisters of Compassion in 1961, then set in place. The wall around the statue was created during the early 1970s by a retired City Council roading engineer Wilhelm Kraus, who was grateful for the care shown by the Home of Compassion to his daughter. At its opening and blessing, conducted by Bishop Owen Snedden and attended by 500 in September 1973, Wilhelm Kraus said the completion of the grotto was the fulfilment of a dream. He had visited Lourdes in 1958 and his work was guided by photographs and his memories.

Some 50 years later, whilst working on the restoration and during their work up on the scaffold Ian, Jenny and Robin got a feel for the importance of the grotto as a place of peace and beauty, remembrance and reflection. Several times visitors came up to talk to them about how important it was to them and to wish them well with the project.

‘It was a good team and I couldn’t have done it without Jenny and Robin’s help,’ says Ian Logan. ‘Robin comes from an engineering and project-management background so he provided expertise on the technical paint application side and Jenny’s knowledge of sculpture and attention to detail were a great

asset. They also tweaked the layout of the scaffolding to make it much easier to work on the detailed areas of the statue such as the flowers at Mary’s feet or the Rosary beads.’

For their part Jenny and Robin saw this as a positive way to contribute their skills to maintaining a community asset. Both still feel very attached to Island Bay with Jenny having a long-lasting legacy as Chair of the Southern Environmental Association there as well.

Although Ian Logan has been visiting the Home of Compassion for a long time now – he even remembers going there as part of an Island Bay School trip way back in the 1960s – it was an exhibition he organised there to support a Children’s Hospital in Kyiv, Ukraine, that led indirectly to repainting the statue. During that exhibition in October 2022, he was asked if he could help with the project and he readily agreed – although being a teacher he needed to work it around the school term and his piano teaching commitments.

‘The Home of Compassion staff and sisters were so helpful and positive during our exhibition for Ukraine,’ he says. ‘I thought it was the least I could do. It was also a link to another community displaced and traumatised by war when we discovered how important this place was to the local Assyrian Christians in particular.’

There is still some way to go though as the shelter attached to the grotto will be



Island Bay artist Ian Logan together with sculptor Jenny Hartley and her husband Robin, spent a week in January working to restore the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes in the grotto in the grounds of the Home of Compassion in Island Bay. The smaller statue of St Bernadette kneeling before Mary is seen in the larger photo.

Photos: Supplied

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UK asylum policy ‘dramatically lacking’

As the UK government pushes controversial legislation banning the settlement of migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales is calling on policymakers ‘to recognise migrants and refugees as people.’

In a new document called *Love the Stranger*, the bishops offer a list of 24 principles to guide immigration policy, based on ‘the innate worth of each human person.’

The document is being released just days after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak introduced the Illegal Migration Bill, which would remove migrants who cross the Channel in small boats from the country and ban them from entering the UK in the future.

‘Our starting point as a society must be to recognise migrants



Britain’s Prime Minister Rishi Sunak speaks during a press conference following the launch of new legislation on migrant channel crossings, on March 7, 2023.

Photo: Leon Neal/AP

and refugees as people. We need to understand their stories, their reasons for leaving their homelands and hopes for building

a future here,’ said Bishop Paul McAleenan, the Lead Bishop for Migrants and Refugees for the bishops’ conference.

‘We should never view people arriving from elsewhere as a political problem to be solved, but rather as brothers and sisters who we have a responsibility towards, and who greatly enrich our communities,’ he said.

Love the Stranger emphasises people’s right to migrate, while acknowledging a nation’s right to control its borders.

‘However, the acceptability of such measures is limited to circumstances in which they are clearly required to protect the receiving community. Controls on migration should be exercised with compassion, giving special attention to people who need to leave their country in order to flourish and live in dignity,’ the document says.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols,

president of the bishops’ conference, said *Love the Stranger* draws together more than one hundred years of Catholic teaching.

‘While it does not propose detailed solutions to complex problems, it clearly calls for procedures which permit safe and controlled access and a fair hearing to those seeking asylum. Present arrangements in this country are dramatically lacking in both of these requirements,’ the cardinal said.

According to the BBC, 45,756 migrants crossed the English Channel to Britain in small boats in 2022.

Sources: *Crux*; www.cbcew.org.uk/love-the-stranger

Catholic women want reform – global survey

The largest study of Catholic women in the Church’s history has found that the majority of women support significant reform within the Church. The study surveyed 17,200 women from 140 countries.

The majority of women surveyed resent their lack of decision-making power, want to follow their consciences on sex and contraception, and think the Church should be more inclusive of the diverse and the divorced.

The survey was initiated by Catholic Women Speak in response to the invitation of Pope Francis for the Catholic Church to engage in a process of ‘synodality’ for the 2021–2023 Synod of Bishops.

Australian researchers led the global study, which also found women want to be allowed to preach, dislike priests promoting political agendas, and are concerned about a lack of transparency in Church governance. The study, International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW), was presented at the Vatican to coincide with International Women’s Day, last month.

The study was led by Drs Tracy McEwan and Kathleen McPhillips from the University of Newcastle. Tracy McEwan, a theologian and sociologist of religion at the University of Newcastle, said the study found some women felt an ‘underlying sense of hurt’ and a ‘feeling of being voiceless and ignored.’

The results varied between countries. The appetite for change was strongest in Ireland, Spain and Germany. Interestingly, younger women were more conservative



Authors of global survey – Dr Kathleen McPhillips (left) and Dr Tracy McEwan.

Photo: University of Newcastle

than older ones, with the age group 18-to-25 least likely to want reform, according to the survey, and those over 70 most likely.

‘We found even when women have considerable struggles with Catholic institutions, nearly 90 per cent said their Catholic identity is important to them,’ said Dr McEwan. ‘Many continue to practise their faith despite significant concern, frustration and dissatisfaction with the institutional church.’

Survey statistics

- 84 per cent of women supported reform in the Church; two-thirds wanted radical reform.
- Almost eight in 10 agreed women should be fully included at all levels of Church leadership.

- Over three-quarters agreed women should be able to give the homily.
- Two-thirds said women should be eligible for the priesthood.
- Over four in five said LGBTQ people should be included in all activities.
- Just over half strongly agreed same-sex couples were entitled to a religious marriage.
- Seven in 10 said remarriage should be allowed after civil divorce.
- Three-quarters agreed that women should have freedom of conscience about their sexual and reproductive decisions.

Sources: *CathNews Australia*, *Sydney Morning Herald*

Famous Spanish choir admits girls for the first time

Women and girls are to be admitted to a choir at the Santa Maria de Montserrat monastery near Barcelona, home to the famous Escolania all-boys choir, for the first time in its 700-year history.

The new chamber choir, made up of a mix of about 25 boys and women and girls aged 17 to 24, will be separate from the Escolania, which comprises 45 boys aged nine to 14. The monastery’s Fr Efrede Montellà said the mixed choir would take over the Escolania’s liturgical duties one weekend a month to give the boys a rest.

‘We’re often asked why there aren’t any girls in the Escolania,’ Fr De Montellà said. ‘It’s a complex and difficult question. We follow a tradition that we would like to continue but we also realise we have to respond to demand.’

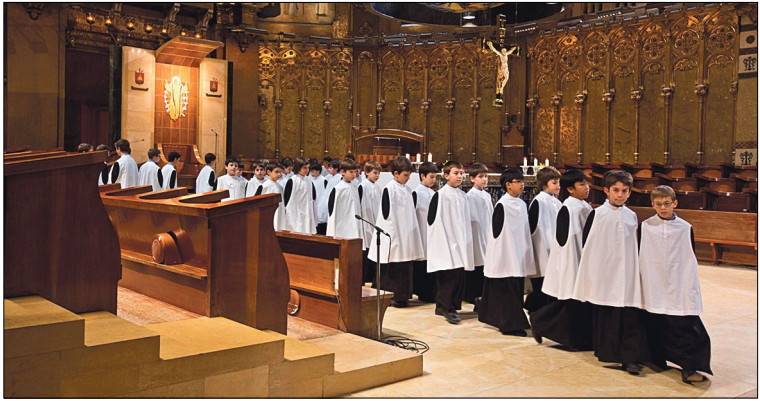
‘In order to include all the girls who would like to sing at Montserrat and be escolanes we’ve

decided to establish this second choir,’ he added, describing it as a ‘historic step.’

After a lengthy debate, the move to include girls was decided in a vote by the Benedictine order that runs the monastery under the newly appointed abbot, Manel Gasch.

De Montellà said the new choir would complement rather than compete with the Escolania and both would wear the same vestment and sash. The all-boys choir, who live and perform in a Benedictine abbey high on Monserrat mountain in Catalonia, Spain, is one of the oldest vocal ensembles in Europe, and predates the more widely known Vienna Boys Choir by several hundred years. The choir rarely leaves its Catalan mountain monastery but was in Australia last month on a rare tour as part of this year’s Adelaide Festival.

Source: *The Guardian*



Unchanged melody for 700 years: Escolania de Monserrat all-boys’ choir.

Photo: Escolania de Montserrat



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If you or someone in your whānau need support, please contact us.

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NZ - middling performer in Mass attendance

The World Values Survey (WVS), which began collecting data in the 1980s, has new data on Mass attendance for 36 countries with large Catholic populations. Which country has the highest Catholic Mass attendance?

Among the countries surveyed, weekly or more frequent Mass attendance is highest among adult self-identified Catholics in Nigeria (94%), Kenya (73%), and Lebanon (69%).

The next segment of countries,

where half or more Catholics attend Mass every week includes the Philippines (56%), Colombia (54%), Poland (52%), and Ecuador (50%). Fewer than half, but a third or more attends every week in Bosnia and Herzegovina (48%), Mexico (47%), Nicaragua (45%), Bolivia (42%), Slovakia (40%), Italy (34%), and Peru (33%).

Between three in ten and a quarter of Catholics attends Mass every week in Venezuela (30%), Albania (29%), Spain (27%),

Croatia (27%), New Zealand (25%), and the United Kingdom (25%).

The lowest levels of weekly attendance are observed in Lithuania (16%), Germany (14%), Canada (14%), Latvia (11%), Switzerland (11%), Brazil (8%), France (8%), and the Netherlands (7%).

The Catholic Church's official population is around 1.3 billion adherents worldwide.

Eternal Word Television Network in the firing line

A new bishop in Spain has banned his local television station from carrying any content produced by the massive EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network) religious media conglomerate on grounds of preserving unity with the Pope.

Bishop Fernando Prado Ayuso of San Sebastián, Spain conveyed his decision two days after he was installed as bishop. In his announcement he said that no content from the EWTN channel would be broadcast on the diocesan television Betania. Betania TV is the formal diocesan media outlet.

Founded in 1981 by Mother Angelica, an American Franciscan nun famous for her feisty sense of humour and direct rebukes of both bishops and so-called 'liberal' trends in American Catholicism, EWTN is the largest Catholic media conglomerate in the world, with an international audience of



The front of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) studio headquarters, founded by Mother Angelica, is located in Irondale, Alabama, USA.

Photo: EWTN

more than 380 million television households in 150 countries and territories throughout the world.

The network has consistently received backlash for programming

critical of Pope Francis and has been criticised for presenting their editorial stance as the only true interpretation of the Catholic faith.

Speaking to fellow Jesuits during his visit to Slovakia in 2021, Pope Francis said that Catholic media critical of the Pope do 'the devil's work,' saying, 'I personally deserve attacks and insults because I am a sinner, but the Church does not deserve them. They are the work of the devil.'

Asked by a Jesuit how he handles critics who look at him and his decisions with suspicion, Francis referred to 'a large Catholic television channel that has no hesitation in continually speaking ill of the Pope,' and while he didn't mention any names, the remark was interpreted by many as directed at EWTN.

Source: *Crux*

Asteroid named after Pope

Pope Gregory XIII, the 16th century pontiff responsible for what is today known as the Gregorian calendar, now has another celestial claim to fame. A working group of the International Astronomical Union has named an asteroid after him. The '560974 Ugoboncompagni' – Gregory's birth name was Ugo Boncompagni – was announced, along with 72 other named asteroids in the latest update of the union's Working Group for Small Bodies Nomenclature.

Catholic Church pledges support to the King

England's Cardinal Vincent Nichols has pledged the Church's 'support and prayers' to King Charles III ahead of his 6 May coronation, as the new monarch praised the work of faith communities in national life. Cardinal Nichols said British Catholics remembered the 'remarkable and unique role' played by Queen Elizabeth II and would give 'support and prayers' to Charles III, while also appreciating his 'steadfast opposition to religious persecution.' The Cardinal praised King Charles' commitment to religious faith, protection of the environment and relief of poverty.



King Charles III and Cardinal Vincent Nichols in Rome in 2019.
Photo: Arthur Edwards, OSV Newsphoto/Reuters.

Catholics call for abolition of death penalty

The Catholic Church in South Korea has officially petitioned the government for a total abolition of the death penalty, saying it is ineffective in curbing criminal offences. The petition was signed by 75,843 Catholics, including all 25 Korean bishops, by priests, religious and lay people from the 16 dioceses. Even though South Korea has had an abolitionist stance for more than 25 years, the death penalty is still technically permitted there. "The Republic of Korea must go beyond the moratorium on executions to become a country that completely abolishes the death penalty," the petition says, reiterating that the state must 'break the vicious circle of violence.'

Nicaragua suspends relations with Holy See

The Nicaraguan Government has closed the apostolic nunciature in Managua and its embassy to the Holy See, after Pope Francis compared President Daniel Ortega's regime to communist and Nazi dictatorships. Mr Ortega ordered the suspension of diplomatic relations on March 12, two days after the publication of an interview with the Pope on the Argentine news outlet *Infobae* to mark the tenth anniversary of his pontificate.



Daniel Ortega.
Photo: Cesar Perez/CNS

Responding to questions on conditions in Latin America, and on the Nicaraguan Government's attack on the Church, Pope Francis said: 'I have no other choice but to think that [Mr Ortega] is mentally unbalanced.' The Pope praised jailed Matagalpa Bishop Rolando Álvarez, sentenced to 26 years imprisonment in February, as 'a very responsible man, a very capable man'. The Nicaraguan regime's conduct, said the Pope, was 'like bringing back the 1917 communist dictatorship, or the 1935 Hitler dictatorship'.

Pope to visit Hungary

Pope Francis will travel to Hungary at the end of April, where he will meet with government officials, refugees, academic scholars and young people in Budapest. He will meet with Katalin Novák, president of Hungary, and the country's prime minister, Viktor Orbán, as well as local bishops, priests and other members of Hungary's Catholic community. He will only spend one full day in the country on 29 April, during which he will meet privately with children from a local school, speak with refugees and people in need, address young people in Hungary and meet with the local Jesuit community.

World War III underway, says Pope

'World War III has been declared,' Pope Francis said in a wide-ranging conversation with the editors of European Jesuit publications, referring to Russia's attack against Ukraine. "The world is at war," he said. "For me, today, World War III has been declared. This is something that should give us pause for thought. What is happening to humanity that we have had three world wars in a century?"

Pope Francis spoke about the complex background to the war in Ukraine and the interests involved, including those of arms manufacturers. He denounced 'the brutality and ferocity' of the Russian troops and praised the heroism and courage of the Ukrainians. At the same time, he said, 'we do not see the whole drama behind the war, which was perhaps somehow either provoked or not prevented.'

German bishops support blessing same-sex unions

Germany's Catholic bishops and lay representatives have agreed to call for the Church to approve blessings of same-sex unions.

The three-day gathering, which is part of the 'Synodal Path' launched in 2019, brought together more than 200 representatives of Catholic life in Germany. A majority of 176 participants voted in favour of same-sex blessings starting from March 2026. Fourteen participants voted against them, while 12 abstained. Crucially, the necessary two-thirds backing of the 67 German bishops was also reached, the news agency dpa reported.

Many congregations already perform such ceremonies, but these aren't formally approved by the Catholic Church, a position the Vatican restated in 2021.

The 'Synodal Path' will culminate in a Synod, that will bring bishops and laity to Rome in October 2023



Bishop Georg Bätzing, president of the German bishops' conference, is pictured during an interview in early May 2020.

Photo: Gottfried Bohl, KNA/CNS

and October 2024 to discuss the future direction of the church and

ways in which it can rejuvenate its mission.

Celibacy 'could be reviewed', says Pope

Pope Francis discussed the possibility of revising the Western discipline of priestly celibacy in a wide-ranging interview for his 10th anniversary as Pope last month.

Speaking with Argentine journalist Daniel Hadad, he said: "There is no contradiction for a priest to marry. Celibacy in the Western Church is a temporary prescription: I do not know if it is settled in one way or another, but it is temporary in this sense," Pope

Francis said.

"It is not eternal like priestly ordination, which is forever, whether you like it or not. Whether you leave or not is another matter, but it is forever. On the other hand, celibacy is a discipline."

When asked if celibacy 'could be reviewed,' Pope Francis responded: "Yes, yes. In fact, everyone in the Eastern Church is married. Or those who want to. There they make a choice. Before

ordination, there is the choice to marry or to be celibate."

It isn't likely making celibacy optional would lead more people to join the priesthood, Pope Francis said. He noted there are already married priests in the Catholic Church in the Eastern rites.

He also said earlier that day he had met with an Eastern Catholic priest who works in the Roman Curia who has a wife and a son.

Sources: *Crux Now*; CNA

Eucharist in Eketāhuna part of civic celebrations

Sue Seconi

When the Tararua District township of Eketāhuna marked 150 years since its establishment over the weekend of 11–12 March 2023, local parishioners at Sacred Heart Church registered their Sunday Eucharist as an event for this civic occasion. Some who gathered could trace their family line to the original Scandinavian settlers in the area.

Each Sunday, this Palmerston North Diocese’s southern faith community gathers for Service of the Word with Communion,

except for when Eucharist is celebrated on the fourth Sunday of the month. Eucharist was rescheduled to coincide with the town’s anniversary with parishioners travelling from neighbouring St Bridget’s in Pahiatua to join local parishioners in the celebrations.

The Mass of Thanksgiving was presided by Fr Marcus Francis, parish priest of the Tararua Pastoral Area in North Wairarapa. He said, ‘We pray remembering the people who founded this church and all those who have sustained it down through the years. We pray to the Holy Spirit to continue to encourage us to be just as faithful to the Lord.’

A delicious morning tea followed Mass.



About 50 people came to the special Mass of Thanksgiving, at Sacred Heart Church Eketāhuna, as part of the 150 years’ celebrations for the township. Photo: Supplied

Faith community fundraiser

Sue Seconi

A parishioner’s random dare placed on the Catholic Parish of Whanganui’s Facebook page, under the Palmerston North diocesan prayer for those affected by Cyclone Gabrielle, snowballed into three other parishioners coming forward to organise a fundraising garage sale. These people needed money as well as prayer they figured.

In a spirit of unity and with the blessing of Fr Craig Butler, parish priest of the Catholic Parish of Whanganui, 18 March was set, the parish hall was booked, and advertising in newspapers, radio, parish bulletins and school newsletters got underway. Answers to

the call for items to sell came in the thousands ranging from toys, jigsaws, magazines and books, quality clothing, furniture and electrics, bulbs, paintings, household items, baking and more.

A total of \$2,940 was raised to support the diocesan appeal for cash donations.

The sausage sizzle and Devonshire teas were a hit during the four-hour event, and ‘no change or take this extra money as a donation’, were common comments.

‘Lent is traditionally about giving up, but after seeing TV images of the destruction from this cyclone, giving has become the theme of these 40 days’, a parishioner reflected.



Parishioners (l-r), Rex Cuff, Jack Ponting, Sandy Cuff and Patrick Seconi in charge of the BBQ. Photo: Supplied

Catholic interfaith committee meets in Palmerston North



Interfaith committee representatives met in Palmerston North last month, (l-r): Nick Wilson, Palmerston North; Christopher Longhurst, Wellington; Colin MacLeod, Dunedin; Adele Churchman, Christchurch/Timaru; Beate Matthies, Auckland; Teresa Fernandez, Hamilton; and Bishop Michael Dooley. Not pictured: Matthew Gardner, Christchurch. Photo: Supplied

Nick Wilson

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Committee for Interfaith Relations (NZCBCIR) met in Palmerston North on 4 and 5 March.

Every diocese in Aotearoa New Zealand has a representative on this committee. Each representative is member of their local Interfaith Council, which all have representatives from different religious traditions. Bishop Michael Dooley of Dunedin liaises on behalf of NZCBCIR with the New Zealand Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

Each council’s work comes from the Vatican II Council ‘Declaration on the Relation of the Church with Non-Christian Religions’, also known as *Nostra Aetate*. Interfaith work is dialogical – using conversation to explore faith dimensions and acknowledge those things we

have in common across faith traditions. For example, care for the environment is one of the many topics we discuss, as something that affects all of us.

The committee meets twice a year and there are regional interfaith groups happening that you are invited to be involved in.

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* states: ‘*Interreligious dialogue is a necessary condition for peace in the world, and so it is a duty for Christians as well as other religious communities... In this way we learn to accept others and their different ways of living, thinking and speaking. We can then join one another in taking up the duty of serving justice and peace*’ (n.250).

For more information on the NZCBCIR or to find out about your local interfaith committee and how you can get involved, please contact interfaith@nzcbc.org.nz



Mikale (Mika) Teofilo was farewelled at a morning tea function hosted by the Archdiocese of Wellington in February, after serving 13 years as the Lay Pastoral Leader of the Samoan Chaplaincy. His chaplaincy comprised 12 communities with over 800 members in the archdiocese. Mika, bottom left of photo, was joined by family members for the farewell celebrations along with Cardinal John Dew and Archbishop Paul Martin sm. Mika’s family were also acknowledged for their support of his work. Photo: Supplied

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New Catholic Hospital Chaplain commissioned

Wendy Hill has been appointed as a Catholic Hospital Chaplain to work part-time at Wellington Hospital. Wendy took up her appointment in January joining the Wellington Catholic Social Services chaplaincy team.

Last month, Wendy was joined by hundreds of parishioners, friends and supporters at her commissioning Mass presided by Cardinal John Dew, at St Patrick’s Church, Wainuiomata. Cardinal John spoke of the Gospel reading for the day about the woman at the well and her recognition of the presence of Jesus there. ‘As Wendy goes about her ministry as a hospital chaplain she has the chance to be like Jesus. Like Jesus she will offer through her presence to patients and their families “water that springs up to eternal life”. This Word, Life and Light becomes flesh in Jesus. This Light is both to be seen and to be displayed by all who hear, live and see. Wendy and her fellow chaplains will bring light and life to people in hospital. We all have the opportunity to bring light and life to others.’

Wendy is the founder and manager of Greenstone Doors and has a strong background in social work and counselling. Greenstone



Wendy Hill, second from left, is commissioned by Cardinal John Dew as a Hospital Chaplain for the Catholic Social Services chaplaincy team. Wendy was supported at the Commissioning Mass by Kate Sanders (l), another member of the CSS Chaplaincy Team, and Ross Scott (r), Senior Ecumenical Chaplain at Wellington Hospital.

Photo: Godfrey Fernandez

Doors is a Charitable Trust based in Lower Hutt, which functions as a pregnancy focused centre where women and whānau can receive professional information and care. Education, counselling, resources and support for women and their families during and after pregnancy are provided through an independent network of counselling and support professionals.

While working part-time as

a chaplain Wendy will continue to offer counselling and support for other counselling staff at Greenstone Doors.

Announcing Wendy’s appointment earlier this year, CSS Kaiaarahi/Director Kamau Holland said, ‘We are delighted at this appointment and know Wendy will be a great addition to our chaplaincy team.’

Annette Young’s 60th Jubilee

Carmel Cole rmdm

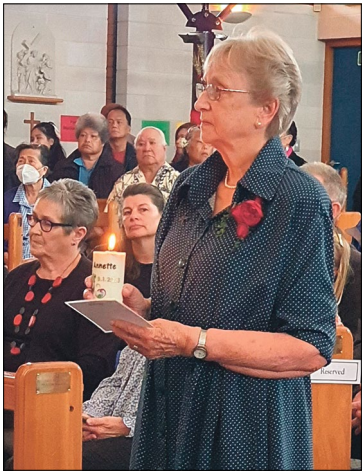
Sisters, family, friends and parishioners gathered on Sunday 8 January – the Feast of the Epiphany – in the Petone Church of the Sacred Heart, to celebrate with Sr Annette Young her 60 years of faithful service as a Sister of Our Lady of the Missions.

Annette was born and raised in Petone. She began her Religious Life as a teacher, teaching in Christchurch, Nelson, Kaikoura and Dannevirke. In 1985 she began teaching at Sacred Heart School, Petone, and has lived in the area ever since. She has worked as an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teacher and a parent educator with a focus on the Tokelauan community. In more recent years, Annette has been involved in the parish helping create community and support especially among the elderly members of the parish.

The Parish Mass was a multicultural experience, with hymns and the parts of the Mass sung in Māori, Samoan and Tokelauan as well as English. The Enthronement of the Word was enacted by the Samoan group, and the Tokelauan group preceded the Presentation of the Gifts with a paddle dance.

In his homily, Fr Bill Burt svd [Australian Province of the Divine Word Missionaries] reflected on the star the wise men followed to find Jesus. Sometimes in our lives, people are stars. They shine out for us showing us the right direction. Fr Bill pointed out that we can be grateful for Sr Annette being a star for many, many people. During her life of mission, she has led people and pointed the way to Jesus.

After Mass a celebratory cup of tea was held in the church foyer, followed by a light lunch in the convent next door for family and friends. There was much singing



Sr Annette Young celebrated 60 years of faithful service as a Sister of Our Lady of the Missions, on Sunday 8 January at Sacred Heart Church Petone.

Photo: Supplied

and storytelling as we continued to celebrate Annette’s 60 years of service to God’s people as a Sister of Our Lady of the Missions.

‘Safeguarding’ workshop held

Sr Catherine Jones smsm
Safeguarding Adviser,
Archdiocese of Wellington

More than 50 participants from the archdiocese were invited to attend a safeguarding formation day in Wellington last month to learn more about safeguarding leadership within Church communities.

In the spirit of the Synodal process, participants listened deeply to the Word of God, to the various presentations, and to one another.

Discussions explored how safeguarding must inform our service in the mission of the Church. A ‘spirituality of safeguarding’ recognised the deep pain and wounds of abuse within the Church, and how the ‘first listening’ must be to victims and survivors of abuse, and often to their families.

The scandal and legacy of abuse by members of the clergy and religious orders was recognised as an ‘open wound’ at both individual and Church levels. However, it was also understood the Church empowers hope and strength for repentance, redress and healing, knowing God alone can reconcile and heal.

Working towards a culture of safeguarding is the way we respond in love, justice and the promotion of the dignity of all.

David Mullin, project director of Te Rōpu Tautoko, the group coordinating Catholic engagement with the Royal Commission into abuse in care, gave a keynote address.

He outlined nine principles of Catholic Social Teaching, which include respect for human dignity. ‘When someone is abused, a sacred bond linking the person to a sense of self, to their human dignity, has been harmed,’ David explained. ‘Ensuring those harmed in Church care are provided with redress that restores dignity is a fundamental responsibility of Church leaders.’

David also screened a short video of Pope Francis’ March 2023 prayer and message for victims of abuse. Parishes are invited to show this, where appropriate, during April Masses [www.youtube.com/watch?v=14VHTwuhPWc].

Lesley Hooper and Elizabeth Barry, members of the archdiocese’s Royal Commission response team, held two workshops. They discussed how to respond if someone wishes to make a complaint. They also looked at a case study about a visitor taking Holy Communion to the sick, that raised safeguarding concerns and called for an appropriate response.

Please contact Sr Catherine Jones at c.jones@wn.catholic.org.nz for further information.

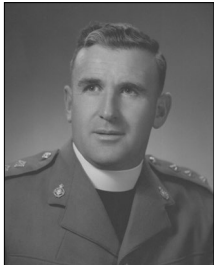
Te Rōpū Tautoko’s March newsletter reported that 21 March was the last day for survivors of abuse in care to register to have their accounts heard by the Royal Commission. The commission will make every effort to have survivor accounts heard by the end of April.

The commission is expected to release its Marylands School report before June. Its final Inquiry report is expected in June.

Medals returned to family

Cecily McNeill (left), a parishioner of Wellington South and niece of Fr James Hugh McNeill, accepts his medals from Archdiocesan Archivist Peter Holm (right). Fr. McNeill was Military Chaplain 1956–1968, receiving campaign medals for Malaya and Borneo followed by

an MBE in 1968. On his death in 1994 the medals were to be sent to his relatives but ended up in the Archives. To honour this intention Cardinal John Dew approved the return of the medals to Cecily as a representative of the family.



Photos: WelCom and Archives

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Photo: Hawkes Bay Civil Defence

www.svdp.org.nz

“We pray for our brothers and *“E inoi ana mātou mō ō mātou tūākana me ō mā*

On February 13 and 14, Cyclone Gabrielle lashed several areas across the North Island with gale-force winds and record rainfall causing multiple landslips and many rivers to burst their banks, devastating affected regions. Sadly, 11 people nationally lost their lives. A National State of Emergency was declared on Tuesday, 14 February and was lifted on Tuesday, 14 March. The regions are now in the recovery phase facing months and even years of repair.

Gabrielle’s horrific impacts on Hawke’s Bay and Wairoa regions claimed lives and caused widespread flooding that washed away homes, and isolated communities, leaving thousands of people displaced. Homes and vehicles were destroyed, animals lost, and crops and pastures ruined.

Three weeks after Gabrielle, WelCom visited people in parishes and schools in Hawke’s Bay, as part of the Palmerston North Diocese, to connect and to hear first-hand their stories. Road closures prevented access to Wairoa. While not all

of Hawke’s Bay was physically impacted, the devastation, loss, economic affects and emotional toll has left its mark on many. People have been deeply grateful for prayers and support from around New Zealand and overseas. They ask that we keep them in our thoughts and prayers as they make their way forward, and that we to continue to donate to the flood appeals for much needed support over the weeks and months ahead.

Photos: Annette Scullion, WelCom

Fr Paul Kerridge, parish priest, Holy Trinity, Central Hawke’s Bay: We’re lucky here in Waipukurau and Waipawa when you see what’s happened further north. But, the torrent of water from the heavy rain up in the back country brought a lot of slips and damage to farmlands and coastland areas. The main areas affected are Pōrangahau and parts of Waipawa. Blocked bridges and culverts caused damage and rubbish, debris and whatever else in the way of the flood waters ended up flattening fences. Waipawa River breached its stopbanks. Family and friends

have helped clear up but costs of replacing fencing will be high. Some were able to harvest the crops in advance of the rains, others lost a lot of stock and their hill pastures are gone. Government and rural support has been generous and our local Church response has been through the local Mayoral fund, St Vincent de Paul and the Diocesan fund. The needs will become clearer once things have settled in six months’ time. It is important to see ourselves as community first and that our Church service is uplifting for people coming together.



Fr Paul Kerridge, parish priest (second left), Donna Te Amo, parish secretary (right), with Chris and Debbie Minehan, CHB parishioners and farmers.

Betty Knewstubb-Brown, Principal and Ngatel Tiuku, Deputy Principal, St Joseph’s School, Waipukurau: From our perspective, we weren’t badly impacted in Waipukurau. Flooding hit Waipawa and some students experienced flooding. There were some road closures and trouble getting to work and school. Our school was closed for four days as there was no water supply. The CHB District Council’s response was fantastic with their communication out to people. They made sure everyone had water and once we were sorted here, they sent crews to Taradale to help there. There have been hidden stresses and trauma for people. During the week of the cyclone there was no communication for four or five days. Being cut off from people was hugely stressful. When we all came back to school it rained heavily and that brought more stress and the wind left people on edge. But the students here are quite sheltered and not aware of the level of devastation elsewhere as they can’t see it. We held a mufti day to raise money to

go to the diocesan fund and we’ve tried to get back to normal quickly by having our swimming sports and the senior students attending the Grid Leadership conference. We have tried to just keep going but at the back of teachers’ minds, there is

a level of anxiety. As a staff we have a messaging group and its good to share comments and light relief. All the principals in the area Zoomed in on a daily basis with aligned messages. We’re a tight community – that’s who we are.



Pictured: Betty Knewstubb-Brown, Principal (r) and Ngatel Tiuku, Deputy Principal (l) and students getting back to ‘normal’.



Homes, buildings, orchards and farmlands were left in ruins by Cyclone Gabrielle, which will take months to repair.

Gerard Minehan, CHB District Councillor, Waipukurau Story’s Clothing owner, and local parishioner: After the cyclone just over 600 urban and residential houses were affected in CHB, including the Lower Waipawa and Pōrangahau townships. CHB set up evacuation centres and provided meals, clothing items and general flood support. Driving down the main streets you don’t see the damage but some of the rural areas were devastated with massive land slips, major bridges in

farming communities out, roading, fencing and stock gone and some communities cut off for weeks. The immediate response was very good with volunteers helping in the evacuation centres and dealing with water, clothing, items, information pamphlets, and helping with the clean up. People were initially in state of shock, as they never thought Waipawa River’s stopbanks would burst. The Waipukurau River held to within about 3cms. The flow on effects from the damage to CHB and wider HB to the local economy



are yet to unfold. The estimate for the total damage for CHB alone is looking like it will be well over \$100m to get everything back.



Gabrielle’s flood waters and debris tore through Pakowhai Rd farmlands and surrounding orchards leaving carnage and destruction everywhere.

sisters. Lord hear our prayer.”

tou tēina. E te Ariki whakarongo mai ki a mātou.”

George Rogers, Principal, St John's College, Hastings: Sunshine goes a long way after a storm and so much rain. Our school was closed for a week and to have everyone back was a good step forward. We've got families who lost everything but were pleased when we reopened. We've been trying to get back to normal as much as we can. We've had to adjust the term's calendar to allow for extended travel times due to road damage.

It's something I've never experienced. The hardest part was being disconnected from the outside world for several days. People in Hastings had no idea what had happened to the people in Napier and vice versa. We were literally standing still in time.

To look around here, everything looks normal but half an hour from here there is absolute carnage. Some pockets have been very badly hit. The primary industry has been hit hard and an unknown is how long the disruptions are going to go on for.

My concern has been the longer-term impact on the staff and boys. We have staff and about 100 boys coming over from Napier each day and they pass through the areas of devastation so that is highly stressful.

The Catholic community



St John's College students, helping clean up out at Eskdale.

Photo: Supplied

support has been unreal. Liam Greer and his team from Palmerston North Diocese office arrived with three loads of food, blankets and clothing. We've been getting support and calls from other schools around the country and everyone has been so giving.

The St John's response is for our staff, families and boys to go out and help others. For me, what is special about us as a school, is doing, but not being seen – that is important.

We're immensely grateful for the support and the prayers for Hawke's Bay.



the Prime Minster, Police, the Army and sharing personal human stories, such as the guy who cycled 15kms to get his daughter's teddy bear left behind.

Sr Helen O'Sullivan rmdm, pastoral coordinator, Catholic Parish of Napier: Our sisters in Napier had no power or water for several days but were all safe and well taken care of. I and others in the parish were able to take communion to the sick and they were pleased to see us. Those I connected with weren't badly impacted but I know of a few people who have been interrupted hugely. Our local radio station, Hawkes Bay Breeze, was a constant source of authentic information throughout each day and were able to negate some of the many false rumours circulating, by providing good intelligent interviews with

Fr Paul Finlayson ssc and Fr Trung Nguyen, parish priest and assistant priest, Catholic Parish of Hastings: We were deeply touched and overwhelmed with people's generosity at St Peter Chanel Church, with donations of food and blankets in the first weeks after the cyclone. The ongoing needs remains and SVdP has also been very supportive with goods. Some have gone to Kainga Pacifica Services at the Aubert Centre in Flaxmere for seasonal workers. Several people helped clean up houses and properties and were out visiting people. It's been amazing to see how strong people's faith is despite the challenges – despite no house to live in, they have still come to Sunday Mass each week. There is overwhelming and ongoing support through prayer. People are looking out for each other and



supporting one another in different ways. The vineyards and orchard people have been severely hit and they have been trying to get people in groups of 10 to remove the silt so their trees wouldn't die. In times of trouble a lot more people come to Sunday Mass. We pray for the cyclone-affected people at Mass every Sunday. The hope is always there. Without that inner strength people couldn't cope and persevere.

Fr Barry Scannell sm, parish priest, Catholic Parish of Napier: While the town area of Napier was not affected, some of our parishioners and families at our schools have been. Some lost their houses, and sadly, some lost their lives. We had two funerals in the parish for lives lost.

The biggest issue in the first week was living without power. The first couple of days people didn't have a clue about what was going on. Everything went dead about 7.30pm on Tuesday 14 February and there was no power, no traffic lights, no lighting or heating for a week. Supermarkets and petrol stations were closed and some people waited two days to be rescued. Cooking was done with a BBQ, using food out of the freezer.

Jemma McLean, Principal, St Patrick's Primary School, Napier: It's been important for us as staff to sit around and talk. Our response has been team collaboration. The strain we've seen on staff and families is immense, so we lean on each other. The cyclone was like something out of a horror movie – an apocalypse. One staff member estimated every minute, enough rain fell in Esk Valley to fill 72 Olympic-sized swimming pools. Those of us who live in Hastings and Napier were completely disconnected. We were totally reliant on AM radio for any communication those first few days. Every hour on the hour we sat in the car to hear the radio to find out what was going on. Roading was out due the huge amount of washed-out bridges. There was a big impact on families. Some didn't know we had reopened, as there was no communication. We took to door knocking to connect with families. When the rain returned, children hid under tables and couldn't sleep due to trauma triggers.

People have been very generous bringing items for people in need. Someone donated \$500 for fuel to get a generator going. Others have given food for those out there day after day digging and clearing mud and cleaning. The clean-up

There were some truly heroic responses. I personally know two young sons of some parishioners who, using their surf boards, rescued 14 people at Puketapu, off roofs or from clinging to a tree. The flood waters were about two or three feet below power lines. Another parishioner in Dartmoor on Swamp Road, looked out his window and saw a tsunami of water. He ended up with 150 people camped at his place.

People have been resilient and very giving, making sure they contributed to what was needed. We have really appreciated people's help and so many groups have responded from around New Zealand. The best way to donate is through the Diocesan fund or through St Vincent de Paul who know what to do with the money at a local level.



Fr Barry Scannell sm, parish priest.

The lesson for me is that this has happened in our history before and will happen again. The early Marists went to Pakowhai and got flooded. They then went to Meanee and got flooded again, so they moved up to St Mary's. The very places that got flooded down the ages are the same places that have been flooded again.



Pictured (l-r): Karina Campbell, DRS; Jemma McLean, Principal; Paul Wallace, Deputy Principal.

was all being done by volunteers. The children at school have been worried about pets so they held a fundraiser to help. Other schools in the diocese in Taranaki and Dannevirke have donated money. St Margaret's College in Wellington donated \$7000 for three schools in Eskdale. Sacred Heart primary school in Wellington donated truckloads of food and had it transported up to St John's College.

Once the initial adrenalin wore off, people became quickly fatigued, drained and on edge. Sleeping patterns were disrupted, and nerves were frayed with the noise of helicopters constantly flying overhead. Some of the donated money is being used for counselling. For all we've been through, we live in hope and gratitude and being united.

feel comfortable with us. Following the cyclone, a team from MSD is working here with us so we can connect with people quickly in a space they know, and not have the barriers that can be felt in larger

organisations for people needing help. Pasifika Services has gained a lot of respect by Pacific people for Pacific people.



Tavita Faka'osi (far left) with Kainga Pasifika Services and MSD teams working together to support people impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle.



Farmlands, orchards, buildings, businesses and homes along Pakowhai road between Napier and Hastings have been devastated by the flood. Jo, a local resident has been working each day to do what she can to help clean up. ‘The road is looking a lot better than it was. But the ongoing challenges to people’s properties will be harder in a few months’ time when the money runs out and they don’t have access to digging equipment, or their properties remain yellow stickered. Everywhere you look, there’s a fence down, a straw hay bale in the wrong place, a lone digger hard at work. My faith has helped get me through day by day. If it wasn’t for my faith, I wouldn’t be able to get up in the morning each day to face this.’

Charles Ropitini, Catechist, Hastings Pastoral Area, Councillor, Māori Liaison: The force of water, mud and silt coming through the Omaha area was huge and took out fences, buildings, machinery and gravestones at the urupa at St Peter’s Anglican Church on the corner of Swamp Rd and Taihape Rd. Across the road, the statue of Our Lady of the Crossroads stands quietly in an encased clear frame. I came down the day after the cyclone fully expecting Mary to have been lost to the floods. But she hadn’t moved. This was noticed by many around. The Omaha Marae diagonally across the corner intersection from Mary has been a

hub for many whānau displaced by Gabrielle, providing food, welfare, clothing and shelter. Every night there has been an ecumenical church service at the marae where everyone is welcome. It is hosted by the Anglicans, the Ratana give the prayers of the faithful, I have been involved with the readings and the Mormons, whose church is along the road, close the service. The service is full every night and many people have been coming from all around to offer prayers. It’s been important to come together as one. I think of Matthew 24:40 – ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’



Charles Ropitini at Mary of the Crossroads, cnr Swamp Rd and Taihape Rd, Ohama, Hastings.

Melissa Paul, Wairoa Catholic Marae: On the morning of Tuesday 14 February, the whole Wairoa town and district woke up to the devastation of cyclone Gabrielle. The initial power cut, water restrictions, road closures were bad, but worst of all, the phone and internet communication lines were down. Whānau that live on North Clyde side of Wairoa were directly affected – 100 families either had their homes flooded or they live in areas that were evacuated. These whānau found refuge with other whānau members, Wairoa War Memorial Hall and Taihoa Marae. Our beautiful little church on our Catholic marae was swamped. Flooding and silt of up to a metre high entered all four buildings of our Tawhiti-a-Maru Marae. We were blessed the Marist community of the Society of Mary responded to the clean-up of St Theresa’s church immediately with the support of

volunteers and whānau of the Latter Day Saints. The clean-up continues. The photos by Pā Rob Devlin sm of last month’s working bee on the Feast of Annunciation show many hands make light work. We continue to work with the Palmerston North Diocese about insurance and we have received monetary and koha from local government, iwi, whānau and friends near and far. It has been humbling. **Fr Rob Devlin, parish priest, Wairoa:** At the Annunciation Mary gave her YES to God. Her ‘Karanga’ welcomed God into our humanity. On the Feast of the Annunciation last month, almost six weeks after the initial clean up from the flood, another working bee was held – with Karanga, Waiata, Karakia, Popoporoaki – as the whānau of Tawhiti-a-Maru Catholic Marae and St Therese’s Church farewelled

Jim Leogreen, St Vincent de Paul Hastings Area Council President: Many people who have been left homeless have been doubling up with other families. For example we have families of five living with another family of five. Our supporting these families is a priority in this disaster. We have been working with the schools to notify us of families needing food baskets. The donor aspect among the community has been wonderful, but there is such a thing as ‘donor fatigue’ and in six to nine months, we will still need bedding and clothing. Many people have lost their homes. People coming into Vinnies stores just want to be heard. We’re all here to help.



Volunteers and staff at work in Hastings Vinnies store. Vinnies has been providing support with blankets, towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, food and vouchers to help with food and petrol.



Jo Doyle, Principal, St Joseph’s School, Wairoa: Here in Wairoa, our threefold community of faith-school, parish and Tawhiti-a-Marae – is woven together. Our Tawhiti-a-Marae whānau were severely impacted by the flood. This is felt throughout our school and St Peter’s parish communities. Our isolation is creating many challenges as we are cut off with a 10-hour drive to Hawke’s Bay. We have many children who attend boarding schools south of Wairoa and this puts financial and added stress to whānau. Our health and education services are all delivered from Hawke’s Bay and access to services is limited. But we are a resilient community and are adapting to challenges as they arise. Our school charism is ‘never see a need without doing something about it’.

closed by the Ministry of Education due to repairs needed from the flood damage. We had a building project coming up, so we had cleared two classrooms. We called the diocese, as they own the buildings, to see if we could help the Nuhaka school community. They gave approval and Nuhaka School joined us on our St Joseph’s School site on 6 March. We had a pōwhiri in our school church where we welcomed the Nuhaka whānau

community. Nuhaka School also joined in with our fun activities on St Joseph’s Day, 22 March. We see the Catholic Social Teaching Principle – to protect the poor and vulnerable displayed throughout our community. We would like to thank everyone for the many prayers, putea, cards and donations we have received from our wider Catholic community and throughout New Zealand. The support has been overwhelming and we feel blessed.



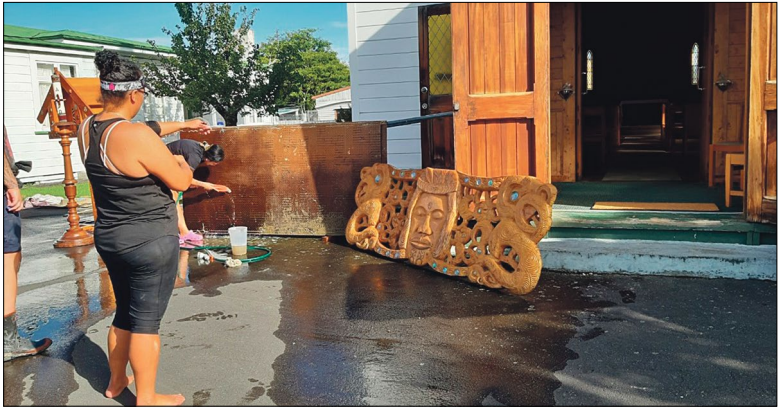
St Joseph’s School Wairoa supported Nuhaka School community while Nuhaka School was repaired after flood damage. Photo: Supplied



St Peter’s Anglican Church on the corner of Swamp Rd and Taihape Rd, is across the road from the Catholic grounds where Our lady of the Crossroads stands. The urupa in St Peter’s Church grounds was hit hard by the flood.

their sacred taonga from the devastated buildings to the warmth and safety of St Peter’s Parish Church across the south side of Wairoa’s town bridge. Large precious carvings were gently removed from broken walls, lovingly cleaned, and began their short hikoi to safety.

Karanga, Waiata and Karakia welcomed the transfer of these ancestral treasures from church and marae to another for safe keeping until the journey of reinstatement is completed. And Mary set out as quickly as she could to meet the needs of others....



The whānau of Tawhiti-a-Maru Catholic Marae and St Therese’s Church farewelled their sacred taonga from the devastated buildings to the warmth and safety of St Peter’s Parish Church. Photos: Supplied



Young Catholics | Rangatahi Katorika

Teachers' Commissioning Masses

Hundreds of teachers and staff from the Archdiocese of Wellington's Catholic schools travelled from all over the lower North Island to gather for their annual Commissioning Mass, held on 14 March at St Mary of the Angels Church.

Presided by Cardinal John Dew, with Archbishop Paul Martin sm and priests from Wellington and Lower Hutt, the teachers were commissioned for the year ahead. Many were also congratulated for completing annual qualifications and certificates in Catholic Education.

In his homily Cardinal John said, 'The task, the call, the mission, the privilege of any teacher in a Catholic school, primary or secondary, is to enlighten the minds and hearts of their students by helping them to meet, to encounter Jesus Christ.

'Our mission is to bring students to life by knowing Jesus who is the Light of the world. We want them to see His light, we want them to Walk his Way, to Tell his Truth to Live his Life.

'It is God's call to you to give life and light and hope to those entrusted to your care. Let God enlighten your hearts and you will enlighten the hearts, the lives of others.'

At the end of Mass, Cardinal

John addressed several teachers who have recently gained further qualifications. 'To help teachers in their mission in Catholic schools and as faith educators, the Bishops of New Zealand, over many years have strongly encouraged teachers to work towards qualifications in religious education and Catholic character,' Cardinal John said.

'I am very grateful for the large number of our teachers in our schools who have responded generously this call. Over the last few years a significant number have annually completed qualifications and gained certificates. Thank you for your willingness to do

this, and for your hard work and commitment. We all congratulate you.'

A Commissioning Mass was held for archdiocesan teachers at the top of the South Island, at St Peter Chanel Church, Motueka, on 17 February. Also in February, Commissioning Masses were held in the Diocese of Palmerston North for teachers in Taranaki at St Joseph's Church, New Plymouth, celebrated by Fr Simon Story; and for teachers in Manawatu at St Brigid's Church, Pahiatua, celebrated by Fr Marcus Francis. The Mass for Hawkes Bay teachers, scheduled for 16 February, was cancelled due to Cyclone Gabrielle.



Teachers from Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Wellington gathered for their annual Commissioning Mass, held this year at St Mary of the Angels Church, Wellington. Photo: WelCom



Students from St Patrick's College Wellington led the capital city's 2023 St Patrick's Day parade along Wellington's waterfront on Sunday afternoon, 12 March. The fun, family parade began in front of Te Papa Museum and moved along the waterfront to finish up outside the TSB arena at Queen's Wharf with live New Zealand and Irish music and entertainment. Hundreds joined the parade, dressed in a sea of green, including Irish groups, pipers and dancers from across the Wellington region. Photo: WelCom

For every \$1 you donate the NZ Aid Programme will add \$3

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Catholic Youth New Testament

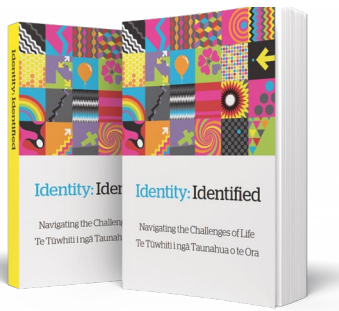
In response to the Synod on Youth in 2018, the Bible Society of New Zealand has developed a unique youth Catholic New Testament.

Identity:Identified has been designed to help teenagers who wouldn't normally read Sacred Scripture to discern their calling in life. It includes inserts addressing some of the big challenges teenagers face from a Catholic perspective, that were identified at the Synod. Topics include loneliness, peer pressure, living in a sexualised world, online bullying, coping with rejection, why am I here, where is God when it hurts, why am I so anxious, making good choices, is life really worth living.

This special publication incorporates the revised Good News translation of the relevant New Testament passages that touch on the above issues.

This material was written by bishops and theologians from seven countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Contributors include Cardinal John Dew and Bishop Michael Dooley, New Zealand; Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Australia; the late Cardinal Sim, Borneo; Archbishop Simon Poh, Malaysia; Bishop Broderick Pabillo, Philippines; and others.

There are also QR codes that link to videos of young people and others talking about their struggles and how they managed to get through.



There is also a downloadable App that links to the inserts, videos and daily readings.

Cardinal John has given his full support to this special New Testament.

'This wonderful book will be a practical tool to help everyone but especially young people to follow Jesus as they navigate the challenges of life and trust him as a true friend and companion. Reading *Identity:Identified* will remind teenagers that God loves each one of us and most importantly, will never abandon us especially in our most vulnerable times. This youth New Testament has my full support and that of the Bishops in Aotearoa New Zealand.'

Identity:Identified was launched in Wellington at the Youth Mass, 26 March, celebrated by Archbishop Paul Martin sm.

Contact John.bergin@biblesociety.org.nz or check out identityidentified.nz for more details.



Cardinal John gives a copy of *Identity:Identified* to Pope Francis during a visit to Rome in May last year. When Cardinal John showed the Pope that he was quoted from *Christus Vivit*, he commented it looked interesting and would read it! Photo: Supplied

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World Day of Prayer for Vocations

Lucienne Hensel
Church Mission Team
Archdiocese of Wellington

On Good Shepherd Sunday, 30 April 2023, the fourth Sunday of Easter, we are invited to pray for those called to serve through priestly vocation. In the Gospel reading for the day (Jn 10:1-10) Christ is described as the ‘Good Shepherd’ who lays down his life for his sheep. The day also marks

For me, the call to priesthood is an invitation to have a personal friendship with Jesus and to bring Jesus to the people I am called to serve, because of the love of Christ for me.



Fr Joy Thottankara.

Whichever path you follow, you have to be willing to take a risk in life. I always keep in mind the promise God made in the book of Jeremiah in the Bible – God knows what plans he has for us, and his plans for us are good. Making the choice to stay on the journey to priesthood took courage, but I have never regretted the decision. Being a priest gives me the opportunity to bring the love of Christ to the people I am called to serve. This gives me the joy and energy to continue my ministry of the priesthood.

Fr Joy is serving as Assistant Priest at Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish, Wellington.
Photo: WelCom

These and other vocation stories of our priests and seminarians are online at wellingtonpriests.org and in the vocation booklet for schools ‘Dare to Say Yes’. Contact Lucienne Hensel at lhensel@wn.catholic.org for copies for your parish or school.

➤➤ *Pray for Vocations, p 19.*
➤➤ *Novitiate life at Kopua Monastery, p 20.*

the beginning of our National Vocations Awareness Week. Please consider who you could pray for, invite, and encourage this year. Visit wellingtonpriests.org to find out more about the call to diocesan priesthood in the Archdiocese of Wellington. For more information please contact the Archdiocese Vocations Director, Fr Andrew Kim, at wellingtonpriests@gmail.com or ph 022 102 2011.

The seminary was a time to grow and mature. I was asking myself: ‘Do I really have what it takes?’ But deep down I knew this was not something I was following blindly, but a call that was not coming from me. God was simply asking me to trust and to follow.



Fr Michael Bellizzi.

The call to be a priest is not something you come up with, but something that is offered to you again and again. If it is really coming from God, the call to the priesthood will not go away even if you try to block it out of your life. God is very gentle but also persistent. He will not choose things for us but leaves us free to choose ourselves. The more we love God, the more willing we will be to risk everything for him.

Fr Michael is serving as Assistant Priest at the Catholic Parish of Wellington South.
Photo: Supplied

Please pray for our seminarians

- Matthew White, from Te Ngakau Tapu parish, is on pastoral placement in Ōtari Parish.
- Kinh Nguyen, from Vietnam, is on pastoral placement at St Joseph’s Parish, Upper Hutt.
- Emilio Capin, from the Philippines, is in his fourth year of formation at Holy Cross Seminary.
- Gerson Badayos, from the Philippines, is in his third year of formation at Holy Cross Seminary.

Wellington CLC supports Fiji arable training project

Sarah Dench

The Christian Life Community is a lay organisation that meets regularly in small groups to pray, learn and practice Ignatian Spirituality. Our emphasis is finding God in all things. Members seek to find where God is calling them in individual missions, and how to support missions developed by the whole community. During the 2020 lockdowns, when we were unable to leave our houses and had to meet by Zoom, our CLC Wellington members considered how we could develop a community mission. As citizens of a Pacific nation, we looked for projects in the Pacific region we could support financially. Phil Brass from Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand gave us information about areas that fitted the CLC charism. We discerned we would support the ‘Tutu project’ in Fiji. The project provides arable training and support to local people. It was founded by the Society of Mary, with whom we have a special friendship. The CLC Wellington Community Mission Project is simple. We invited members for financial donations. These were forwarded to Caritas as our contributions to the work of

the Tutu Rural Training Trust, which runs the Tutu project. The Marist Oceania Province has leased to the Trust for the long-term 1200 acres of mainly arable land on Tavenui Island in Fiji’s Cakaudrove Province. The centre provides:

- non-formal agriculture and small business skills training to the people of the local area and adjacent islands as a free, three-year, live-in course;
- biennial six-month livelihood and skills courses for unmarried women;
- annual short-term couples’ farming courses; and
- village-based extension courses about family health and marriage enrichment.

Caritas keeps us informed on how the Tutu Rural Training Centre is developing. Every \$1 we raise via Caritas is matched with \$3 of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Funding. Donations by CLC Wellington members began in 2021 and raised \$1,525 in the first year. That equated to a total of \$6,100 in support for the project. Donations for the end of the March 2023 will match this amount. CLC Wellington members feel privileged as a community to play a small part in supporting this valuable work among our Pacific neighbours.



Caritas supports young people to become self-employed farmers through non-formal training at the Tutu Rural Training Centre.
Photo: Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand website

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Storm brewing over Pacific nations as climate and debt crises collide

Cardinal Soane Patita
Paini Mafi, Tonga

Across the Pacific, people are picking up the bones of their ancestors like shells on the beach. Burial grounds are being washed away by rising tides. Communities are shoring up seawalls with old tyres.

I was raised on the beautiful island of Tonga. When I was a child, my parents and grandparents would come out every morning to look at the horizon. They would look at the clouds and see the patterns to understand what laid before us that day.

Nowadays, things are different. Children playing and swimming at the beaches see the patterns in the clouds and run back to alert us to a disaster. This is now becoming a regular occurrence.

After storms, I visit my people and I am always lifted by their resilience and their spirit of helping each other. But when I delve deeper, they share their real emotions, which are full of pain, heartache and fear. You see, in the Pacific our people are strong. We are resilient, but even we have our limits. And we have reached our limit.

Nowadays, when I wake up in the morning and look out to sea, I see two clouds. Two dark and looming clouds. One is climate change. This cloud brings rising sea levels, more frequent cyclones and king tides like we have never seen before.

It is joined by another cloud. This one is debt. Increasingly frequent and severe weather means that Pacific Island nations are struggling to rebuild. We feel like we are going backwards.

Vital infrastructure such as homes, bridges, farms and fisheries, take years to rebuild while crops and livestock take a similar period to restore. It is extremely expensive, and it is money we simply don't have.

Last year at the United Nations climate talks, nations agreed on a Loss and Damage fund; a fund created to compensate developing



Agreeing to the Kioa Declaration, when Pacific groups came together to discuss their shared issues in the region prior to COP27. Photo: Caritas Australia



Two dark and looming clouds over Tonga are climate change bringing rising sea levels, more frequent cyclones and king tides as never seen before; and debt – increasingly frequent and severe weather means that Pacific Island nations are struggling to rebuild. Photo: Michael Fitzsimons

Damage is meant to pay for the intangible as well as the tangible, for the loss not just of my home, but for the loss of my ancestors' graves, for the loss of the way of life that I grew up with on this beautiful island, which is slowly being worn away by rising tides and disasters.

We need the Loss and Damage fund to truly listen to Pacific Island communities. It must be accessible to those who need it, and not push countries further into debt that we can ill afford. It must prioritise the most vulnerable, including women



‘The global community has an ethical and moral obligation to support Pacific Island countries to adapt to climate change’
- Cardinal Soane Patita Paini Mafi

and girls, children, the elderly and people living with disabilities.

The global community has an ethical and moral obligation to support Pacific Island countries to adapt to climate change. We are at a critical time in our fight for climate resilience, especially in the Pacific which is facing existential threats. Put simply, it is now or never. The real challenge for the world is to see with their eyes, and listen with their ears, to those on the frontlines of climate change. Listen, see, then act, and act now before it is too late.

Cardinal Soane Patita Paini Mafi is the first ever cardinal from Tonga and the youngest member of the College of Cardinals. He is also the President of Caritas Oceania and represents the region on key issues, especially climate change.

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countries impacted by climate change, like my home of Tonga in the Pacific Island nations.

We don't contribute much to climate change. In fact, we contribute less than 0.5 per cent of all global emissions. But we certainly pay for it in our futures, and the futures of our children. We need compensation for this injustice.

The Loss and Damage fund is an important step towards climate justice, but we can't forget that the 2009 pledge to spend \$100 billion a year in climate aid has still not been met. In fact, the pledge to spend \$100 billion a year is far from achieved.

Right now, the Pacific region needs nearly US\$1 billion per year in financing to adapt our infrastructure to climate change. We receive much less than this.

Unfortunately, even when money is sent to the Pacific for climate change adaptation and mitigation, it is spent in a questionable manner.

Large infrastructure projects like wharfs and airports have taken up over US\$300 million in funds intended to address climate change in the Pacific yet contribute more to economic development than helping communities adapt to climate change.

I hear from communities in Tonga, Papua New Guinea's Admiralty Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Samoa who face serious challenges in accessing funds; challenges like lengthy accreditation delays, or onerous and complex grant application processes.

Women and disability groups rarely know what options might be available to them, and it isn't easy to figure it out either. To properly support and compensate the Pacific region, funds must reach the right people in a timely fashion, before our homes, livelihoods and culture are destroyed forever by climate change.

'Loss and Damage' is at its heart about climate injustice. Loss and

Anzac Day, 25 April 2023, National Day of Remembrance

Te Rā o Anzac, 25 o Paenga-whāwhā 2023, He Rā Whakamaharatanga a Motu

Pilgrimage, not just a visit



Chaplain Brian Fennessy ED, RNZChD

Later in the year I'm going on a Battlefield Tour of Germany including a visit to the Mohne and Eder Dams, of the Dambusters fame, and Colditz Castle. Charles Upham VC & Bar was a prisoner at Colditz for about six months.

Commemorations of Battles like Messines and Cassino, and the growing attendance at Gallipoli for Anzac Day help us to remember part of New Zealand's heritage.

Battlefield Tours can be just a holiday with friends, or they can be a pilgrimage to sites that are meaningful and part of our heritage. A pilgrimage is a journey, a physical and a spiritual journey. The intention is to affirm and strengthen our values, or religious faith, by our participation in the journey.

Catholics are familiar with religious pilgrimages to Jerusalem, Lourdes and even to North Auckland to the site of Bishop Pompallier's shrine. The ritual of pilgrimages seems to be part of the human and Christian condition.

There is a transcendent dimension to a pilgrimage. To visit a site where people have been willing to sacrifice themselves, in a sense of service, for the 'love of their neighbour' speaks to the human heart. Pilgrimages and memorials introduce us to a legacy that reaches beyond a mere visit to a site. We endeavour to link the past to the present and apply it to the future.

Pilgrimages often conclude with a visit to a grave, shrine, or cemetery, where we stop, and offer a prayer and pause to remember human courage and service.

From a military perspective we normally recite the Ode, with its refrain 'we will remember them', play the *Last Post* and lay poppies in remembrance.

By our participation we acknowledge the heroic service of others and consciously or unconsciously pledge ourselves in the communal duty to work for peace and the wellbeing of society.



Parade to the cemetery, led by bagpipers and flagbearers in the French town of Nieppe. Photos: Supplied



Service in Nieppe Cemetery, France.

“Commemorations of Battles like Messines and Cassino, and the growing attendance at Gallipoli for Anzac Day help us to remember part of New Zealand's heritage.”



“Each commemoration records a story of past deeds of service, valour, courage, and sacrifice; it is also a living reminder of the Anzacs who lived these stories and in time became part of the heritage of New Zealand families and communities.”

This Anzac Day there will be countless services throughout New Zealand and at overseas memorials.

Each commemoration records a story of past deeds of service, valour, courage, and sacrifice; it is also a living reminder of the Anzacs who lived these stories and in time became part of the heritage of New Zealand families and communities.

Anzac Day observances have the potential to be a pilgrimage, often beginning with a service at a hall then a parade to the cenotaph.

It is one of the few events within New Zealand where a prayer is still offered and perhaps a passage from the Scriptures is read.

In New Zealand, where over 50 per cent of New Zealanders will state on their census form 'No Religion', Anzac Day still carries an expression of the transcendent and the message of eternal life. Perhaps this is why attendance is significant in all centres. On Anzac Day, peoples' innate religious dimension is given an opportunity to be expressed.

Our affirmation is shown by standing in silence as the Ode is recited, the *Last Post* and Reveille are played, and we lay wreaths and poppies in remembrance.

By our attendance we give public expression to our remembrance and thanksgiving and our intention to uphold human dignity and freedom.

Lest we forget.

Chaplain Brian Fennessy ED, RNZChD, is parish priest of Selwyn Parish, Lincoln and currently a chaplain on Standby Army Reserve.



Anzac Day at Gallipoli – with the Sphinx in the background.

Photo: Joe Armao

In June 2017 I attended the centennial commemorations for the Battle of Messines. My main reason for attending the commemorations was to commemorate the death of Fr James McMenamin, an army chaplain from the Wellington Archdiocese, who was killed, from an artillery blast, while officiating at the burial of several soldiers during WWI.

The commemoration in Nieppe, a French town near the Belgium border, where Fr McMenamin is buried in the priests' plot in the local cemetery, included a parade along the main street, and a service at the cemetery, laying of poppies and the *Last Post*. This was followed by a mayoral reception with speeches and refreshments.

Pilgrimages also possess a social dimension; friendship and enjoyment are part of any pilgrimage. That evening there was a Mass in the parish church in Messines. This, like many commemorations, remembered in thanksgiving the life and ministry of a New Zealander.



A Litany Revisited

A once popular form of prayer honouring Our Lady, Mary, Mother of Jesus, is rarely heard today, **Fr James Lyons** writes.

The Litany of Loreto dates from 1531. It was officially approved by Pope Sixtus V in 1587, its contents almost unchanged in the nearly five centuries since. But, in recent decades the Litany has dropped out of use.

Loreto is a town in the Italian province of Ancona. Its Basilica, the Shrine of the Holy House of

the Blessed Virgin Mary, is still a renowned pilgrimage destination. The Litany was first prayed there.

Traditionally, a litany is a series of invocations or intercessions. The more ancient one is the Litany of the Saints, prayed at the Easter Vigil and in the Ordination rite. An abbreviated version is used in the infant baptism liturgy.

Litany of Loreto actually contains six litanies, pointing to: (1) Mary’s holiness, (2) Mary as Mother, (3) Mary the Virgin, (4) Symbols of Mary, (5) Mary the Helper, (6) Mary as Queen.

This edition of WelCom opens a series on this Litany. Fr James Lyons explores the intercessions relating to the ‘Symbols of Mary’ and ‘Mary

the Helper’. There are 18 in total: *Mirror of Justice, Seat of Wisdom, Cause of our Joy, Spiritual Vessel, Vessel of Honour, Singular Vessel of Devotion, Mystical Rose, Tower of David, Tower of Ivory, House of Gold, Ark of the Covenant, Gate of Heaven, Morning Star, Health of the Sick, Refuge of Sinners, Solace of Migrants, Comforter of the Afflicted,*

Help of Christians. The series will examine these titles, placing each one in a context relevant to the experiences and aspirations of today’s Christians. The Litany of Loreto need not be lost.

Mirror of Justice

This special series begins with *Mirror of Justice*.

James Lyons
Priest of the archdiocese

Mirror of Justice
*Mirror, mirror on the wall
Who’s the fairest of us all?*

The fairy tale rhyme demands much from the piece of reflective glass. Nothing less than a choice in favour of the user.

“Mary, Mother of Jesus, as Mirror of Justice, reflects in her own life all that is fair and right and just.”

The magic mirror in JK Rowling’s creation, Harry Potter, has a similar role, showing the viewer whatever that person most desperately wants to see.

Mirrors in Fun Fairs deliberately distort your appearance, making you look misshapen, distorted, grotesque. And all for entertainment.

When I look into a mirror I expect to see no one but myself. The mirror may help some people to improve their appearance: to straighten a tie, to reapply makeup, to detect and eliminate a smudge, to

rearrange a hairstyle – but it makes no judgement, gives no assessment. A cryptic crossword clue gave me the best description of a mirror: *Its use can be seen on reflection*.

Mary, Mother of Jesus, as *Mirror of Justice*, reflects in her own life all that is fair and right and just. She is the one who ‘proclaims’, ‘magnifies’, makes ever so clear the

presence of ‘the Lord’ [Luke 1:46-55]. Her *Magnificat* is a powerful statement, both a song of praise and a celebration of belief in God’s mercy and compassion, committed by promises to lift up the lowly, to set things right.

God comes to us through Mary, in Jesus her Son, and calls us through her own lived experience with Jesus.

All concerned with justice, who ‘hunger and thirst’ for what is right [Matthew 5:6], need only look at Mary to measure their progress,

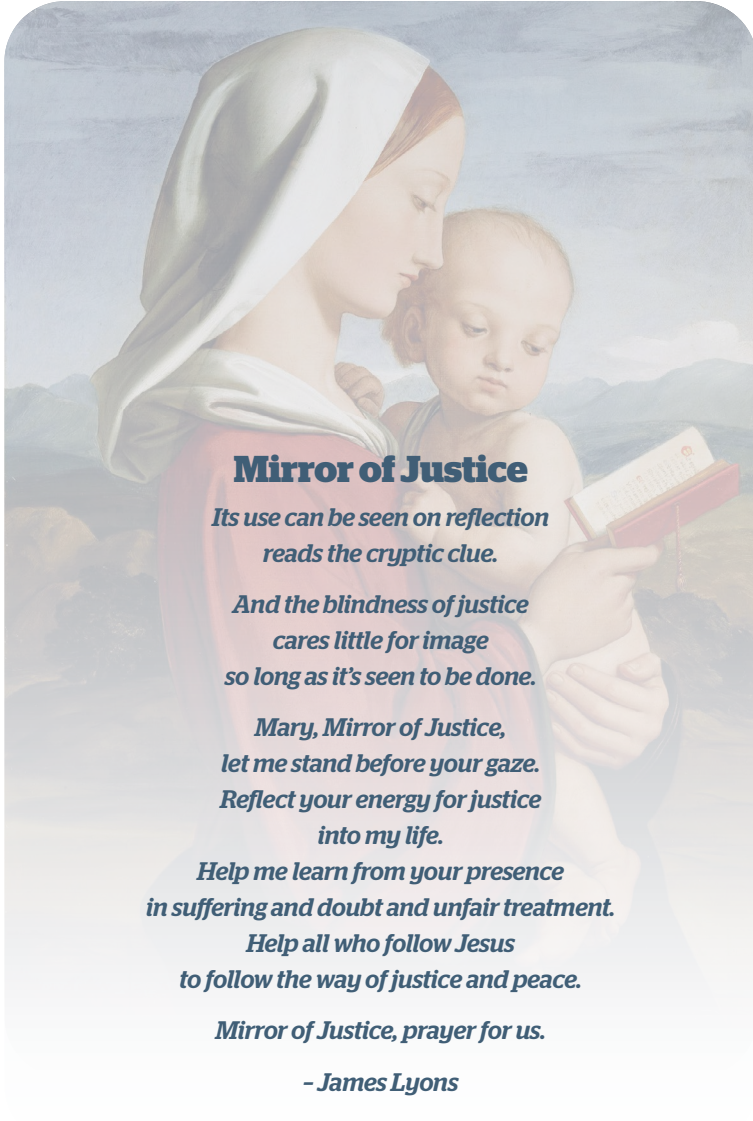
to see what might still need straightening or removing in their own lives for justice to prevail.

As a *Mirror of Justice*, Mary is the image of powerlessness for all people who struggle for acceptance or identity. She reflects the sorrow in the hearts of those deprived of home or family, and the anguish of those who cannot ease the agony of others. She knows the suffering of people who have no one to speak for them, and the hurt that ridicule and betrayal bring. The *Mirror of Justice* stands at the foot of the cross and reflects the forgiveness that alone opens up the path to true justice.

Justice understands weakness but never takes sides. Justice is close to the broken hearted and works to heal.

Justice sees with both mind and heart and is thereby blind to much of human reasoning which ignores the heart. Justice is fair beyond words, upholds dignity, reconciles differences, perceives the truth.

Justice is a beach in summer and an open fire in winter.



Mirror of Justice

*Its use can be seen on reflection
reads the cryptic clue.*

*And the blindness of justice
cares little for image
so long as it’s seen to be done.*

*Mary, Mirror of Justice,
let me stand before your gaze.
Reflect your energy for justice
into my life.*

*Help me learn from your presence
in suffering and doubt and unfair treatment.
Help all who follow Jesus
to follow the way of justice and peace.*

Mirror of Justice, prayer for us.

- James Lyons

Gospel Reading: Sunday 2 April 2023

PALM SUNDAY – MATTHEW 21:1-11

When they drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, “The master has need of them.” Then he will send them at once. This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: Say to daughter Zion, “Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”’

The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them,

and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: ‘Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.’

And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, ‘Who is this?’ And the crowds replied, ‘This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.’

The Entry into Jerusalem

Tom Gibson

Matthew’s gospel (21:1-11) describes Jesus riding into Jerusalem on two donkeys, which at first glance seems quite impossible. Matthew’s interpretation may be based on his understanding of Zechariah’s prophecy in the Old Testament, which refers to both a donkey and its colt. Mark more than likely wrote the gospel first then Matthew wrote his gospel later. I believe Mark’s gospel that refers to a single unbroken donkey is factually correct, as Jesus could only ride one.

Matthew’s account tells us the disciples took the donkey and the colt, back to Jesus where they put garments on them, in the context of what happened. We know from Matthew’s gospel that Jesus mounted an unriden colt and rode it before the crowd who were shouting. ‘Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest.’

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowd continued their cheering, some asking, ‘Who is this?’ While others were yelling, ‘This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.’ What a site! What a crowd! What an uproar! How the enemies of Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees must have trembled in their shoes to see all this adulation – despite Jesus’ entrance on an unbroken small donkey. This was the start of Holy Week. The week when Jesus’ enemies struggled to find a cause to put Jesus to death. Every day their efforts to incriminate Jesus were foiled. Finally, they had to grab Jesus and take him away from his adoring multitude so enable them to ridicule, torture and belittle our Saviour, before crucifying him.

What should we make of the fact that the King of the Jews, our King, chose to celebrate his arrival by riding on a small unbroken donkey? Jesus was the essence of humility. There could be no equal by his action; what he did remains remarkable to this day.

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Cathedral corner:
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Fr James Lyons,
Priest of the archdiocese.

Anna Geremia-Young sells houses. She is also a wife and mother, has an Italian background and is a parishioner of Te Awakairangi (formerly Lower Hutt) Parish.

Her monthly advertisement in WelCom promises a donation of \$400 to the Cathedral Restoration Fund for every parishioner who sells their house through her.

And she doesn't mean only Lower Hutt parishioners. A sale through Anna from any parish in the Greater Wellington area will benefit the Cathedral.

What has prompted Anna to make this offer?

Her own home is not in the Cathedral Parish. She has very rarely been to Mass there and has little to do with the Thorndon part of the city.

'The Cathedral belongs to all of us,' she says. 'For Catholics living in the Wellington region, the Archdiocese, the Cathedral is our mother church. We all have a stake in it and should welcome a chance to help its preservation.'

Sacred Heart Cathedral also reminds Anna of her Italian heritage.

'The Basilica architecture is beautiful and so much like I remember from home.'

She is also concerned that,



"As an architectural gem, the Cathedral has both a social and cultural claim to life. But primarily, it represents the foundation stone of Catholicism in the Archdiocese. It is the starting point of all our parishes."

because there are not many examples of this architectural style in New Zealand, we can easily undervalue the little we have.

Anna reflects the message Cardinal John Dew and others have been stressing during the funding campaign.

As an architectural gem, the Cathedral has both a social and

cultural claim to life. But primarily, it represents the foundation stone of Catholicism in the Archdiocese. It is the starting point of all our parishes.

Anna is right. We do all 'have a stake' in its preservation.

Can you help close the gap? If you are planning to sell your house, call Anna!

EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS.

The old adage rings true: Every little bit helps! Donations, of whatever amount, will help and will be gratefully acknowledged.

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DATES AND EVENTS – WHAT'S ON

Sunday 2 April

Palm Sunday.

Monday 3 April

- Chrism Mass – Archdiocese of Wellington Lower North Island, 7pm, St Teresa's Pro-Cathedral, Karori. Celebrant, Archbishop Paul Martin sm.
- Quiet Day for the Creative Soul – facilitator Tracey Young and friends, 10am–2.30pm, Josephite Retreat Centre, Mt St Joseph, 14 Hillside Tce, Whanganui. Register by email pam.hopper@sosj.org.au ph (06) 345-5047 ext 3.

Tuesday 4 April

- Chrism Mass – Archdiocese of Wellington Upper South Island, 11am, St Mary's Church, Blenheim. Celebrant, Archbishop Paul Martin sm.
- Chrism Mass – Diocese of Palmerston North, 12noon, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

Thursday 6 April

Holy Thursday, Triduum.

Friday 7 April

Good Friday, Triduum. Collection for the Holy Places.

Saturday 8 April

Easter Vigil, Triduum.

Sunday 9 April

Easter Sunday, Solemnity. Sunday of the Resurrection.

Saturday 22 April

World Earth Day.

Sunday 23 April

St Joseph's Church Shannon – 60th Jubilee Mass and celebrations, 10am, St Joseph's Church, cnr Grey and Vogel Sts, Shannon, Manawatu. (See this page.)

Tuesday 25 April

Anzac Day – National Day of Remembrance. (See p 16.)

Sunday 30 April

- 4th Sunday of Easter Time. Day of Prayer for Vocations – Seminary Collection.
- St Peter Chanel. Pro-martyr of Oceania – Patron Saint of Oceania.

Sunday 30 April-Saturday 6 May

National Vocations Awareness Week.

Saturday 6 May

Retreat for mothers – 'In the Potter's Hands'. Mothers are invited to come and rest and be blessed by the God, 10am to 3.30pm, Our Lady's Home of Compassion, Rhine St, Island Bay. Please register with Lucienne Hensel by Friday 28 April, l.hensel@wn.catholic.org.nz or ph (04) 496-1715 or 021 164 5800.

Sunday 14 May

Maltese Mass for Mother's Day – 12 noon, celebrated by Michael Bellizzi, at Our Lady of Fatima Church, 169 Main Rd, Tawa. All welcome.

Sunday 28 May

Pentecost Sunday, Solemnity.

Applications invited for Catholic Foundation grants

The Wellington Catholic Foundation of the Archdiocese of Wellington makes a significant grant to the archdiocese each year, including chaplaincies and social services. It also makes funding available to the Archbishop for priests' support and special issues.

The Foundation makes a further four x \$10,000 grants each year for archdiocese parish projects. Parishes are invited to apply for a grant.

Applications for one of the four grants and archdiocese projects are considered at Foundation Board quarterly meetings and must be



THE CATHOLIC FOUNDATION
OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

received one week prior to the meeting. The meeting dates for the remainder of 2023 are 16 May, 12 September and 7 November.

Applications forms are available on the Foundation's website www.catholicfoundation.org.nz or please email the Foundation Secretary at admin@catholicfoundation.org.nz


Pray for Vocations

Fr Trung Nguyen

Director Vocations, Diocese of Palmerston North

As we approach Good Shepherd Sunday, also known as Vocations Sunday, on 30 April, and Vocations awareness week, Sunday 30 April to Saturday 6 May, we recall the words Jesus told us, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers

into his harvest.' (Matthew 9: 37-38). This is our responsibility – to pray for more vocations of priesthood and religious life as well as other vocations. The Diocese of Palmerton North is grateful for the courage and generosity of three students who came from Vietnam to learn English before joining the seminary. We are encouraged men and women who have the desire to serve the people of God in this vocation; 'do not be afraid' to respond to this call.




Students and seminarians (l-r) Hung, Duy, Zung, Lam.

Photo: Supplied

Invitation to St Joseph's Church Shannon 60th Jubilee

'We are having Mass at 10am on Sunday 23 April celebrated by Mons Brian Walsh and a shared morning tea after Mass with a slideshow of historical photos from the opening day to the present day. There will also be a blessing of new Tukutuku panels for our altar. Our small faith community would love to share this special occasion with as many as possible. We would love to celebrate with past parishioners and past pupils of St Joseph school. We also invite anyone local or from far away who is interested, of all denominations and faiths.' – Kathy Bills, St Joseph's, cnr Grey and Vogel Sts, Shannon, Manawatu.




St Joseph's Church Shannon – 60th anniversary Mass, 10am, Sunday, 23 April, for all past and present parishioners and friends.

Supporting arriving refugee families

The Sisters of Compassion launched an appeal in March for donations to help provide essential help to future refugee families arriving to live in Wellington.

In a letter to potential donors congregational Leader, Sr Margaret Ann Mills, writes: 'For many refugee families, being able to stay together provides them with the strength they need to overcome their past difficulties and face the uncertainty and challenge of moving to a new country. Thanks to your ongoing support, the Sisters of Compassion are able to provide essential help to refugee families arriving to live in Wellington, such as Zerai and his family who moved here from Sudan. Your support made all the difference in helping his family start over.

To find out more and to donate please go to the Home of Compassion website: compassion.org.nz



Zerai Mewos, his brother Mewes and his family now settled and living in Wellington.

Photo: Home of Compassion

Correction

In last month's WelCom, in the photo caption about the baptism in Wairoa, the spelling of the surname for Fr Arthur Toothill sm was incorrect.

Day of Prayer for Vocations – Seminary Collection

30 April 2023

and National Vocations Awareness Week

30 April-6 May 2023

World Day of Prayer for Vocations is observed this year on Sunday, April 30, 2023. It is also known as Good Shepherd Sunday. The purpose of this day is to fulfil the Lord’s instruction to, ‘Pray the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his harvest’ – Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2.

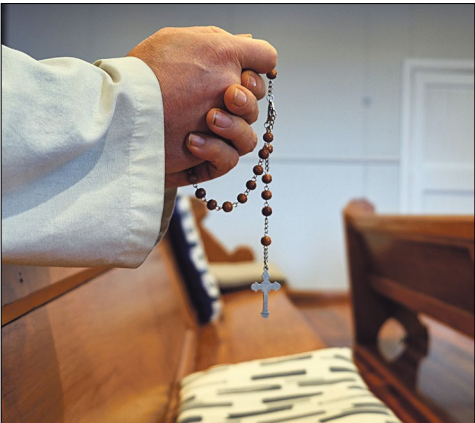
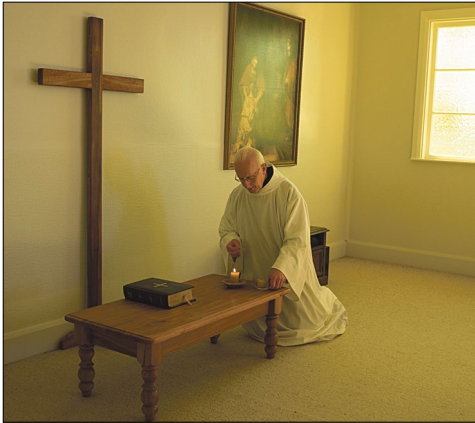
National Vocation Awareness Week is an annual week of the Catholic Church dedicated to promoting vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education, and to renew prayers and support for those considering these vocations.

There will be a page on the National Liturgy Office website nlo.org.nz dedicated to the Day of Prayer for Vocations, Sunday 30 April, and for National Vocations Awareness Week, which will include prayers.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES IN VOCATIONS AWARENESS

- Each of us is called by God. This call is rooted in Baptism and is a way of participating in the mission of Jesus. The promotion of vocational awareness is the responsibility of every baptised person.
- There is a rich variety of calls given by God.
- Most people are called to marriage. Some people are called to be single, and others are called to be sisters, brothers, priests or deacons. All vocations are equal and make up the Body of Christ.
- The seeds of many religious vocations are sown in childhood, even though the person does not make a vocational decision until adulthood.
- Sisters, priests, deacons and brothers are ordinary people who don’t claim to be perfect, but desire to be of service in how they live and work.
- To be a brother, sister, deacon or priest can be an exciting life.
- Priesthood, permanent diaconate and religious life are for healthy, happy and energetic women and men.
- A celibate choice is a valid and healthy way of loving that demands an integrated sense of self and one’s sexuality.
- Personal invitation continues to be the main reason someone chooses to consider religious life, the diaconate and priesthood as possible options.
- There is need for education regarding the language used in relation to: vocations, ministry, religious life, priesthood, diaconate, for example charism, vows, formation, novitiate.
- Religious life, priesthood, diaconate continue to evolve in ways rarely presented by the stereotypical images in the media. Based on ‘A Future Full of Hope’ – Parish Leadership (NCCV Chicago).

Source: Serra Council of Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific (www.scanzspac.org)



Br Jonathan Craven, a junior monk of Kopua Monastery in Central Hawkes Bay, shares insights into his vocation.

Life at Kopua: The Novitiate in a Cistercian Monastery

Early formation is a time for asking questions. When the Cistercian monk St Bernard of Clairvaux first joined Citeaux monastery in the 12th century he would repeatedly ask himself ‘*Ad quid venisti?*’ – ‘to what have I come?’ Christ slowly gave him the answers he was seeking. And today too, Jesus speaks in many ways to those who set forth on the adventure of monasticism. He settles questions and sows the seeds of new ones too.

The main formator in a monastery is the Holy Spirit, who can be found everywhere. One of the prime areas where the Spirit works, is the community of monks itself. I have found that the experienced senior monks are happy to respond whenever asked to my questions, but it is often enough just to observe them going about our life with devotion and humility that my questions find sense and purpose.

The great anchor of our life is praying the liturgy of the hours. Gathering to pray in church seven times a day helps to form our vocation by building virtue through attendance, focus and the prayers themselves. We experience God through joining our voices to the writers of the Psalms who turned to God for a vast range of reasons: from lament to gratitude, from plead to praise.

Reflecting on all that human mix, our prayers too contribute to the salvation of humanity. I marvel at how the Church Fathers formed the liturgy and how it evolved over the centuries as a coming together of our human needs, including the desire to offer praise, and God’s overflowing providence towards us.

Lectio divina or holy reading is another source of growth that monks are encouraged to engage in on a daily basis. In recent decades, this practice has become popular well beyond the walls of monasteries. While sometimes challenging, it too can result in much healing, wellbeing and wisdom.

During the Novitiate of two years, much time in formation is also given to studying the Rule of St Benedict. Our Cistercian Life is a reform of Benedictine life. Over the centuries many enriching commentaries and reflections on the Rule have been written by gifted men and women. Described as wisdom literature, the Rule has poetic qualities and so the contemporary student of the Rule benefits greatly from the commentaries and insights that they suggest, which preserve the intent of St Benedict yet adapt to our times.

Study is of course part of the Novitiate programme too. The various topics we study include psychology and history. The Desert Fathers and Mothers were the first monks and nuns in the 3rd and 4th centuries. They were fascinating people and, far from being

‘removed’, they had a great understanding of human nature and of God.

Naturally, we also study great figures from our own religious family including St Bernard and the early Cistercian Fathers from the 12th century. They were brilliant writers who reflected on the questions of their age as well as the questions that endure. Then from our own times is the great spiritual testimony of the martyred Cistercian monks of the Tibhirine Monastery in Algeria. Learning about these great figures helps us grasp the Cistercian spirit and the depths we now are so privileged to have access to. The quest for virtue, in a humble way, makes us all great and along with our prayer is our one sure contribution to the life of the Church, the people of God.

We monks of Kopua are happy that on the 25 March, Jeffrey Russell, a local from Dannevirke, having completed his postulancy, has received the habit and entered the novitiate.

Please pray for him on his vocation journey.

kopuamonastery.org.nz

Kopua Monastery: ‘The main formator in a monastery is the Holy Spirit, who can be found everywhere.’

Photos: Annette Scullion; and Kopua Monastery