



# WelCom

Newsletter of the Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand

## ‘Conversations in the Spirit’ and synodality: Reflections from meeting with the Pope and Cardinals in Rome

by Cardinal John Dew

Not long after the Conclave in May last year, Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster was interviewed. When the reporter asked him the question “Why did the Cardinals choose Cardinal Prevost?”, the answer he gave was “We did not choose him. God chose him, we just found him.”

His words appealed to me. Of course, God chooses any of us for a particular task (or vocation) in life.

I believe we found the right man to succeed Pope Francis and to assume the role of Bishop of Rome. In that process of “finding” him, we had several days of meetings. In those meetings, we had the opportunity to reflect together on what the major issues were in the Church and the world today. We also naturally spoke of the kind of person and the gifts and talents he would need to lead the Church in the modern world. Pope Leo was who we found, and that finding was the work of the Holy Spirit.

A topic that arose many times during those meetings was that whoever the next Pope was, it would be helpful – and even necessary – to meet more frequently with the College of Cardinals. Pope Leo obviously heard those words (he is a very good listener), and called for a Consistory (meeting) of Cardinals in early January. He also told us that he will invite us back to Rome in June this year.

Not long before Christmas, we were given the agenda for the Consistory and told that it would be helpful to read *Evangelii Gaudium*, the first Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis (November 2013), which is about the Church’s missionary character. The second document to read was the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*, on the role of the Roman Curia and its relationship with the particular Churches around the world. The other topics to be considered were synodality and liturgy; we were asked to read up on those topics.

[The Holy Father] was very clear in telling us when we gathered that he wanted to foster shared discernment and that he was looking to us for support and counsel as he carries out his responsibility for the governance of the universal Church. That is a big ask of any of us!



The actual meeting was short. It was only two days, but they were two days well spent, and it was the first time I had been involved in Rome in using the synodal process and engaging in the “Conversations in the Spirit” process. It was powerful, respectful and obviously centred in prayer.

At those meetings before the Conclave last year, the question of synodality had been spoken of often. There was a plea from many that the Synod process needed to be continued in the Church of today. Pope Leo referred to that in his words at the opening session of this Consistory: “We embrace the Synod and synodality as both an instrument and a style of cooperation.”

He did not in any way influence the gathering as to the topics to be discussed, but it was clear that he wanted to hear from the College of Cardinals. In fact, he said “I am here to listen.” He also said a couple of times: “You elected me to this position, now you need to help me.”

This meeting was very positive, and gave me the assurance that if we are to be sensitive “to the least breath of the Holy Spirit”, then listening is essential. I witnessed a Pope who listens intently, and I experienced the College of Cardinals listening to one another in a whole new way.

This Consistory for me was a wonderful experience, an experience of gathering in prayer, listening to one another with respect and knowing that “Conversations in the Spirit” really do work.

See the whole reflection from Cardinal John online at:

[https://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/adw\\_community/conversations-in-the-spirit-and-synodality-reflections-from-meeting-with-the-pope-and-cardinals-in-rome/](https://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/adw_community/conversations-in-the-spirit-and-synodality-reflections-from-meeting-with-the-pope-and-cardinals-in-rome/)

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# From Archbishop Paul

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ – tena koutou

Greetings to you as we enter Holy Week and Eastertide.

Holy Week is the most important week of the Church's year. We have completed our time of Lent, with its focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Now we immerse ourselves in the events leading to the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. It is a time for us to ponder and depth again the mystery of God becoming one of us, in Jesus Christ, and His sacrifice for our sins, and the promise of eternal life made possible by His death and resurrection.

The liturgies of Holy Week take us through a process where we walk with him on that journey, where we stop and pray and reflect on what it means for each of us. Palm Sunday reminds us that he entered Jerusalem as a hero, being greeted as the Messiah – yet how quickly that all changed. Holy Thursday celebrates the institution of the priesthood and the Eucharist and reminds us of our call to service through the washing of the feet. It ends with the procession to the altar of repose and the beginning of Jesus' passion. Good Friday we commemorate Jesus' death on the cross. We listen to the passion narrative again, we venerate the cross as a sign of our gratitude for his suffering for us, we pray for all the peoples of the world and we receive Holy Communion, the body of Christ, on this day.

Our Easter Vigil sees us moving from darkness to light, from the Easter fire outside to the darkened Church where we hear the Scriptures telling of God's presence and generosity to his people, culminating in the resurrection account. Then we celebrate the entry into the Church of those who are the Elect, those being baptised and received into our community. This year there are 89 people in our Archdiocese for whom this is the case, a powerful moment when we see the movement of faith in those who are seeking the Good News. It reminds us of our own Baptism and calling, and the importance of the Church community where we support one another to live this life.

On Tuesday of Holy Week I will be in Nelson, and on Wednesday evening at the Cathedral, to celebrate the



Chrism Mass. At this Mass, the priests of the Archdiocese renew their priestly promises and the oils which are used in our sacraments are blessed and given to representatives of each of our parishes. It reminds us of the wider life of the Church and that we are brothers and sisters in faith from many faith communities, drawn together in the person of the bishop as one diocese.

I encourage you to participate in all these liturgies in your parish church. Read the Scriptures and prayers for the Mass before you go, so that they are familiar to you and you can hear them with new ears and listen to what the homilist might say about them. Come and join me for the Chrism Mass in the two churches of our Archdiocese. Bring your children, talk to them about what is going to happen. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation so that you are at rights with God. Allow the power of this Holy Week to grace your hearts. St Augustine said that we are Easter people and alleluia is our song. Give yourself the best chance to let the grace of God touch your heart this Easter.

Please be generous in donating to Caritas this Lent. We are asked to give alms during Lent and Caritas is the Catholic agency we have for helping those in need around the Pacific and in other places. If you go to the Caritas website, you will find the place to donate or pick up one of the envelopes that are in our churches. On Good Friday there is a collection for the Holy Places. These funds help to keep running the places where the events of Holy Week took place. They are under real pressure currently and I would again encourage you to be generous in your gifting for this appeal.

May the blessings of the Risen Christ once again touch your hearts and minds as we celebrate this Easter season.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ P. B. Martin SM".

+ Paul Martin SM  
Archbishop of Wellington

## "COME AND SEE" VOCATIONS RETREAT

DISCERNMENT WEEKEND  
FOR YOUNG MEN DISCERNING PRIESTHOOD

RETREAT DIRECTOR: FR ALAN ROBERTS

DATES: FRIDAY 27 - SUNDAY 29 MARCH 2026

PLACE: MAGNIFICAT RETREAT CENTRE, FEATHERSTON

Email: [l.hensel@cadw.nz](mailto:l.hensel@cadw.nz)

 Called to serve  
[wellingtonpriests.org](http://wellingtonpriests.org)

# Rite of Election at Sacred Heart

As rays of warm, bright sunlight filtered into Sacred Heart Cathedral in Wellington on the afternoon of March 1, it was clear the Lord was at work on the first day of autumn. But He was not only at work with the weather; it was the Rite of Election, when people preparing to become Catholic wrote their names in the Book of the Elect to join the Church.

Catechumens (people preparing to join the Church) travelled from as far as the Wairarapa for the liturgy, which was presided over by Archbishop Paul.

In his homily, Archbishop Paul said the Rite of Election was very different than a political election.

"You are being recorded as being chosen by God," he said to the dozens of people in attendance. "It is a calling by God to come to Him."

He added: "Each one of us, created in His image, are called to come to Him."

Archbishop Paul also said the Rite of Election is a time to honour and rejoice, a call that goes beyond us, and for the community to celebrate.

"It's one thing to hear the Word [of God]. It's another thing to actually respond to it."

Later, he said: "We're called to become holy people."

The Rite of Election is a ceremony, usually at the start of Lent, where people preparing to become Catholic are officially welcomed and their names are recorded as ready to join the Church at Easter. It's basically a "you're ready" before being baptised and fully received at Easter.



## Welcoming new Catholic school principals

Two new principals have been welcomed into the Catholic school community of the Archdiocese.

Lindsay Dailly, newly appointed principal of Sts Peter & Paul's Catholic Primary School in Lower Hutt, was welcomed at a mihi whakatau on February 12 in Sts Peter & Paul Church.

New St Francis de Sales Catholic Primary School in Island Bay principal Nik Solia was welcomed at a mihi whakatau on February 23 on the grounds of St Francis de Sales school.

Both Lindsay and Nik were received with warmth, respect and a strong sense of whanaungatanga (connection) as their school communities gathered to formally welcome them into their roles. These ceremonies beautifully highlighted the values of connection, faith and shared purpose that underpin our Catholic schools.

We congratulate Lindsay and Nik on their appointments and wish them every blessing.



Lindsay Dailly

Nik Solia speaking at Mihi Whakatau



# Blessing of Samoan communities at Sacred Heart

It was a beautiful, joyous day on Sunday, February 15 at Sacred Heart Cathedral for the blessing of Samoan communities within the Archdiocese.

With songs and prayers in Samoan, there was a true sense of cultural connectedness and unity.

Unity was a theme of Archbishop Paul's homily. As he said: "Let this be a year of unity, not division."

He also said, "God is not calling on us to endure, but inviting us" into His kingdom, to be brothers and sisters in Christ, and to be active in the Church.



*“ Let this be a year of unity, not division.”*

Following the Mass came a blessing of the members of the Samoan Chaplaincy within the Archdiocese. After, almost everyone who

attended the Mass stayed for a feast in the foyer.

The feast featured numerous Samoan dishes and was

accompanied by speeches in Samoan and English about the Samoan Chaplaincy's work, hopes for unity and appreciation for everyone who helped make the event possible. Frowns were not to be found on anyone's faces.



## WelCom

Have an event coming up in your parish? Something you're proud of, or would like to get the word out about? Need volunteers or help with something?

Please let us know! Info can be sent to [b.mack@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:b.mack@wn.catholic.org.nz)

We look forward to hearing from you!

# Diaconate ordination of Joseph Tuan van Nguyen

It was a blessed last day of summer on February 28 at St Mary's Church, Blenheim, as Joseph Tuan van Nguyen (also known as TJ) was ordained to the diaconate by Archbishop Paul.

In the presence of clergy and family who came all the way from Vietnam and parishioners, it was an powerful moment marking a commitment to serving the Lord and growing His kingdom here in Aotearoa New Zealand and on earth.

Born in Vietnam, Joseph Nguyen Van Tuan first became aware of his vocation in 2010. While he was



working in the garden in a parish where his great-uncle was the parish priest, he met the Passionists there – and this encounter made his future decision to join the Passionist Congregation.

TJ will stay with the Passionist community in Blenheim. He will work pastorally with the Passionist priests in the role of deacon in the Star of the Sea Parish in Marlborough.

God bless you, TJ, for taking up this calling. Please pray for him and his ministry.

## Ash Wednesday joint service at St Paul's Cathedral

The spirit of the Lord was within the Wellington Cathedral of St Paul, near the Beehive, on February 19 or Ash Wednesday. At a joint service between the Anglicans, Sacred Heart Cathedral and St Paul's Lutheran Church, Archbishop Paul delivered the homily.

Archbishop Paul said there was something profoundly hopeful about beginning Lent together, something much-needed in our fractured world. As he also told worshippers: "The ashes we receive will be washed away. But the work God does in us these 40 days can last far longer."

He also said: "Now is the time of salvation."

Thank you to everyone who made the service possible, and for everyone who attended.





# Catholic Schools Commissioning Masses

Teachers, principals, administrators and others involved in Catholic education received special blessings from Archbishop Paul in February, as part of the Archdiocese's annual Catholic Schools Commissioning Masses.

South Island educators gathered on February 13 at St Mary's Church in Blenheim to receive their blessing. The historic church brimming with hopeful energy, the Mass was a celebration of all who sacrifice so greatly and give so much of themselves to make education possible.

Sacred Heart Cathedral was at capacity on a warm summer evening on February 17 for the North Island Catholic Schools Commissioning Mass. Saying in his

homily that "educating is an act of hope", Archbishop Paul added that "in order to guide others in faith, we also need to tend to our own faith. Your schools will only be strong in faith if you continue to grow as disciples."

He continued: "You are among the gifts to this Archdiocese. And you are not alone in this mission."

He ended by offering words of encouragement in te reo Māori, calling on those at the Mass – and educators throughout the Archdiocese – to "be strong, be brave and be steadfast in hope".

God bless our school teachers, administrators and all who work in education.

## North Island Certificate Recipients

### CHANEL COLLEGE, MASTERTON

**Catholic Special Character Foundation Level:** Jason Downes, Natasha Johnson, Sally Baker, Jake Scott, Troy Etherington, Michelle Potangaroa, Rachel Kirby  
**Catholic Special Character Classroom Level:** Callum James  
**Catholic Special Character Leadership Level:** Myra Coley

### ST CLAUDINE THÉVENET SCHOOL, WAINUIOMATA

**RE Foundation Level:** Haydee Balingit, Criscel Pamintuan, Joy Cabrera, Daniel Panzo, Jana Panzo, Josh Paton, Persis John

### HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, MIRAMAR

**RE Classroom Level:** Tala Moemai  
**RE Leadership Level:** Lucy Wooles, Tala Moemai

### HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL, PORIRUA

**RE Foundation Level:** Anne Munro

### OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY SCHOOL, WAIWHETU

**RE Foundation Level:** Kelly Wybourne

### SACRED HEART COLLEGE, LOWER HUTT

**Catholic Special Character Classroom Level:** Paula Davies

### ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE, KIILBIRNIE

**Catholic Special Character Foundation Level:** Alan Simmonds, Bronwyn Wilson, Deborah Foster

### ST BRENDAN'S SCHOOL, HERETAUNGA

**RE Foundation Level:** Amy Perkins, Damien Don, Rosie Hopkins  
**RE Classroom Level:** Yvonne McElwain  
**RE Leadership Level:** Heather Campbell  
**RE Leadership Endorsement:** Sarah Chard, Veronica Sawers, Sara Williams

### ST BRIGID'S SCHOOL, JOHNSONVILLE

**RE Foundation Level:** Gina Quintero, Melanie Gregory  
**RE Classroom Level:** Monika Goel

### ST FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL, TAWA

**RE Leadership Level:** Faencha Nicholls  
**RE Leadership Endorsement:** Erica Bowe, Joan Woods

### ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, LEVIN

**RE Foundation Level:** Shelvin Prasad  
**RE Classroom Level:** Agnieszka Stankiewicz  
**RE Leadership Level:** Agnieszka Stankiewicz

### ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, UPPER HUTT

**RE Foundation Level:** Teresa Topp, Kyle Jones, Monique Jones, Stacey van Wyk, Dezika Lal, Olivia Baird, Seth Loughran, Charlie Lake, Josiah Masoe, Andy Topp

### ST MARY'S COLLEGE, THORNDON

RE Classroom Level: Molly MacKenzie

RE Leadership Level: Molly MacKenzie

### ST PATRICK'S SCHOOL, MASTERTON

RE Foundation Level: Daleen Botha, Michelle Rowe, Mariette Van Graan, Liz Roseingrave

### OUR LADY OF KĀPITI SCHOOL, PARAPARAUMU

RE Foundation Level: Hannah McCardle

RE Classroom Level: Hannah McCardle

RE Leadership Level: Hannah McCardle, Michelle Gunson

### ST PIUS X SCHOOL, TITAHĪ BAY

RE Foundation Level: Liezl Ferreira, Lina Galo

### ST MARY'S SCHOOL, CARTERTON

RE Classroom Level: Tracey Jacobson

RE Leadership Level: Karen Goodall

RE Leadership Endorsement: Anita Ward

### ST TERESA'S SCHOOL, FEATHERSTON

RE Leadership Level: Elizabeth Lark

### ST TERESA'S SCHOOL, KARORI

RE Foundation Level: Grace Cornejo, Wendy Holbrooke, Charles Perry

RE Classroom Level: Rebecca Dymond

### STS PETER AND PAUL SCHOOL, LOWER HUTT

RE Foundation Level: Antoinette Cagalawan, Giana Maroon, Grace Allan, Shanann O'Sullivan-Glynn

RE Classroom Level: Emalyn Jiang

RE Leadership Level: Janine O'Styke, Ivy Abella, Suni Abraham, Lindsey Dailly

### ST FRANCIS DE SALES SCHOOL, ISLAND BAY

RE Foundation Level: Hala Bassel

### ST ANTHONY'S SCHOOL, SEATOUN

RE Leadership Level: Francesca von Lanthen

### ST BENEDICT'S SCHOOL, KHANDALLAH

RE Foundation Level: Freda Amofo, Tyler Stevens

### ST THERESA'S SCHOOL, PLIMMERTON

RE Foundation Level: Megan Squires

RE Leadership Level: Olivia McKennie

### ST ANNE'S SCHOOL, NEWTOWN

RE Foundation Level: Christine Cowan

RE Classroom Level: Tina Fagaloa, Emily Dickie

RE Leadership Level: Emily Dickie

## South Island Certificate Recipients

### GARIN COLLEGE, NELSON

Having Life to the Full: Markelle Ward, Sharon Murray, Richy Tau'alupe Vaipulu, Roman Birch, Sue Kertsen  
Catholic Special Character Foundation Level: Renee Bouchut, Ingimar Menzies, Jenn Arai, Ayesha Tahir, Kate Souness, Amanda Thompson, Nicole Griffiths, Layla Sudol, Katrina Rowley, Patrick Gluck

RE Leadership Level: Markelle Ward

### ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, KAIKŌURA

RE Foundation Level: Ellice Soper

RE Classroom Level: Sophie Lewthwaite

RE Leadership Level: Judith Ford

### ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, NELSON

RE Foundation Level: Ellie McGregor, Rachel Donald, Taylor Boyd

RE Classroom Level: Brigid Hindmarsh, Tracy Malthus, Antonio Sardella, Chris Biggam, Chris Bascand, Arianne Floyd

RE Leadership Level: Elizabeth George

### ST CANICE'S SCHOOL, WESTPORT

RE Foundation Level: Cathy Kelly

### ST MARY'S SCHOOL, BLENHEIM

RE Foundation Level: Rebecka Hayley Hewetson

RE Classroom Level: Bridget Comer, Nicole Simson, Jennifer Williams

RE Leadership Level: Louise Lee

### ST PAUL'S SCHOOL, RICHMOND

RE Foundation Level: Abbey Smith, Erenna Witty, Julia Kosterman, Matthew Witty

RE Classroom Level: Kathryn Powick, Victoria Stockdale, Sharlene Bascand, Sarah Jeffries

RE Leadership Level: Kathryn Powick, Stacey Ashley, Cathie Dodd, Maria McTague

*(below left-right) North Island Commissioning; Bishop Viard College Staff*



# Caritas launches Lent campaign in challenging times

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand launched its annual Lent fundraising appeal at a time when humanitarian needs are rising in many parts of the world, but some countries are cutting aid.

Communities across the Pacific, Southeast Asia and conflict-affected regions are facing mounting pressure from climate change, violence and economic instability, Caritas said.

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand chief executive Mena Antonio said this year's Lent Appeal comes at a difficult moment.

"We are seeing unprecedented hardship in many parts of the world," she said. "Climate pressures are deepening poverty in our own Pacific neighbourhood, while unprecedented humanitarian crises and displacement continue elsewhere.

"At the same time, funding for international aid has fallen. All of this creates a real gap for communities already under strain."

Funds raised through the Lent Appeal support Caritas' work with trusted local partners. Caritas provides improved food and water access, climate-resilient farming and other livelihood support to communities across the Pacific and Southeast Asia.

In the last year, it has also been called upon to respond to emergencies, such as the war in Gaza, the conflict in Ukraine, the Rohingya refugee emergency in Bangladesh, the Myanmar earthquake and the displacement caused by clashes on the Thai/Cambodian border.

Caritas helps about 620,000 people a year.

Last year also saw the US government gut USAID, which triggered a raft of cuts across the sector from other donor nations. These cuts are expected to affect humanitarian operations globally, including programmes supporting food security, protection and livelihoods.

Ms Antonio said Lent is a time when faith is expressed through practical solidarity.



"We walk with communities before, during and after emergencies," she said. "When people give this Lent, they are helping families stay safe and build a future in very difficult circumstances."

A central focus of this year's appeal highlights protection work with Rohingya refugee families in Bangladesh. More than 1.3 million Rohingya people remain confined to camps with limited rights and ongoing risks of violence, trafficking and exploitation. Caritas-supported community volunteers provide counselling, case work and referrals to safety for women and children facing abuse.

One Rohingya mother supported through the programme said access to a trained Caritas volunteer changed her situation after she fled violence in Myanmar.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference has endorsed the appeal.

Donations to the Lent Appeal can be made online at [caritas.org.nz/lent](https://caritas.org.nz/lent)



## PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS

Archdiocese of Wellington



Deacon Emilio Capin  
Final Year



Gerson Badayos  
Sixth Year



Kham Nguyen  
Second Year



Dyester Abo-Abo  
Second Year



Long Tran  
First Year



Ele Minseok Oh  
First Year



## Holy Cross Seminary makes pilgrimage to Christchurch

Seminarians and staff from Holy Cross Seminary completed a very busy schedule in Christchurch Diocese during their annual start-of-year pilgrimage.

There were six first-year students among the 31 seminarians who visited Christchurch last month. In the first-year group, one is in preparation for Palmerston North Diocese, one for Dunedin Diocese and two each for Christchurch Diocese and Wellington Archdiocese.

The 2026 hikoi started with the seminary students and staff joining Bishop Michael Gielen and parishioners for Mass at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral. Participants learned about the history of Christchurch Diocese in a talk at Nazareth House and visited Sacred Heart Basilica in Timaru and the St Mary MacKillop

Heritage Centre in Temuka.

A prayerful time was spent at the Beatitudes Community in Leithfield, which was described as "a time to slow down, listen and be renewed in the Lord".

At Akaroa, the hikoi participants learned about Bishop Pompallier and the first church in the South Island. On February 11, they visited the Carmelite Sisters and later gathered with 130 young people for dinner before attending the Youth and Young Adults Encounter Night at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral.

Sixth-year seminarian Gerson Badayos from Wellington said being on the hikoi this year was "a privilege and a blessing". "I would like to mention the church in Timaru. It's really beautiful. Being inside that church, you can really feel the Holy

Spirit moving," Mr Badayos said.

Another highlight for him was visiting the Beatitudes Community. "It's just so nice seeing holy men and women responding to God's call, and inspiring others to do the same...I'm very inspired to live a life of holiness and of service to others," he said.

Another sixth-year seminarian, Tung Tran (Ignatius) from Christchurch, enjoyed the "companionship and brotherhood that I have shared with all my brothers in the last few days".

Second-year seminarian Samuel Turnbull from Hamilton Diocese also enjoyed visiting the basilica in Timaru, adding that another hikoi highlight for him was "visiting the Carmelite Sisters and getting to talk with them, and asking them for their prayers".

## NZ leader says Mercy Sisters' mission still strong and active

Missions of Mercy inspired by Venerable Catherine McAuley are widespread and achieving much good today, says the Aotearoa New Zealand leader.

Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand congregational leader Sr Denise Fox RSM discusses religious life in an interview with Joanna Kearney in the latest episode of the Catholic Kiwi Podcast.

"We all joined the Sisters of Mercy because we were captivated by the mission, which for us is the spiritual and corporal works of mercy," she said, with the religious women carrying out what the congregation's founder, Catherine McAuley, called "the work of our lives, or the business of our lives".

Among the subjects Sr Denise discussed were her own background growing up in Wellington, her ministry as an educator and leader in various capacities and the

work of evangelisation.

Search Catholic Kiwi Podcast on YouTube or Spotify to find this and other episodes.



# Fr Kinh Nguyen Mass of Thanksgiving



February 9 was a special day for Catholic people in north-central Vietnam, and in the life of Fr Kinh Nguyen. The reason: Fr Kinh celebrating a Mass of Thanksgiving!

Well over a thousand people attended the bright, colourful morning Mass. Archbishop Paul and Fr Ron Bennett were also there to accompany Fr Kinh on this special occasion.

The Mass was celebrated at Hoi Yen Church in the Diocese of Vinh, Nghe An. It's where Fr Kinh is from, having been born and raised there until leaving for university in 2011. His family still lives there, too.

"Although I had already celebrated many Masses before returning home for the Thanksgiving Mass, I still felt quite nervous at the beginning," says Fr Kinh.

"Celebrating Mass in front of my loved ones and the people who have known me since I was little felt somewhat surreal. They know me very well, and I know them well too, so it was a unique feeling that is quite hard to describe.

"Above all, I felt deeply loved and supported by everyone. I was especially grateful to have Archbishop Paul, Fr Ron and some of my Vietnamese brother priests who are ministering in New Zealand there to support me on that special occasion."

Fr Kinh was ordained at Sacred Heart Cathedral by Archbishop Paul in July 2025. He is currently assistant priest at Holy Trinity Parish in Wellington's eastern suburbs.

God bless you, Fr Kinh!



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Want to be seen by an audience of thousands from throughout the lower North Island and upper South Island, from the Wairarapa and Kāpiti Coast down to Kaikōura? By parishioners at every Catholic church in our Archdiocese, and families at every Catholic school?

Please get in touch with Reuben Norris at 0212 480 608 or [r.norris@cadw.nz](mailto:r.norris@cadw.nz).

We look forward to hearing from you!

# Celebrating Launch Out journeys

On February 1, the Te Whetū o te Moana – Star of the Sea Parish in Marlborough gathered as one whānau to celebrate a truly special milestone: Vicky Raw's completion of the Te Hāo Nui – Launch Out Formation Programme of the Archdiocese of Wellington. Fr Jacob Kuman CP presided over the celebration.

From 2019-2025, Vicky faithfully undertook theological studies through Te Kupenga, completed pastoral projects within the parish, participated in retreats and prayer days, and journeyed consistently in spiritual direction.

A dedicated member of Star of the Sea for more than 25 years, Vicky was surrounded by immense love and support. Her father, Edward, even flew from England to be with her on this proud day, and her professional colleagues joined the celebration as well.

During Mass, Vicky offered a heartfelt reflection, acknowledging the leadership and support of the Archdiocese from Cardinal Tom Williams, who founded Launch Out in 2001, to Cardinal John Dew, who



championed the programme until his retirement in 2023, and now Archbishop Paul Martin, who certified the completion of her formation.

Congratulations, Vicky! Your dedication, faith and service continue to bless your parish and the wider Church. We are grateful for your witness and excited for all that lies ahead.

## St Francis de Sales Church Jubilee

The Catholic Parish of Wellington South is inviting former and current parishioners to a celebration of several historical milestones on April 18-19.

The first Catholic church, St Francis de Sales Church, Island Bay, was built in 1906, 120 years ago, and the current church was blessed and opened on April 17, 1966 – 60 years ago.

The weekend will also acknowledge 100 years since the opening of the St Madeleine Sophie Primary School, the forerunner of the current primary school of St Francis de Sales.

A special Mass of remembrance and thanks featuring past and present priests will be followed by a lunch at the Pines Cabaret, Houghton Bay.

Registrations of interest are welcomed by providing contact details at:

[office@wellingtonsouthcatholic.org](mailto:office@wellingtonsouthcatholic.org)

### PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 18

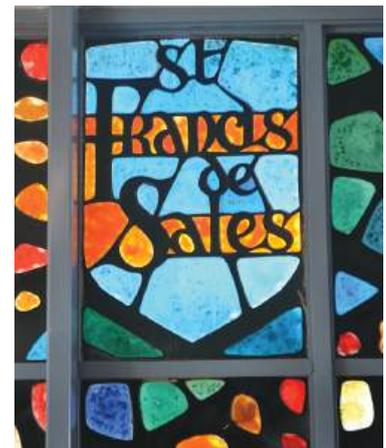
**10.00am Memorial Mass**  
(Main Celebrant Fr Biju Xavier).  
Followed by morning tea.

**11.30am Guided tour of the special features of the church.**

**"The Catholic Features of Island Bay"**  
Historic walkabout. Notes for the walk, or drive, will be provided.  
In own time.

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 19

**10.30am Jubilee Mass** (Main Celebrant Fr Merv Duffy SM, Provincial of the Society of Mary in NZ)



**12.30pm Jubilee Lunch**  
The Pines, Houghton Bay, Wellington; (\$55 per person to be paid in advance; no door sales).

Please register your attendance by making payment to Catholic Parish of Wellington South, bank account 02-0576-0064832-01

*Note: There will be a Jubilee Magazine available for purchase.*



## ADORATION

### SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL

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6.00PM-7.00PM

EVERY THURSDAY · FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

# Farewelling Br Douglas Dawick FMS

As Édith Piaf's *Non, je ne regrette rien* (*No, I regret nothing*) filled Sts Peter and Paul Church in Lower Hutt on a sunny afternoon on February 21, something remarkable was happening: the song was not being played on a sound system, but sung by the priests walking out and the hundreds of people in attendance.

A Marist, Br Doug spent around 25 years in Lower Hutt in the service of God in the Archdiocese of Wellington. His ministry was predominantly amongst the youth, specifically within the Te Awakairangi Parish, of which Sts Peter and Paul is a part. He moved up to Auckland at the end of 2025.

**“*Non, je ne regrette rien* (*No, I regret nothing*)”**

The song came at the end of a memorial Mass for Br Douglas Dawick FMS, better known as Br Doug, who was reunited with God on January 12 (with his funeral held in Auckland on January 16). Br Doug loved the song.

The church was filled with people whose lives Br Doug had touched, including youth who had lived at The Grove in Lower Hutt. The Grove was a home where young people lived with the Marist Brothers to discover the joys of living together in Catholic community.



A farewell for the Marist Brothers took place in late July at Sts Peter and Paul. Presided over by Archbishop Paul and Cardinal John, the event was a chance to say goodbye as the last Marist Brothers moved to Auckland after 149 years of continuous service in the Wellington region.

In 1850, eight Marist Brothers accompanied Bishop Philippe Viard from Auckland to Wellington. Most Brothers later travelled further on with Marist priests to parishes in places such as Napier and Nelson. More Brothers came in 1876, and were a constant presence in the Wellington region, particularly involved with helping run Catholic schools.



## Sacred Heart Cathedral Easter Services

*Easter is fast approaching – and Sacred Heart Cathedral has several Masses and Vigils for the season.*

Wednesday, 1 April	7:30pm	Chrim Mass
Holy Thursday, 2 April	7.30pm	Mass of the Lord's Supper
Good Friday, 3 April	10:00am	Stations of the Cross
	3:00pm	Commemoration of the Lord's Passion
Holy Saturday, 4 April	8:00pm	Easter Vigil and Mass of the Resurrection
Easter Sunday, 5 April	10:00am	Easter Sunday Mass
	7:00pm	Easter Sunday Mass

