

Te Ara a Maria

A resource for Youth Ministers



The Artwork

Ko Hāta Maria, te Matua Wahine o te Atua

Translation: Holy Mary, Mother of God

On Sunday 15 August 2021, Aotearoa renewed our country's dedication to Mary, Mother of God, Assumed into Heaven.

To celebrate the rededication, our Bishops have commissioned a new piece of art. They wanted a depiction of Mary that connects her to Aotearoa. The piece challenges us to see her as a woman of incredible strength and the place she holds in our hearts and our community today.

The artwork aims to respect our different cultures and backgrounds. The painting captures details which are unique to our country and Catholic identity. It asks us to celebrate the things we share in our community and to learn more about our different worlds.

Christchurch based artist Damien Walker's goal was to create a vision of Madonna and Child with an emphasis on kotahitanga (unity). He connected with authentic voices in Te Ao Māori to help steer the project.

For Damien "the painting depicts Mary as a symbol of unity in her universal motherhood, uniting Heaven and Earth in her son, Jesus, the son of God."

"She reflects the unity of the Church, which reaches to the ends of the Earth, stretching not only across the oceans but across the centuries as well. The work has a distinctly New Zealand depiction of Mary, emphasising also the unity of the tangata whenua with all the other peoples who have come to live alongside them in the partnership of bi-culturalism, called to live the same faith and baptism, each in their unique way."

Text Sourced from www.tearaamaria.nz/



Engaging your Youth Ministry in Te Hīkoi Wairua mo Te Ara ā Maria

THE HIKOI OF *KO HĀTA MARIA, TE MATUA WAHINE O TE ATUA* IS A ONCE IN A GENERATION OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CHURCH IN AOTEAROA TO CELEBRATE, TO REFLECT AND TO PRAY AS OUR NATION IS REDEDICATED TO MARY, MOTHER OF GOD, ASSUMED INTO HEAVEN. THIS RESOURCE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO HELP YOUTH MINISTRIES THROUGHOUT THIS TIME AND PARTICULARLY WHEN THE ARTWORK VISITS YOUR COMMUNITY.

There are so many different ways to mark this occasion with Young People as a Parish Youth Ministry whanau.

First among these, would be arranging a Youth Night for when the Artwork is in your Parish (this might mean holding your Youth Group on a different night than normal.) As part of the night, you might do the following

- Pray the Liturgy (pg 6-7) as a group
- Pray a decade of the Rosary
- Sing Marian Hymns ([@cytmusicministry on Spotify](#) or <https://www.nlo.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Hymns-for-15-Aug-Assumption-Mass-.pdf>)
- Do Visio Divina (pg 8)
- Pray the Rededication prayer (back cover)
- In the week(s) before, use the Youth Group Session plan in your Ministry (pg 4-5)
- Create personal Marian Icons

Needless to say, a Youth Group Night is not the only way to engage Young People in this special event.

Other ideas include

- Making the individual resources included in this resource available to Young People.
- Encouraging your Parish to take the Artwork to visit the schools in your Parish
- Making sure the Young People of your Parish are aware of events
- Including Young People in any Parish Masses or Liturgies
- Sharing on Social Media about the visit of the Artwork - both before and after
- Advocating for Ethnic Groups to have the opportunity to celebrate according to their own customs

Youth Group Session plan based on Te Ara a Maria – Mary's Way

About this session

The format of this session is based upon the LifeTeen Model of Gather, Proclaim, Break, Send. For more information on how this model works, visit <https://bit.ly/3oA9pBs>



School Year: This has been targeted to be used from Year 7–13. We encourage Youth Ministers to adapt to the ages/needs of their Young People accordingly.

Length: approx 90 minutes

Goal: The Goal of this Youth Group Session is to engage your Young People in the Hikoi of the image and rededication of Aotearoa to Mary, Assumed into Heaven.

Environment

In addition to the normal things you'd do to make your space engaging and appealing as Young People arrive, put up several Marian Images and Icons – especially ones that depict her via the lens of a different culture (eg Our Lady of Guadalupe). As the Session focuses on her Patronage of Aotearoa, a bit of Kiwiana wouldn't go amiss either.

Resources

The main resources (beyond the usual) you'll need are Art materials for the Break. There is flexibility in terms of what type of materials – this activity would work with coloured pencils, crayons, felts, Sharpies, chalk, paint (or a combination of the above). If possible, using small canvas's would add gravitas to the Icon creation.

Gather

Open your Session as you normally would. Cover any logistics or housekeeping, introduce all the leaders and welcome new members of the group as well as opening the evening in prayer.

Game – Anything but no.

- Give each Young Person a lolly (or another small prize)
- Set a time limit (we recommend about five minutes)
- Tell the Young People to mingle and ask questions of each other.
- If the answerer doesn't answer or answers 'No', 'Nah', 'Nope' etc, the questioner gets all of that person's prizes.
- The winner is the person with the most prizes when time is up.

The game is designed to link back to Mary's Fiat – she didn't say no.

Proclaim

Begin by asking your Youth, if they know the Patron Saint of Ireland? (St Patrick), The Patron Saint of England? (St George), The Patron Saint of Finding Lost things? (St Anthony), and other famous patrons that your Young People might know.

Proclaim (cont)

This Proclaim is very much an outline for you to flesh out according to the needs of your community. If you need help doing this, contact your Diocesan Youth Office.

Then ask if they know who is the Patron Saint of Aotearoa is? (It, of course, being Mary.)

At a level that is accessible to your Young People, share some of the story of Pompallier and the dedication of this place to Mary. (Info found elsewhere in this resource.)

Begin a conversation with your Young People about the traits of Mary (eg her humility, her obedience, her faith, her love.) This will be followed up more in the Break.

The next part of the Proclaim is to lead into talking about the image. Tell your group to look around the room at the various Marian images you've put up. Ask them to share what images they like most and what draws them to those ones. Focus particularly on the answers around showing her traits or pointing to Jesus.

Now explain the story behind the image (make sure it's projected or given out as a handout) and talk about why we use images in the Catholic tradition – ie we don't worship, but they remind us and inspire. Wrap up before sorting into small groups.

Break

This Break is split into two parts – the small group and the art. Make sure the Young People have a copy of the Prayer Card that was distributed to Parishes. If they don't make your own with the image on one side.

The small group should be an opportunity for Young People to respond to what was in the Proclaim. Questions the small group leader might want to ask include: If you were the Patron Saint of something, what would it be? What trait of Mary speaks most to you? How do you think Mary is a guide for us in New Zealand today? (Remember the Break is for Young People to speak to each other, not the leader to extend the Proclaim.)

The second part of their small group is the opportunity to make their own Marian Artwork. Small group leaders will introduce this task. The emphasis of this task is not drawing something artistically beautiful but an image of Mary that relates to them and their individuality, much like how *Ko Hāta Maria, te Matua Wahine o te Atua* relates to Aotearoa. Mention things like the Korowai, fern, Pounamu and Southern Cross as examples. Allow your Youth plenty of time for this.

Send

The first part of the Send is to allow your Young People the opportunity to share their Icon and speak to the aspects they included. Don't put pressure on Young People to share their image as it could be deeply personal to them.

The most important part of the send is the Prayer time. Make sure you've allowed enough time at the end of the night for this, as giving Young People the time and space to encounter Christ through prayer is essential.

- Begin the time by singing a Marian Hymn – perhaps Ka Waiata.
- Explain to the group that this is a time to reflect on Mary's life and those moments where she led us to Jesus.
- Use the reflection on Page 9 of this resource to guide your Young People through those key moments.
- Follow this up with time for Young People to offer their personal prayers of intercession
- End with a closing prayer, saying the Hail Mary together and singing Mō Maria.

Wrap up the Night with any notices and an invitation to any Parish events around the visit of the Artwork to your Parish.

Liturgy for Young People

in the presence of the Artwork

Environment

While much of this will depend on the space available for your Liturgy, there are things worth considering before beginning. Is there enough seating? Are pews the only option or is more comfortable seating available eg beanbags etc? Will every Young Person have an unobstructed view of the Image? Is the Artwork well lit up? Can background noises be mitigated?

Background

Before the liturgy begins, make sure the participants have, at least, a cursory understanding of the story of the image.

Format

Where possible, encourage Young People to read the readings/prayers. Make sure each participant has access to the responses on a handout or Powerpoint etc

Opening Prayer

Open with a Hīmene (hymn) - Suggested: Ka Waiata

Leader: As we gather in the presence of this taonga of the Church in Aotearoa, let us enter into the presence of God.

Ki te ingoa o te Matua, o te Tamaiti o te Wairua Tapu.

Everyone: Ameme.

Young Person: Let us pray. E te Atua, as we, your Young People, enter this time of prayer and reflection, help us to encounter you anew.

Everyone: Amen

Liturgy of the Word

Responsorial Psalm 45 (Psalm of the Day for the Feast of the Assumption)

Response: "Kei to ringaringa matau te kuini e tu ana."

OR "The queen stands at your right hand, arrayed in gold."

Reader: The queen takes her place at your right hand in gold of Ophir. (R)

Hear, O daughter, and see; turn your ear, forget your people and your father's house. (R)

So shall the king desire your beauty; for he is your lord. (R)

They are borne in with gladness and joy; they enter the palace of the king. (R)

Gospel Luke 1:39-56 (Gospel of the Day for the Feast of the Assumption)

Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

[Read Luke 1:39-56]

The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Follow the Gospel with a period of silence, encouraging your Young People to let the image and Word speak to them. Consider playing reflective music in the background.

The Visio Divina (pg 7), would work well here.

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: We now turn to God, gathered as his Young people, to offer our prayers.

Reader: For all Young People in Aotearoa. That, like Mary, we may hear what God is calling us to and respond in our lives. E te Ariki...

Everyone: Whakarongo mai ra ki a matou,

Reader: For the Church in New Zealand. That, inspired by Mary, we may Grow in Holiness, Strengthen our Communities and Proclaim the Good News. E te Ariki...

Everyone: Whakarongo mai ra ki a matou,

Reader: For our Parishes, Schools and other Faith communities. That this Hikoi may challenge them, inspire them and bring them closer to our Lady of Assumption. E te Ariki...

Everyone: Whakarongo mai ra ki a matou,

Reader: For the World as it continues to deal with the effects of this pandemic. That, through Mary's protection, the most vulnerable are kept safe. E te Ariki...

Everyone: Whakarongo mai ra ki a matou,

Leader: Feel free to share your own intentions.

Leader: We now pray in Thanksgiving for all those pioneers of the Faith in our land who have gone before us. We ask for their Intercession and that of our mother Mary as we pray together. Hail Mary... etc

Closing Prayer

Leader: As this draws to an end, let us join with the Bishops and recall the rededication of Aotearoa to Mary
[Pray together the Rededication Prayer - back cover of this resource]

Young Person: Let us pray. E te Atua, as the Young People of this nation, we pray that, as we journey through our lives, we may be inspired by and guided by Mary, the first disciple and Patron of our land.

Everyone: Amen

End by singing Mō Maria together as a group.

<https://www.tearaamaria.nz/celebrate#mo-maria-himene>



VISIO DIVINA

THE LESS WELL-KNOWN SIBLING OF *LECTIO DIVINA* '**VISIO DIVINA**' TRANSLATES TO '*DIVINE SEEING*' AND USES AN IMAGE AS OPPOSED TO SCRIPTURE.

This can be done as either a group with a leader or as an individual devotion. It would fit well with both the liturgy on the previous pages or the Individual Reflection opposite, but also can be done on its own. (If leading this for a group, make sure to pause between lines and at the three dots. Speed is not our friend.)

Step 1) Let us prepare hearts for prayer

You may want to begin your time in prayer with a scripture reading about Mary or praying a Marian prayer. Close your eyes ... breathe ... clear your mind and ask God to enter into this time of prayer with you.

Ask God to speak to you through this image.

Step 2) Allow the Image to Speak to Your Heart

Open your eyes and look at the image. ... Let your eyes focus on the part of the image they're first drawn to.

Look at just that part of the image for a minute or two.

Now, close your eyes, still seeing that part of the image in your mind.

Step 3) Reflect on the Entire Image

Open your eyes and now look upon the whole image again.

Gaze upon the whole image, allowing it to draw you in ... maybe a word, a feeling/an emotion, or an image in your heart will come into your mind.

Use the following questions as a prompt.

What do you hear God whispering into your heart?

What thoughts or questions is this image raising?

What emotions do you feel?

Continue to gaze and reflect as long as you need to, then briefly close and rest your eyes.

Step 4) Pray Through the Image

Open your eyes.

While looking at the image, respond to God.

Pray through the words, images, emotions, questions, and thoughts that are now in your heart.

Continue to look upon the image as you pray. Then, close and rest your eyes briefly.

Step 5) Rest and Reflect in God

As you finish your time in prayer, open your eyes and gaze again upon the image.

Rest in God's presence as you reflect upon this prayer experience.

Consider how you'll take this into your life.

Personal Reflection before the Artwork

This reflection, intended for personal prayer, can be used on its own or alongside other prayers or devotions such as the Rosary, Visio Divina or the Prayer of Rededication.

You might like to begin by praying the Hail Mary or, if appropriate, singing/listening to a Marian Hymn.

Begin by thinking about a Motherly figure in your own life and the relationship you have with them. Recall the times and experiences of love, hope, excitement and care in your relationship with them. Consider also the times of pain or anguish or doubt.

Turn your eyes towards the image and gaze upon the different aspects of the artwork.

As you look upon this image of Mary, bring to mind her life, her words, her actions, her feelings.

Think about her 'yes' when the Angel Gabriel came to her. Imagine her doubts and fears, but, most of all, her yes. (Luke 1: 26-38)

"Here am I, the servant of the Lord, let it be with me according to your word."

Think about her Joy when she visited her cousin Elizabeth and the child in Elizabeth's womb leapt for that same joy (Luke 1: 39-56)

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour"

Ponder her fear and confusion when Jesus was lost in the temple and her relief on finding him. (Luke 2:41-51)

"His mother treasured all these things in her heart."

Consider her words at the Wedding Feast of Cana and the Faith she had in her Son. (John 2:1-11)

"Do whatever he tells you."

Imagine her pain as she looked upon her crucified Son at Calvary. (John 19:25-27)

"Behold Your Mother"

Think about those moments in your own life where you felt those emotions. As you consider them, invite Mary into your prayer. She always points us to her Son so ask yourself how, in these moments, she shows us Jesus...

Look again upon the image and ponder her as the first disciple and ask how you can imitate her example.

End your time of prayer however and whenever you feel comfortable to.

The Rededication of Aotearoa to Mary

On Sunday 15 August 2021, we renewed our country's dedication to Mary, Mother of God, Assumed into Heaven. We have called this Te Ara a Maria – Mary's Way. This is an opportunity for all of us to honour Mary as she is now - alive, body and soul, rejoicing in the happiness of God's kingdom.

Bishop Pompallier was our country's first bishop. He journeyed from France to support the growth of our Church in Oceania. At the request of an Irish-born migrant farmer, he decided to move from Australia and settle in the Hokianga. Pompallier made his dedication while celebrating his first mass here in 1838.

In the Hokianga, Pompallier learnt Te Reo and developed an understanding of Māori spirituality. The partnerships he built helped encourage local iwi to explore the Catholic faith. These important steps would see Hokianga become the cradle of Catholicism in Aotearoa.

Pompallier's dedication honours Mary as the Virgin Mother of Jesus. She endured an incredible journey - from her teenage years to being a mother enduring the sufferings of her son. Mary's commitment was always to God. Her reward was the comfort of being assumed into heaven.

Covid-19 brought anguish to our country. We saw other countries struggle during the pandemic and as a country, we took measures to unite to protect ourselves. During this testing time, many sought aid and comfort. Our Bishops received requests and they decided to renew Pompallier's dedication.

To mark the renewal of the dedication, our Bishops staged a special mass at St Mary of the Angels in Wellington on 15 August 2021. This service saw the unveiling of artwork specially commissioned to honour Mary. The artwork has begun its journey around New Zealand before being permanently housed at St Mary of the Angels which will become a National Shrine.



Image Credit: NZCBC

This resource has been created by the Catholic Youth Team – Catholic Diocese of Christchurch. We acknowledge, with thanks, content that has been reproduced from the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference, the National Liturgy Office and the Christchurch Catholic Education Office.

If you have any questions about its use, comments or corrections, contact Mark Currie (Parish Youth Ministry Support at the Diocese of Christchurch)
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LINKS



Official Website for Te Ara a Maria

<https://www.tearaamaria.nz/>



Catholic Education Office Resource

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KOytF2B1OILRvwy3Ot5x8NP-eWTNxDriadD3VyhQWyg/edit?usp=sharing>



Rededication Mass at St Mary's of the Angels – 15 August 2021

<https://youtu.be/60hOoD7JczU>



Catholic Diocese of Christchurch – Te Ara a Maria

<https://chchcatholic.nz/2021/10/te-ara-a-maria/>



National Liturgy Office – Te Hikoī Wairua

<https://www.nlo.org.nz/news-and-events/media-releases/te-hikoī-wairua-liturgical-starters/>



Catholic Youth Team – Diocese of Christchurch

<https://cyt.org.nz/>

Prayer for the Rededication



E te Atua aroha mā te whakapuaki, i tō mātou whakapono

Loving God in professing this faith

In which we are united as your people
we unite ourselves with the Yes of your mother Mary, the first disciple.

**E te Atua, te Puna o ngā mea ora katoa,
te kaihomai o ngā mea pai katoa**

O God, Source of all life, giver of all that is good

We, your people of Aotearoa New Zealand, meet in the bonds of your love
Keep us faithful in our response to your love, with Mary patroness of our land.

**E te Atua aroha, ka karangahia houtia mātou
e koe ki ngā hua o te ora.**

Loving God, you call us anew to the abundance of life

For which we have been created. In our life with you we mature
in relationship with you, with one another, and with our land

We repent the harm we have caused in this holy place

To our sisters and brothers and to our land.

In humility we turn to Mary, Mother of God, Assumed into Heaven

**E te Atua, mā roto i te korowai o Maria
te whāea o tāu tamaiti, tō mātou whāea anō hoki**

O God, under the patronage of Mary,

the mother of your son, and our mother

We join with those gathered in the Hokianga in January 1838
with the leadership of Jean-Baptiste Pompallier, first Catholic bishop of this place

to dedicate our land of Aotearoa New Zealand

To the care of Mary, Mother of God, Assumed into Heaven.

I tenei wā, ka whakahoungia e mātou tēnei oati tapu

We now renew this dedication

Turning to Mary with new fervour

In union with her Son Our Lord Jesus Christ

Who lives and reigns with you In the unity of the Holy Spirit

God forever and ever

Amen