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WelCom

A newspaper for the Wellington and Palmerston North Catholic Dioceses

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MAHURU 2024
 ISSUE 425



WELCOM CELEBRATES MĀORI LANGUAGE WEEK – TE WIKI O TE REO MĀORI, 14-21 MAHURU 2024 | 14-21 SEPTEMBER 2024 – KIA KAHA TE REO MĀORI
 WINNER OF THE 2023 AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC PRESS ASSOCIATION (ACPA) AWARD FOR BEST LAYOUT AND DESIGN FOR A PRINTED PUBLICATION

Signature Choir: promoting Pacific music and culture

Annette Scullion

Wellington-based ecumenical-interfaith Signature Choir is achieving widespread national and international attention through performing and promoting Pacific music and culture.

Since it was founded in 2018, the choir has gained an enormous following and reputation. Its mission is to promote Pacific language and culture through showcasing Pacific music in new and re-imagined ways, and exploring choral harmony, fresh compositions and arrangements from hymns to rock music to opera.

‘The choir’s 30 to 50 choristers include a number of Māori and Pacific members from the Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational EFKS, Seventh Day Adventist, Evangelical (AOG), and Ratana churches from around Wellington, says choir member Melania Luka-Lui. Melania is Pasifika Engagement Coordinator at Te Kupenga, Catholic Theological College’s Wellington site.

‘The choir is led by members of the Catholic Parish of Wellington South including music directors and composers Jadhrah Tupāi,

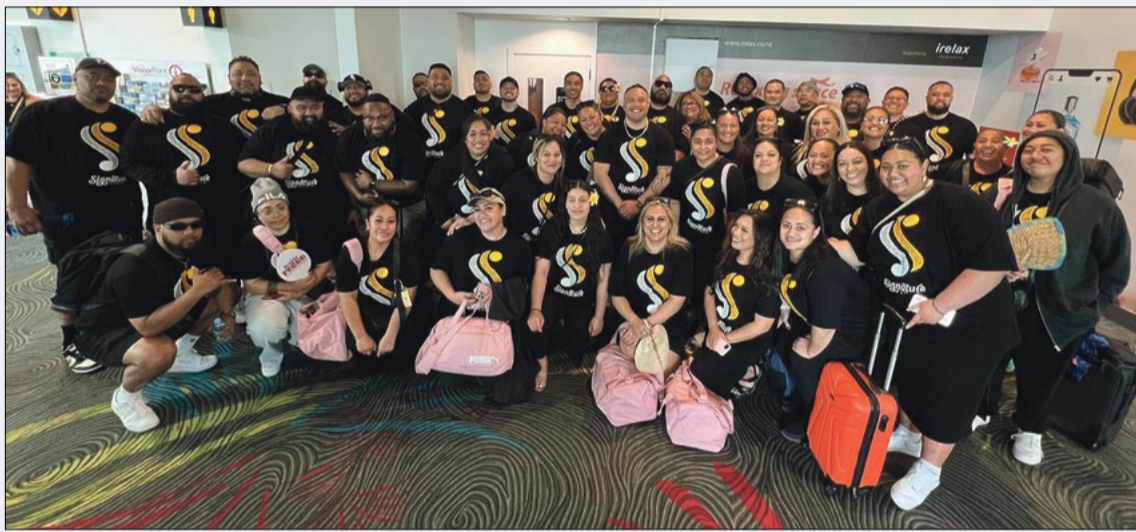
Seumanu Tana Tupāi and teacher, composer and renowned international performer, Fepuleai Helen Moananu-Tupāi,’ says Melania.

‘Team leaders Tauatele Mason and Atelina Malagamalii (EFKS Newtown), Evan Belford, (PIPC Newtown) and Henrietta Hunkin-Tagaloa (Our Lady of Hope, Tawa), help with bringing the choristers together to form Signature Choir.’

Other members from the Archdiocese parishes include Melania Luka-Lui, Julian Tupāi, Leu Ulu, Jessie Antonio and Elama Elama of the Catholic Parish of Wellington South and Pacific Island Presbyterian (PIPC) Church, Newtown, John Meli and Henrietta Hunkin-Tagaloa of Our Lady of Hope, Tawa-Titahi Bay and Leilani Tupai-Faaeteete of Te Wairua Tapu, Wainuiomata.

‘The choir holds twice-weekly practices at church venues including PIPC Newtown, St Anne’s Newtown, EFKS Congregational Church Porirua, Newtown and Naenae, as well as Wellington East Girls’ College,’ says Melania.

‘In the recent years Signature has performed at the Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington and the



Wellington’s Signature Choir members are going places with their music and culture.

Photo: Supplied

Spark Arena in Auckland with the acclaimed Mana Moana tour with the NZSO, as well as at the Hutt Valley Sports Awards, the Pacific Symphony for international cruise ship visitors to Wellington, operas and national choral events.’

Signature is currently involved with the inaugural Musika Moana Choir competition, formed as a result of last year’s resoundingly successful Mana Moana event with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in Auckland, and

at which Signature featured prominently.

This new competition is set to take place this month across Aotearoa New Zealand to showcase the richness of Pacific culture and the talent of the Pacific community choirs in some of the country’s leading venues. Signature Choir will be supporting the Musika Moana Choir Competition in Wellington on 7 September at the Michael Fowler Centre.

The choir is also involved with

the Dawn Raid Project as well as *Porgy and Bess* with the Wellington Orchestra in November.

Signature Choir has been nominated for the Pacific Music Awards 2024 and are finalists for several music categories, says Melania. ‘These include SunPix, Best Pacific Language, 531pi, Best Pacific Gospel Artist and Recorded Music NZ Te Pukaemi Toa o Te Moana Nui a Kiwa, Best Pacific Music Album.’

Te Rōpu o Ngā Rangatahi o te Rūnanga o Ngā Pīhopa Katorika o Aotearoa

Representatives from the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference National Council for Young People of Aotearoa met with the New Zealand bishops at the Home of Compassion in Wellington, 20-21 August.

The council, with representatives from each diocese, meets regularly with the bishops. Its role is to advise and advocate on behalf of young Catholics in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Among the many topics discussed at last month’s meeting were Young Church leadership, safeguarding and best practice for keeping young people safe, the 2025 Jubilee Year and its ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ theme, World Youth Day including next year’s Jubilee of the Youth, 28 July-3 August 2025 – a

‘mini’ World Youth Day for Youth and Adults, The Send Gospel national youth event in November at Mystery Creek, Hamilton, and the two-day Life Teen Aotearoa Leadership Convention held in partnership with the Archdiocese of Wellington at Sacred Heart College, Lower Hutt, 30 August-1 September 2024.

Our council’s work is vast says chair Nick Wilson. ‘We work on different projects such as the World Youth Day, a major worldwide celebration held every two to four years in a different country, and which draws together thousands of young Catholics from around the world. We collaborate on national ministries, such as LifeTeen Aotearoa Summer camp and we co-

operate in the tertiary chaplaincy space,’ he said.

‘It is important to the bishops and to us that we work together as much as possible in providing encounter experiences for young people with the living God. There is much to distract young people from a life of discipleship. To counter this, we take great hope and encouragement from the words of Pope Francis’ document to young people in *Christus Vivit*, which speaks about the importance of accompanying young people in their *hikoī whakapono* – their faith journeys.’

Nick says people often think it is just the youth minister who is responsible for the work of accompanying young people. ‘This



Members of the NZCBC National Council for Young People of Aotearoa with the New Zealand bishops at the Home of Compassion, in August. Pictured, l-r, back: Bishop Michael Dooley, Archbishop Paul Martin sm, Bishop Steve Lowe, Bishop Richard Laursenon, Bishop John Adams, Susilo Kentjana; front: Nick Wilson, Palmerston North, Mark Currie, Christchurch, Sam Brebner, Auckland, Miriama Allen, Kaikōura, Louise Lloyd, Wellington, Jil Miller, Hamilton, Bishop Michael Gielen.

Photo: Supplied

» Continued on p 2

From the editor

Annette Scullion

Tēnā koutou
Greetings.

In support of Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, 14–21 Mahuru | Māori Language Week, 14–21 September, WelCom's masthead is translated to NauMai and several articles in this edition reflect the significance of te reo Māori in our country and our Church.

The feature on pp 14 and 15, with content provided by Merv Duffy SM and Charles Ropitini, gives some interesting historical and cultural perspectives on te reo Māori in Catholic liturgy in Aotearoa New Zealand. And Deacon Danny Karatea-Goddard has written the gospel reading for Sunday 1 September and a reflection in te reo Māori and English, on p 18.

The World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and the

Season of Creation this month, with calls for care for creation and a responsible response to climate change, are explored in our feature on pp 10 and 11.

Social Justice Week runs from 8–14 September, Te Wiki o te Whai Tika: 8–14 Mahuru. Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand has produced resources to support parishes and schools to consider and reflect on this week, as featured on p 20.

St Vincent de Paul's Feast Day on 27 September has elicited an article from the Society of St Vincent de Paul in New Zealand's National President, Gerard Stevens, on p 5.

We are grateful for the ongoing support and contributions of so many of our readers who help provide a wide range of topical news and articles. Please enjoy reading this edition.
Ngā mihi

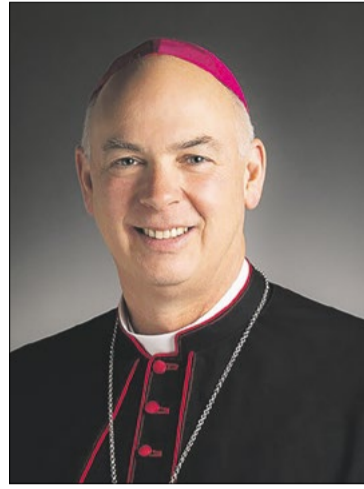
>> Continued from p 1

is erroneous, because by virtue of our baptism, our Vatican II ecclesiology points to our calling to journey together as a community of disciples. Perhaps a question for reflecting on for the disciples of some longevity reading this is: "how can I assist the faith journey of the young people in my local faith community?" After all, you too were accompanied by someone

– a teacher, a priest, a youth worker, a whānau member or similar back in the day.

'Now it is your turn to pass on the faith and nurture it in the young. In this way, we live Jesus' call in Matthew 28 to baptise people and animate their faith lives. We send a strong message to young people if we are excited about living and sharing our faith lives.'

'How can we be a missionary synodal Church?'



Archbishop Paul Martin SM
Archbishop of Wellington

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

At the end of this month I will be returning to Rome for the second session of the Synod on Synodality. Those who attended last year are required to be there again. It will be good to reconnect with people I met last year and with whom I spent the month in prayer, discernment and discussion. Fr Dennis Nacorda from the parish of Wairarapa is also attending.

This second session of the Synod addresses the question How to be a missionary synodal Church? This is indeed the challenge for us as we come to terms with what it means to be synodal and then how this may be put into practice moving forward. The synodal Church is about attitude and action. It is

helpful to be able to explain what it is so that we know what to work on in our life as a Church moving forward.

This is an important gathering and I would ask that you pray very deliberately for this Synod over the month of October. We are asking the Holy Spirit to animate our hearts and minds so that the discussions will be graced and help us in working for a Church that is truly missionary.

In the Archdiocese I have asked all the priests to read Fr James Mallon's book *Divine Renovation – From a Maintenance to a Missional Parish*. This was written 10 years ago and there have been a lot of developments since in this area. It is about looking at our parishes and seeing how they are helping us to have a deep encounter with Christ and from that build communities of faith, which are then focused on being missionary. The Archdiocesan Pastoral Council have also been reading this and discussed it at their August meeting.

"I am wanting us to reflect on what we are doing, how we are doing it, and what we need to do into the future to be more outward focused as people of the Gospel."

I am not pushing the Divine Renovation movement as the only way for parish renewal. I am wanting us to reflect on what we are doing, how we are doing it, and what we need to do into the future to be more outward focused as people of the Gospel. My hope is that parish

councils and leadership teams will also work on this together.

At the heart of all of this lies the question of whether we have fallen in love with Christ, have encountered Christ personally. For if we have and continue to then we will be motivated and indeed driven to want to share in the life of the Church and bringing others to Christ.

James Mallon notes 'the difficult truth for us as pastors, leaders and people who care about our Church is that so many of our people have never come to know him personally, and therefore have no hunger for him'. That is a sobering statement.

We know faith is a journey, that we have times when we are going well and others when we struggle and everything in between. As we approach the Year of Jubilee in 2025 with the theme of 'Pilgrims of Hope' I want us to be doing all we can to deepen and strengthen the faith lives of each of us and to build parish communities that support this faith so that we will indeed go out.

I pray the Holy Spirit will be kindled in all our hearts and that we will be a Church where those who are seeking the truth will find the person of Jesus Christ and his Good News.

Ngā mihi nui

WelCom www.welcom.org.nz

Published by: The Archdiocese of Wellington and the Diocese of Palmerston North.
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Catholic Centre, 22-30 Hill Street, PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140
September 2024 WelCom was published 26 August 2024.

Sending articles to WelCom

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

The 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. Please include your name, address and day-time phone number. At the editor's discretion, articles may be edited for length or clarity.

Photos should be in their original format (unedited, uncropped), at least one megabyte (MB) in size and attached to an 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 October 2024 issue: Monday 16 September 2024.

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

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XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops

The Second Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops will take place from Wednesday 2 October to Sunday 27 October 2024. It will continue the work of the Synod on Synodality around the theme 'For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission'. The Second Session of the XVI Assembly will be preceded by two days of spiritual retreat, from 30 September to 1 October, with participants arriving on 29 September.



Young Church TUĀKANA

2025

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Sisters conserve rare flag

Charles Ropitini

A rare military flag has received much needed conservation work from the Carmelite Sisters at Christ The King Monastery in Christchurch. The flag is the Regimental Guidon of the 9th Wellington East Coast Mounted Rifles of WWI and is paraded by Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles (QAMR) based at Linton Military Camp, near Palmerston North.

The expertise of the Sisters was sought to repair and conserve the Guidon [flag] before being formally retired from active service. The

work required deconstructing and reattaching the delicate textiles to an inserted fabric designed to hold the whole piece together. The occasion was an opportunity to view up-close the historic Guidon, made in 1935 to carry the regiments WWI Battle Honours. The Sisters expect 300 hours of handwork would have constructed the Guidon and although it will no longer be paraded, the conservation work is important for ongoing remembrance.

QAMR have a unique tradition dating from 1959 where the Guidon is held in custodianship of the Mayor of Hastings for public display



Fr Marcus Francis blesses the 9WECMR Guidon returned to Hastings after conservation work by the Carmelite Sisters in Christchurch.

Photo: Hastings District Council

in the District Council Chambers. As required the regiment retrieves the Guidon for formal occasions and then returns it to the Council for safekeeping.

The Guidon was last retrieved in November 2021 and was returned to Hastings District Council with a handover ceremony on 8 August this year.

Mayor Sandra Hazlehurst acknowledged the Sisters during the ceremony with the blessing conducted by Fr Marcus Francis, Parish Priest of Hastings.

Wellington Catholic primary schools face potential closure

Two Wellington Catholic primary schools are facing potential closure because of growing financial pressures in maintaining the schools and stagnant population growth in the capital.

The Archdiocese's General Manager, Reuben Norris, and Vicar for Education and Director of Catholic Schools Education Services, Kelly Ross, recently met with parents of children at the

two schools. They have issued the statement in the panel below.

Cardinal McKeefry Catholic Primary School was opened in 1970 and later named after the Archbishop of Wellington Peter McKeefry. The school was the first Catholic primary school in New Zealand to be state integrated with a maximum roll of 278. It was designated as a full co-educational primary school in the 1980s. Its

roots trace back to New Zealand's first Marist Brothers' school that provided education at various places in Thorndon.

Cardinal McKeefry Primary School ranges from year 1 to year 8. As from the 1 July 2024 roll return, the school has 54 students.

St Bernard's School was originally opened and blessed in the Catholic Church at the top of Jefferson St, Brooklyn, in 1911. After a meeting of parishioners, it was decided a Mercy Sisters convent school would commence in the church building. This was during the term of Fr J F O'Connor sm as parish priest of St Mary of the Angels, when Brooklyn was linked to St Mary's parish.

A later parish priest, Fr Paul Kane, procured land in Taft St. The church was re-sited there in 1949 and a new school built. The school was called St Anthony's, but this name was changed in 1961 and the parish and school became St Bernard's. The Sisters of Mercy continued to run the school until they withdrew in 1972.

As from the 1 July 2024 roll return, St Bernard's Primary School currently has 47 students.

West Auckland parish priest Fr Mosese Tui appointed Archbishop of Samoa-Apia

Pope Francis has appointed Fr Mosese Vitolio Tui sdb – the parish priest of St Paul's Parish in Massey in West Auckland – as the new Archbishop of Samoa-Apia.

The announcement was made on 12 June 2024 from Rome.

Archbishop Mosese Vitolio Tui was ordained bishop on 22 August 2024 at St Therese Retreat Centre, Leauvaa, Archdiocese of Samoa-Apia.

Archbishop Tui replaces Archbishop Alapati Lui Mata'eliga, who died in Auckland in April, 2023.

Born in Samoa in 1961, Archbishop Tui is a priest of the Salesians of Don Bosco. He was ordained in 1994 at the St John Bosco Church, Sinamoga, Apia.

Following his ordination, Archbishop Tui was a school principal and parish priest in Samoa from 1995 to 2017. He was appointed parish priest at St Paul's Massey and Ranui Parish. West Auckland in March 2018.

Bishop of Auckland Stephen Lowe said Archbishop Tui was a popular parish priest with the spirit of Don Bosco who was much loved by the people of the parish. He had served on the Auckland Diocese Council of Priests and been a popular priest among the local clergy.

'While it is a sad day for the people

of St Paul's Parish and for us in the Diocese of Auckland, I am delighted with the Holy Father's appointment for him as the new Archbishop of Samoa-Apia,' said Bishop Lowe. 'Fr Mosese will bring the joy of the Gospel to his new diocese as well as his gift of unifying people in their love and service of our God.'

Following Archbishop Mata'eliga's death last year, Pope appointed New Zealand-born Bishop Emeritus Peter Brown – the Bishop of Samoa-Pago Pago in American Samoa from 2013 until 2023 – as apostolic administrator in Apia, pending the appointment of Archbishop Tui. Bishop Brown will now return to Auckland.

According to the 2021 Samoan census, there are 36,096 Catholics in Samoa, making Catholicism the second-largest Christian denomination behind the Congregational Christian Church Samoa, with 55,411 adherents. Samoa's total population is 205,557.



Archbishop of Samoa-Apia, Mosese Vitolio Tui sdb.

Photo: Supplied

The Archdiocese of Wellington recently finalised a review of all schools in the Archdiocese network. To fulfil our mission of providing the best education possible for our students, we continually review and assess all schools in our network to ensure viability and sustainability for the future.

Due to growing financial pressures, such as rising insurance premiums and building costs, along with stagnant population growth projections for the City of Wellington, means that the Archdiocese needed to consider these factors in maintaining its buildings across the entire network to meet Ministry of Education standards.

As a result, and after careful consideration, the Archdiocese of Wellington has informed parents of its intention, as Proprietor of these schools, to engage the Minister of Education to consider the potential cancellation of Cardinal McKeefry Catholic Primary School's and St Bernard's Catholic Primary School's Integration Agreement.

We deeply understand that this news has brought a great deal of uncertainty and concern for the staff, students, and families within these school communities. Our thoughts and prayers are with them during this challenging time, and we are fully committed to offering our support to everyone affected.

– Reuben Norris, General Manager, and Kelly Ross Vicar for Education, Wellington Archdiocese



School picnic, Cardinal McKeefry School, 2023.

Photo: Cardinal McKeefry School



St Bernard's students enjoy an outdoor lesson at nearby Wellington Southern Coast.

Photo: St Bernard's School



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Congratulations to Con Anima, our award winning college choir directed by Mr Roger Powdrell on their stellar performance at the national Cadenza competition held in Hastings last month.

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Assessment of Catholic safeguarding offers blueprint for improvement

An independent assessment of Catholic safeguarding protocols and procedures in New Zealand has identified significant progress in many areas, while also highlighting where more work is needed.

Te Rōpū Tautoko, the group that coordinated the Catholic Church's engagement with the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, last year contracted an independent firm to assess the implementation and suitability of safeguarding culture standards.

The project included a review of safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as dozens of face-to-face and online interviews. A team of consultants met with survivors and survivor advocates, Church leaders, safeguarding officers, academics and parishioners to understand the current practice.

It looked specifically at compliance, effectiveness, appropriateness and improvement.

The report, carried out by UK firm GCPS Consulting, was delivered to Church leaders late July. A summary report has now

been published.

'Alongside the critical work being undertaken by the Royal Commission, we wanted to scrutinise our existing standards and strategies and see if they remain fit for purpose,' said Catherine Fyfe, who served as chairperson of Te Rōpū Tautoko, which recently completed its work.

Ms Fyfe said the report commends the Church for much of the work that has been undertaken in recent years. It also points to where some approaches could be better coordinated or where systems, processes and communications need to be enhanced.

'When read in conjunction with the Royal Commission's findings and recommendations, this report gives the Church a blueprint for further developing our safeguarding policies and procedures,' Ms Fyfe said.

Bishop Steve Lowe, president of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference, said the report shines a light on places where improvements can tighten the



An assessment report of the implementation of the safeguarding culture standards of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand, has been presented to Church leaders in New Zealand.

Church's existing practice.

'It was encouraging to read how a range of approaches are working well, but there are areas where we can take existing efforts further to

strengthen them,' Bishop Lowe said.

'We are grateful for the dedicated and knowledgeable people we have guiding our safeguarding initiatives, but it is important that we provide them with the appropriate support and promote collaboration and ongoing development for them.'

Congregational Leaders Conference of Aotearoa New Zealand president Fr Thomas Rouse ssc said the need for increased dialogue with survivors and their representatives was a recommendation that resonated with him.

'The road towards a sense of truth, of justice, of healing is one we must walk with those who have been abused in our settings,' he said.

'I have seen a major shift in that engagement over the past couple of decades, but we have been challenged to do more – and so we must.'

Other recommendations the report makes include:

- regular public reporting on the number of cases reported to Church authorities;
- ensuring documents are more

accessible for people from a range of backgrounds;

- seeking to undertake investigations in a more timely manner;
- assessing the Church's allocation of resources on prevention and on responding to complaints and concerns;
- ensuring safeguarding is embedded in all roles for those working in the Church.

Bishop Lowe and Fr Rouse said their respective organisations will discuss the report in the coming weeks and develop a plan for responding to its recommendations.

That plan would sit alongside the Church's ongoing review of the Royal Commission's findings and recommendations.

'We have much to consider, and we are committed to providing the leadership our Church needs at this time to continue the work of creating and maintaining the safest possible environments for all people,' Bishop Lowe said.

The summary report can be found at: tautoko.catholic.org.nz

Annual Day of Prayer for Life – Support Life Sunday, 13 October

The 'Infinite' Nature of Human Dignity

Each year, on the second Sunday in October, the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand holds a Day of Prayer for Life, otherwise known as Support Life Sunday.

This year, the Day of Prayer for Life is on Sunday 13 October. The theme for 2024, approved by the New Zealand Catholic bishops, is 'Infinite Dignity = Infinite Love'.

The focus picks up on the recent Vatican document, *Dignitas Infinita – On Human Dignity*. In the preamble to this significant publication, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith describes the impetus for it as arising out of 'the indispensable nature of the dignity of the human person in Christian anthropology' and the urgent need to illustrate 'the significance and beneficial implications of the concept in the social, political, and economic realms', which are currently characterised by so many grave violations of human dignity.

The document's title traces back to a speech given to disabled people by Pope St John Paul II in 1980 in which he emphasised that God, in Jesus Christ, has shown how he loves every person in an 'unsurpassable' way and this thereby bestows upon



Photo: iStock

every individual an 'infinite dignity'.

To quote directly from *Dignitas Infinita*: 'Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter.'

In line with the focus of *Dignitas Infinita*, the campaign tagline for this year's Support Life Sunday is: 'Every Life Matters ... Always!'

Liturgical materials in the form of a suggested welcome and introduction and Prayers of the Faithful have already been distributed to parishes,

along with suggestions for hymns.

Other materials, including social media posts using quotes from *Dignitas Infinita* and a specially developed Prayer for Life, are still being worked on, says Dr John Kleinsman, director of the Nathaniel Centre for Bioethics, which is responsible for developing the campaign content in close collaboration with the six diocesan Pastoral Care Offices.

» How does the Declaration on Human Dignity apply in Aotearoa New Zealand? Bishop Peter Cullinane, p 16.

Review of End of Life Choice Act – public submissions now open

Assisted dying – in the form of physician-assisted euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide – became legal in Aotearoa New Zealand three years ago on 7 November 2021.

That law stipulates there must be a review within three years of the practice coming into force and every five years after that.

The first review, overseen by the Ministry of Health, is currently taking place [opened 1 August 2024; closes 26 September 2024], and consists of two parallel streams.

- A review of the operation of the End of Life Choice Act (2019), to be informed by targeted engagement with organisations and individuals that are directly involved in the provision of assisted dying or have particular knowledge or expertise relevant to its operation. This material will form the basis for a formal report with recommendations to the Minister of Health.
- An online process canvassing public opinion on what changes could be made to the End of Life Choice Act via an online portal:

tinyurl.com/End-of-Life-Choice-Act-Review.

This feedback will not influence the recommendations but will be summarised in a separate report to politicians to help inform them in the event a new private member's bill is put forward suggesting changes to the current legislation.

In anticipation of the statutory review, various proponents of assisted dying have begun lobbying for a more permissive law.

'Canada, where eligible people are requesting assisted dying because of a lack of available health care options or lack of proper social supports, provides a salutary warning for us should we decide to further liberalise our law,' says Director of the New Zealand Catholic Bioethics Centre, Dr John Kleinsman.

Dr Kleinsman is concerned about the push to make our laws more permissive, including the following.

- Changing the current requirement that a person will die within six months.
- Extension to include 'non-terminal' neurological conditions.
- Allowing doctors to suggest the option of assisted dying with their patients.
- Allowing for assisted dying to be consented in advance through a directive which would open it up for people with dementia.
- Greater pressure on health practitioners and institutions to participate in assisted dying, undermining their rights to freedom of conscience.



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Growing and sharing the love of Jesus Christ for all in a practical way

Gerard Stevens
National President, Society of St Vincent de Paul in New Zealand

On 27 September hundreds of thousands of members in 153 countries round the world will celebrate the patronal feast of the Society of St Vincent de Paul.

The Society as we know it was founded in Paris 1833 by Frederic Ozanam and his young friends – aged late teens and early twenties – as means to develop their faith.

They formed a Conference of Charity but very quickly learnt they had to do more than just talk, realising they needed to take positive action by actually visiting and helping the poor. The Conference of Charity rapidly became the Society of St Vincent de Paul after they adopted him as their Patron Saint. Frederic and his young friends were inspired by Vincent's life and work for the poor some 170 years earlier. As a priest Vincent had been working as a Chaplain to wealthy Catholic families. He lived a worldly way of life until one day he was called to give the Last Rites to a very poor dying man. In that encounter he personally experienced the love of God and became a different person, devoting his life to the service of the poor, helping them with love and practical assistance.

For most people the face of the Society in New Zealand is food parcels and Op Shops and yes, we do those things. But they are a means to an end and there is much more to Vinnies.

The Society, which is unique in that it is a totally independent lay organisation, came to New Zealand in 1868 the Society seeking to achieve the same goals as its parent body; growing the faith of its members and putting that faith into practice by assisting the poor in a practical and personal way. On his very first visit to the poor in Paris in winter, Frederic took some firewood to help them heat their home in the slums of Paris;

and even today in New Zealand we still bring firewood to those need of home heating.

The Society is structured in such a way the focus is always on the poor and marginalised members of our community. The local Conference is the kingpin, and its members are the apostles at the 'coalface' and it is through them that we carry out our Mission of offering practical and personal help. Like St Vincent de Paul, we want our members and the people they help to have the opportunity to experience the love of God through their actions.



“While times have changed enormously, we have to remember the Goals of the Society have not... We are not a welfare agency. The help we supply is a practical way of growing and sharing the love of Jesus Christ for all.”

As Pope Benedict XVI said, 'People discover Christianity not because of learned talks or books, but because they have experienced God's love in a practical way'.

Local parishes have always been and still are very supportive and nearly all our Conferences have a connection with the local parish. Today, in New Zealand we have approximately 1100 Members, 1735 Volunteers and around 3000 in our Young Vinnies groups, which are mainly school based.

Like all Church-associated groups in English-speaking countries we are following a pattern of ageing membership, declining parish participation, reduced numbers of members and some Conferences have had to close.



The St Vincent de Paul shop in Hastings is a hub of activity and support, and was especially busy over the months following the devastating impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle last year.

Photo: WelCom

There is also a lack of diversity in the current membership. Despite these problems there is still enormous enthusiasm for the work being done to further the Society's Mission. It is an important part of the Church's mission.

Like many other similar organisations, we must re-examine what we are doing and why we are doing it. The world has changed over the last couple of hundred years and many of the charitable tasks of old no longer exist or have been taken over by government and like bodies. We now must look hard at why our Society was founded and find new ways of achieving the same goals in an environment vastly different to that when Frederic founded the Society. The definition of 'the Poor' is now very different and Government plays a bigger part in assisting them. Nowadays, helping the poor can mean advocating for them to the authorities to make sure they receive what is rightfully theirs. Helping them deal with unexpected expenses; making sure people get to live with dignity.

We face extra difficulty in that our Society asks us to visit and make personal contact with the people we help just as Jesus did and as Frederic did. The social and legal environment today makes that harder.

While times have changed enormously, we have to remember

the Goals of the Society have not. Yes, the demands for practical assistance are increasing, our numbers are decreasing and in the midst of the turmoil it is easy to forget our original goals. We are not a welfare agency. The help we supply is a practical way of growing and sharing the love of Jesus Christ for all.

Vincentian Charity is Service with Christian love. Join us in this Mission!

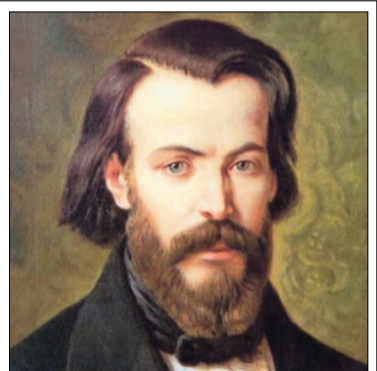
Visit www.svdp.org.nz for more information about the Society of St Vincent de Paul in New Zealand.

» Young Vinnies' annual Mass, p 13.



St Vincent de Paul cm (1581–1660) was an French Catholic priest who dedicated himself to serving the poor. A man of deep faith, intellect and enormous creativity, he has become known as the 'The Apostle of Charity' and 'Father of the Poor'. He was renowned for his compassion, humility, and generosity and was canonised a saint in 1737. Vincent is the patron of all works of charity. His feast is on 27 September.

Image: Seventh-century portrait of Vincent by Simon François de Tours.



Blessed Antoine-Frédéric Ozanam (1813–1853) was a French Catholic literary scholar, lawyer, journalist and equal rights advocate. With fellow Sorbonne students he founded the Conference of Charity, later known as the Society of St Vincent de Paul. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris in 1997.

JOIN THE VINNIES



Young and old, town and country. Vinnies harness the generosity of Aotearoa NZ – whānau, churches, community groups, schools. Get involved and help those who are going through tough times.

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www.svdp.org.nz

Society of St Vincent de Paul New Zealand

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Synod on Synodality: Bishops launch regional workshops ahead of October meeting in Rome

Around the world, bishops together with the Catholic faithful of their dioceses in Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa have been gearing up for the second session of the 2021–2024 Synod on Synodality to take place 2–27 October in Vatican City.

The worldwide process launched by Pope Francis for the Catholic Church is centred on the theological concept of 'synodality' or 'journeying together' as the People of God. Synodality places particular emphasis on renewing the call of each baptised person to actively participate in the mission Jesus Christ entrusted to his church.

As part of this global process of listening, dialogue, and discernment, regional bishops' conferences – in collaboration with clergy, religious men and women, and laypeople – have spearheaded continental-wide workshops to discuss key theological and pastoral considerations raised in the *Instrumentum Laboris*, the Vatican's working document for the second and last global session of the Synod on Synodality, released on 9 July.

In Europe 42 representatives from local churches across Europe were divided into small focus groups at a conference from 29–31 August in Linz, Austria, to discuss the themes outlined in the Vatican's working document for the second session of the Synod.

Members of the Council of the Bishops' Conferences of Europe (CCEE), including the presidents of the bishops' conferences of Italy, Austria, and Switzerland, attended the three-day meeting, together with European experts in theology and canon law as well as Vatican representatives.

In Asia, the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) held its regional workshop from 5–8 August in Bangkok and identified the necessity for unity and harmony for the growth of the Catholic Church in a largely non-Christian region. The meeting was attended by 38 delegates from local churches spread across 17 countries.

In association with its social communications office, the FABC have recently launched the 'Synodality Asia' [synodalityasia.net] website to



Pope Francis made his remarks on synodality during an annual meeting for moderators of international associations of the faithful, ecclesial movements, and new communities, organised by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life on 13 June 2024. Photo: Vatican Media

engage the Catholic faithful to engage with the synodal path of Asia.

In South America, the Episcopal Council of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAM) held a three-day congress in Bogota, Colombia, attended by nearly 2,000 people. Approximately 200 people attended workshops in person while an additional 1,200 people participated online in the 9–11 August congress

to discuss topics including church structures, the role of women, and the meaning of mission.

Prior to the release of the *Instrumentum Laboris*, the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) together with the African Synodal Initiative (ASI), convened a two-day meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in April.

Fifty delegates from local

churches came together to explore the ways and means of being 'a synodal church in mission' and discussed the unique experience and distinct contribution of the peoples of Africa in the evangelisation of the continent.

Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo, president of SECAM and archbishop of Kinshasa, said the meeting recognised the importance of fortifying the Christian identity in the region and the need to integrate the distinct cultural and community forces into the broader mission of the Church.

The 2–27 October meeting to be held in the Vatican with Pope Francis will close the discernment phase of the Synod on Synodality. The conclusions of both the 2023 and 2024 global sessions – as accepted and approved by the Pope – are then expected to be implemented in all local churches with the purpose of creating a listening and more participative Catholic Church worldwide.

Source: CNA

Five religions gather to celebrate fraternity at Paris Olympics

Bishop Emmanuel Gobilliard of Digne, the Holy See's special representative for the 2024 Paris Olympics, was the representative of the five major religions involved in the Paris Olympics, at a significant interfaith ceremony held on Sunday 4 August outside Notre-Dame Cathedral, to highlight a message of universal fraternity.

The square in front of the cathedral was bathed in sunshine as Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus came to talk about their experiences at the multifaith centre in the Olympic Village and discuss the values of faith and sports.

The event followed a backlash against several scenes at the Games' opening ceremony from a number

of religious leaders across the world.

But the interfaith meeting has a long tradition. A similar meeting of faith leaders had taken place at Notre Dame a hundred years earlier, in 1924, during the Paris Olympic Games, at the initiative of Pierre de Coubertin, who had relaunched the Olympic Games in 1894.

Thomas Bach, the current president of the International Olympic Committee, and Tony Estanguet, president of the Paris 2024 Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, were welcomed by Archbishop Laurent Ulrich of Paris, and the French capital's Auxiliary Bishop Philippe Marsset, who was delegated by the archdiocese to oversee the Olympic Games and

Holy Games initiative.

Bishop Emmanuel Gobilliard was there along with the mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, and the Chief Rabbi of France, Haïm Korsia.

Meeting in front of the cathedral under the theme 'How does sport mobilise the best in man and humanity,' the religious leaders emphasised how sport can be a powerful sphere of positive values and unity for humanity.

Surrounded by some 100 chaplains from the Olympic Village multifaith centre, they shared their thoughts on how sport can bring out the best of humanity and serve the peoples of the world.

'Faith and sport share many of the same values that guide us to live together in peace with our fellow human beings,' Mr Bach said.

He said that 'the Olympic Games are first and foremost about sport. But they are also about much more than sport. They are about: Togetherness. Hope. Solidarity. Peace.'

The religious leaders spoke freely, with prayers, exhortations or readings. Bishop Gobilliard highlighted the impact of the moments of silence during the ceremony.

'I think this is the most beautiful way to express a common prayer, it allows you to say something important and beautiful,' he said.

'God has performed a miracle.' This spirit of unity continued to accompany the Olympic athletes throughout the Games at the multifaith centre in the Olympic Village, which housed five prayer rooms and offered spiritual support during the competitions.

Source: Vatican News



Marileidy Paulino of the Dominican Republic rings the Olympic bell after winning gold in the women's 400m final at the Paris Olympics.

Photo: OSV News/Aleksandra Szmigiel/Reuters

Notre Dame Cathedral strikes gold with donation of Olympic bell

The bronze bell used for track and field competitions during the Paris Olympic Games will ring during every Mass at Notre Dame Cathedral when it reopens in December.

'We were contacted a few months ago by the Paris Organising Committee, to see if we would be interested in this bell for Notre Dame,' the cathedral's rector-archpriest, Fr Olivier Ribadeau Dumas, told OSV News. 'And we accepted this proposal.'

The bell, weighing 500kgs, was made for the Olympic Games by the Cornille Havard foundry, dubbed 'the last bell makers of France.'

The foundry produces bells for France's largest churches and cathedrals. In 2013, it produced nine new bells for Notre Dame to mark the cathedral's 850th anniversary. Installed in Notre Dame's north tower, their role was to ring for the cathedral's daily services.

The same company was responsible for the restoration of

eight of these nine bells after they had been damaged during the fire in April 2019.

The cathedral's largest bell, known as 'le bourdon Emmanuel', is located in the south tower. It dates back to the time of King Louis XIV, at the end of the 17th century, and it rings for historic events, as it did at the end of both world wars. Emmanuel was not affected by the fire and on special occasions continued to be operated manually as the electrical system was fixed.

'It has rung several times since the fire, at Easter and Christmas, and for special occasions such as the death of Pope Benedict XVI' Fr Dumas said.

'The Olympic Games bell is not destined to join those of two cathedral towers. It will join two other bells, newly cast by the same company, which will be placed inside the cathedral, in the gallery, not far from the organ. These three bells will ring together during Mass, at the moment of the consecration.'

Source: NCR



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Launch for World Youth Day 2027

The Church in South Korea has officially set the stage for World Youth Day 2027 with a launch event at Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul.

Under the theme 'Hope Ignites in Seoul. Success for WYD Seoul 2027', the ceremony, held on Sunday 28 July, marked the beginning of preparations for the highly anticipated international gathering.

The event drew a diverse crowd of more than 1000 young attendees, including North Korean defectors, youth with disabilities and military personnel.

The launch event 'kicked off' with a colourful flag parade, where young Koreans and international participants carried 193 flags into the cathedral.

This parade symbolised the universal call and enthusiasm for WYD, highlighting Seoul's role as a global hub for young Catholics.

A highlight of the ceremony was the 'Kick-off Declaration' led by Archbishop Peter Soon-taick Chung, chair of the local organising committee for WYD Seoul 2027, alongside two young Korean delegates.

This declaration marked the official commencement of

preparations for WYD 2027, emphasising the Church's dedication to youth engagement.

The ceremony concluded with a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Chung. In his homily, Archbishop Chung spoke of the Church's mission to provide a platform for young people, urging them to unite in hope and prayer as they prepare for this significant event.

'I believe that WYD represents an invaluable opportunity for youth

from across the globe, including our Korean youth, to reflect upon and engage with these challenging tasks. It is imperative that we unite our hearts, pray together, and discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we earnestly prepare for this journey,' he added.

The event's motto will be announced in this September, followed by the ceremonial handover of WYD symbols to Seoul in November.



Young participants carry flags from 193 countries during the launch ceremony of World Youth Day 2027 at Myeongdong Cathedral in Seoul.

Photo: Archdiocese of Seoul

Tickets for Pope Francis' Mass in Belgium sells out in record time

Pope Francis will make an official visit to Belgium, 26–29 September, where he will preside over the Eucharist before more than 35,000 people. The event has generated significant enthusiasm, with all tickets for the Mass already distributed.

Bishop Henning to replace Cardinal O'Malley in Boston

In a surprise announcement, Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Richard G Henning of the Diocese of Providence as archbishop-elect of Boston. Henning, who has only been a bishop since 2018, will replace 80-year-old retiring Cardinal Seán P O'Malley, who has served as one of Francis' closest advisers since the beginning of his papacy.

Papal almoner oversees new shipment of food and medicine to Ukraine

The Pope's charitable efforts continue towards Ukraine, a country he has long described as 'martyred', with trucks loaded with essential supplies leaving Rome for the war-torn country. The trucks left last month from the Ukrainian Basilica of Holy Wisdom in Rome, carrying essential supplies, such as food, clothing, and medicines, for the distressed population of the Eastern European nation. The shipment also includes boxes of tuna, a long-lasting food item. Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, papal almoner [medical social worker] and Prefect of the Dicastery for the Service of Charity, is overseeing the shipment and distribution in Ukraine of these gifts from the Pope.

Pope discusses climate change with Amazon chief

Pope Francis met with Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and his fiancée, Lauren Sánchez, vice chair of the Bezos Earth Fund, last month at the Vatican to discuss climate change. The meeting was at the Domus Sanctae Marthae, the Pope's residence.

In an Instagram post 15 August, Sánchez said the Pope's wisdom, warmth, and humour were deeply touching. 'He reminded us not to take life too seriously, a simple yet powerful reminder to keep lightness in our hearts,' she wrote. The meeting was not listed on the Pope's official agenda nor publicised through the Vatican's media channels. Sánchez wrote the three of them discussed the 'urgent need for climate action', a passion she said she shares as vice-chair of the Bezos Earth Fund.

In March, Sánchez announced the Bezos Earth Fund would invest \$60 million in centres focused on biomanufacturing and creating alternative proteins. Bezos has committed to spending \$10 billion on fighting climate change through the fund.

Schedule for Pope's journey to Asia and Oceania

September will be a busy month for Pope Francis, and for the faithful of the four countries preparing to welcome him as he visits them on his 45th Apostolic Journey abroad: Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste and Singapore. The Pope will be visiting the four countries over a period of less than two weeks.

Departing from Rome on 2

September, Pope Francis will first make his way to Indonesia, landing in the capital, Jakarta. Then, on 6 September, he will travel to Port Moresby to greet the faithful of the Pacific island nation of Papua New Guinea, where he will remain until 9 September. From there he will fly to Dili, the capital city of Timor-Leste. Then, from Dili, Pope Francis will travel

to Singapore for the final leg of his journey, from 11 to 13 of September, on which day he will return home, back to Rome.

Visit tinyurl.com/Pope-Asia-Oceania-Visit for the full schedule of the Holy Father's journey.

'Strong and multicultural' Church in PNG

When Pope Francis visits Papua New Guinea in September, Fr Mario Abzalón Alvarado Tovar, the Superior General of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, says the Holy Father will find a Church with a strong practice of faith, but in the style of Papua New Guinea. These are very ancient peoples with very ancient traditions. For them, the Pope's presence is a confirmation of their journey as a Church, as the people of God.

Speaking to *Vatican News* in July, the Guatemalan-born missionary describes Papua New Guinea as a multicultural world and the Church there as multi-coloured, multilingual, and multiethnic in every sense.

'There is a saying that describes

Papua New Guinea,' Fr Alvarado said, 'as "the land of the unexpected".'

It is a country with a very ancient cultural tradition but with a way of life very different from the Western world.

'Pope Francis will find a Church with a strong practice of faith, but in the style of Papua New Guinea, of the islands of New Guinea, of the mainland, of the highlands, and of the coastal areas,' he said. 'These are very ancient peoples with very ancient traditions. We need to change the SIM card in our heads when we arrive in Papua New Guinea.'

Referring to the ecclesial reality Pope Francis will encounter in Papua New Guinea, Fr Alvarado indicated that it is a Church with many rituals and dances, born

from a rural world of jungle, rivers, fishing, and hunting.

Fr Alvarado emphasised there has been significant progress in Papua New Guinea, and there is a strong Church on the island. However, it faces challenges like those worldwide, such as climate change, mining with no respect for local communities, and systemic poverty.

'There is systemic poverty in Papua New Guinea, despite being a country with incredibly large natural resources. Many international companies are exploiting the country. Climate change is felt strongly, as it is a country heavily dependent on its natural resources. Deforestation and large-scale monocultures



A member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart with members of the Christian in Papua New Guinea.

Photo: Vatican Media

affect the people. Mining 'without a human face' is also a major issue. The Church is deeply affected and strives to stand with the most needy. Additionally, the tribal world is a challenge for foreigners and the Church alike – how to respect tribal or clan structures

and evangelise from within, while respecting and trying to heal the anti-values that exist within all social and ecclesial structures. It's a significant challenge because these are very different worldviews.'

Source: *Vatican News*



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Inspiring environmental leadership

Adrienne Gallie rsj
Archdiocese Integral Ecology Committee

“Hope has two beautiful daughters, Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”
 – Attributed to St Augustine

The Wellington Archdiocese Ecology, Justice and Peace commission's Integral Ecology committee organised two workshops in early August to offer and lead people with creative initiatives and resources for celebrating the Season of Creation during September.

A highlight of each workshop was the inspiring presence of two women witnessing to ‘Courage’ with their lives. Amanda Joe, Young Vinnies Co-ordinator, and Di Buchan, QSM JP, spoke about passionately seeing that things do not remain as they are, through hopeful initiatives underway in their communities.

With a heart for nature, caring and living better, Amanda is involved with leading children in three Catholic primary schools for an hour a week. Her initiatives include encouraging the children to visit and talk with the elderly at rest homes, plant gardens, cook their own food, shop secondhand and clean up beaches and waterways.

The students carry out tasks – gaining knowledge from beginning to end – including learning about the value of money, wastefulness and landfill, the art of conversation, and taking concerns to councils

and government ministers. Their confidence and smiling faces in the social media posts are testament to Amanda's engaging and enthusiastic way, a building block for happy, well-informed citizens into the future.

Di Buchan is the founder of the DB Environment Trust, a philanthropic entity giving grants to tree-planting initiatives across Aotearoa New Zealand. Di's passion



Amanda Joe, Young Vinnies Co-ordinator.

for trees often leads her to join the planting with the recipients.

Di is now an honorary Life Member of the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand, which shares knowledge across many disciplines. She is encouraged for the future by the young graduates she sees who are ‘so competent, so ethical, so dedicated’ and would like to see local councils make it mandatory for the environmental workers they employ to be certified as environmental practitioners.

The township of Ōtaki, where

Di lives, is awarded every year for leading the way with positive initiatives through the Energise Ōtaki projects. As one of the six trustees Di is co-ordinator of the Ōtaki Carbon Forest project, enabling the planting of up to 40 hectares of trees on private land, 8000 trees per hectare.

Along with Di's live inspiration, the workshops included participant

handouts with quotes from *Laudate Deum* and *To Hope and Act with Creation* for parish bulletins, Prayers of the Faithful, website links, copies of posters and reflective material.

A rich sharing from participants about the ideas and activities already in motion and taking place throughout September, rounded off the two workshops.



Integral Ecology committee members l-r: Estelle Henrys, convenor; Adrienne Gallie rsj; Ian Munro; Amanda Joe; and Deidre Meskill, EJP Commission Facilitator.



EJP Commission Chair Jim McAloon with Di Buchan and Integral Ecology committee member Peter Healy sm.

Photos: Supplied

Energise Ōtaki

Energise Ōtaki is powered by a vision of living in a town – and world – where there's enough good energy for everyone.

‘Enough’ – as in what we need, and not more than we need; addressing energy poverty and issues of access; helping provide education and infrastructure to use less energy to live well.

‘Good’ – as in energy sourced in the least damaging ways, including being revived from ‘waste’; and ‘good’ as in feeling good; recognising the health of our town – and planet – connects and affects the health of our communities, and vice versa.

As a charity Energise Ōtaki is guided by principles they're grateful to Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki for sharing.

Energise Ōtaki supports and leads local projects on Climate Energy, Clean Energy, Energy Access and Energy Recovery, and welcomes new collaborations for people-powered energy change.

Together they're transforming how Ōtaki gets and uses energy.

E mahi tahi nei ki te panoni i te whakaputa, i te whakapau a Ōtaki i te hiko.

Visit www.energiseotaki.nz to learn more about Energise Ōtaki.

Understanding Te Tiriti from a Christian Perspective

Carolyn Tait and Estelle Henrys

When in 2023 Ōtari Parish was surveyed by their Parish Justice, Peace and Development group, the community made it known it wanted to gain a deeper understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This led to a recent offering to take part in a two-part video and discussion programme called ‘Belonging in this Land: Treaty Basics from a Christian Perspective’.

The programme is produced and presented by Common Grace Aotearoa, a Christian movement seeking justice for the common good.

Over 30 people gathered on two



Members of Ōtari Parish community, the Christian Life Community and Te Ngākau Tapu, took part in a discussion programme to learn about Te Tiriti o Waitangi from a Christian Perspective.

Photo: Supplied

wintery Sunday afternoons to take part. They included members of the parish community, the Christian

Life Community and Te Ngākau Tapu. People introduced themselves and their family origins at the first

session, and both sessions were ‘bookended’ with group prayer and waiata.

Some participants had had Treaty education opportunities through their work and other organisations, but the point of difference these sessions offered was the influence and relationships with Māori of the early Christian Missionaries, as well as a bicultural perspective on historical broken promises and social injustices.

The material presented varying degrees of challenges, but the video presenters framed the discussions in an open, interesting and respectful way.

This shared experience contributes to how we as Christians

can go forward as Tangata Tiriti in hope. As Rev Jay Ruka (Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Mutunga), Anglican Dean of Taranaki Cathedral Church of St Mary, said in the video, ‘The Church can do this by speaking the truth of history and by speaking it in love.’

The ‘Belonging in this Land’ programme is available from Common Grace Aotearoa for groups to use. There is a booklet to guide facilitation with questions for discussion. Visit treatyandbelonging.nz for more information.

Carolyn Tait and Estelle Henrys are members of Wellington's Ōtari Parish JPD group.

MEN'S MEETINGS

Joshua aims to encourage, support and strengthen men in their Christian calling. Come and join us.

Wellington
 Returns to **Connolly Hall** Guildford Tce
Thursday 19 September, 7:30pm
 Contact: David 027 447 7280

Palmerston North
 St Mary's Church foyer, Ruahine Street
Tuesday 17 September, 7:00pm
 Contact: John 027 688 7750

‘As for me and my house we will serve the Lord’ - *Joshua 24:15*

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Pope Francis' Prayer Intention

During the month of September 2024 Pope Francis' intention is: *for the cry of the Earth.*

We pray that each one of us will hear and take to heart the cry of the Earth and of victims of natural disasters and climactic change, and that all will undertake to personally care for the world in which we live.

St Anne's Church Whanganui leased to preschool

Sue Seconi
Catholic Parish of
Whanganui - Te Parihi
Katorika Ki Whanganui

St Anne's Church, with its distinctive sparkling stained-glass steeple and tiered seating, was packed for the last Eucharist to be celebrated at the church in Whanganui East, after 82 years.

The Mass of Thanksgiving, celebrated by parish priest Fr Craig Butler and Fr John Roberts on Sunday evening 4 August 2024, was one of sadness. Especially touching were the parishioners in silence clearing the sanctuary and removing the liturgical items, lectionary, candlesticks, hand bells and finally the altar cloth.

Given the challenges of ongoing maintenance on parish buildings

and properties across the city of Whanganui, coupled with the serious impact of rising costs of living, meant a tough financial decision had to be faced by the parish and a decision about the church taken.

However, rather than being sold, the church is currently being rented by Whanganui Montessori Preschool.

'We see this as being a much better option to lease it out for a term, rather than sell it outright. This still gives hope for the future,' said Fr Craig.

Masses which were celebrated in St Anne's will now be held in St Mary's in the central city.

St Anne's was first established in 1942 with the purchase of a large house on the corner of Kawakawa and Nixon Sts to serve as a Mass centre and a primary school. With

the increased numbers of families settling in Whanganui East, a long, hall-type church was built. In 1973 a sizable property was purchased around the corner in Raine St and a new open-plan style school was built two years later. In May 1999, the contemporary St Anne's Church was opened and blessed by Bishop Peter Cullinane.

St Anne had the last say in one of the presentations at the final service offering us the same blessing God gave Moses those thousands of years ago.

May Yahweh bless you and keep you.

May Yahweh let his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May Yahweh uncover his face to you and bring you all peace.



St Anne's Church, with its distinctive sparkling stained-glass steeple, was packed on Sunday 4 August for the last Eucharist celebrated at the church.

Photo: Annette Scullion/WelCom

Midwinter food, fun and fellowship

St Joseph's Parish Levin's Tuesday Social Group was started approximately four years ago to provide a much-needed social outlet for our parishioners at zero cost. We offer a varied programme of activities including music, indoor games, picnics, outings, movies, food, bingo and hobbies. We also have a shared meal once a fortnight.

We also have special celebrations for Christmas, St Patrick's Day, Easter and midwinter. We recently

had a combined gathering with a group at Our Lady of Kāpiti Parish in Paraparaumu and we have been planning a trip into Wellington to visit the newly re-furbished Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.

We would like to arrange visits with similar groups in other parishes. If anyone wishes to contact us we would like to hear from you. Please phone Danny on 021 0761646.



Members of St Joseph's Tuesday Social group enjoying the recent mid-winter celebration.

Photo: Supplied

Celebrating our diversity

Several members of various migrant communities came together at the newly re-opened Metropolitan Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on 13 July to celebrate their cultures through prayer and fellowship. The gathering began with a multicultural Mass celebrated by Archbishop Paul Martin sm, followed by a tour of the cathedral. Participants then attended a workshop to discuss their communities' strengths and hopes for the future. The event was capped with an Agape lunch [Christian feast] where participants shared dishes from their home countries.

About 60 attended including people from Myanmar, Zimbabwe, several Spanish speaking countries, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, India, Philippines and Indonesia. Members of the Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission joined the group.

This now annual gathering is an offshoot of the Ethnic Review conducted by the Archdiocese of Wellington in 2022.



Members of a young family prepare the offertory procession at the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.

Photo: Supplied

'The Church is where the people are' St Mary of the Angels' aged-care ministry

Dr Maya Bernardo

National statistics show our aged population is increasing exponentially and our elderly are now becoming a significant part of the peripheries we are called to encounter.

Within our Catholic parishes, seniors make up a significant proportion of our ministry and our gatherings. This also means, that in the near future when our senior parishioners move to rest homes or retirement villages outside the suburbs of their parishes, we could see a significant shift in our parish demographics and a potential drop among our churchgoers.

Concomitant is the shortage of priests, the growing complexity in the health and safety and safeguarding policies, and a range of other social-economic and political issues surrounding ageing and the care for the aged.

The best ministries often emerge when the needs of people cross paths with others who feel called to make a difference. The urban parish of St Mary's of the Angels was faced with the challenge of reaching out to its parishioners who had moved out of Wellington Central, but still feel St Mary's is their spiritual home.

What began as visits to former parishioners in their rest homes by Sr Frances Gibbs, long-time parish minister of St Mary's and a former nurse, has evolved into a ministry that now covers 11 rest

home facilities across Wellington Central and involves about 25 lay volunteers. It also includes a care facility for elderly with disabilities. The ministry has developed its own formation programme with regular sessions run on a Saturday once a month at St Joseph's Mt Victoria. Along with Sr Frances, the programme is now run with St Mary's parish priest, Kevin Mowbray sm and Jeff Drane sm.

The ministry has been running for two years. Currently called 'The Aged-Care Project', it has a solid and distinct spirit based on relationship building. The model of aged-care

rest homes within the whole of the archdiocese.

The traditional configuration of what we call the 'Church' is predicated on the parish as its basic organisational unit headed by a parish priest. This model of demarcating territories is centred on a religious edifice – church building – where we all go to worship and gather. The changes in today's world, forces the Church to be open to new ways of being church.

Church is where the people are; Church is where the greatest needs are. As exemplified by the Aged-

"The Church continues to evolve, and its mystery continues to unfold through our responses to the call of mission - that of spreading the Good News to all the corners of the earth." - Mark 16:15

that the ministry team is promoting is transparochial and goes beyond providing the Sacraments to the Catholic aged-care residents. It is also providing support to the staff of the residential facilities.

This care also extends to residents' families and support ranges from visitations, liaising with the parish, and accompanying families during bereavement. Lay people are allocated to specific rest homes, and they collaborate with a group of priests, mostly from the same parish.

It is hoped such a model or something similar for this ministry will eventually cover many more

Care Project, the Church as the living body of Christ, goes to where the people are. Being present to our elderly to assure them they will always be part of our church life, and we stand beside them as they make their most important and final journey to eternal life.

Please email parish.priest@smoa.org.nz if you are interested to join and support the Aged-Care Project.

Dr Maya Bernardo is the Formator and Manager for the Archdiocese of Wellington Te Hao Nui Launch Out Formation Programme.



St Mary of the Angels' Aged-Care team involves about 25 lay volunteers who meet regularly at St Joseph's, and whose ministry now covers 11 rest home facilities across Wellington Central.

Photo: Supplied

Ko te Rā Īnoi i te Ao mō te Manaaki World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Te Wāhanga o te Orokohanga 2024 Season of Creation 2024:

Me Mahitahi, me Tūmanakohia tahi me te Orokohanga “Hope and Act with Creation”

The annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation is celebrated on 1 September. The ecumenical Christian celebration of the Season of Creation is convened each year to pray and respond to the cry of Creation, between 1 September, the World Day of Prayer for Creation, and 4 October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

Every year, Pope Francis issues a message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. Francis' message for 2024 with the theme: 'To Hope and Act with Creation', was released on 27 June.

In his message Pope Francis reminds us how the Holy Spirit 'keeps the believing community alert and calls it to conversion in lifestyles, to resist human degradation of the environment.'

The Holy Father calls us, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to seek to live 'a life that becomes a song of love for God, for humanity, with and for creation, and that finds its fullness in holiness.'



Saturday, 21 September has been scheduled as the Global Day of Action for individuals, communities, organisations, and all levels of government to focus on the ecumenical call to endorse the FFNPT (Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative).

Acting with hope

Ian Munro
Member of the Archdiocese's
Ecology, Justice and Peace
Commission

“Despite all attempts to deny, conceal, gloss over or relativise the issue, the signs of climate change are here and increasingly evident. No one can ignore the fact that in recent years we have witnessed extreme weather phenomena, frequent periods of unusual heat, drought and other cries of protest on the part of the earth that are only a few palpable expressions of a silent disease that affects everyone.” – Pope Francis, *Laudate Deum* [5].

Monthly, perhaps even weekly, new warnings are sounded based on verifiable scientific data. In early July, the Copernicus Climate Change Service reported that June 2024 was warmer than any previous June in the data record and the annual global temperature for the previous 12 months was 1.64°C above the pre-industrial average. Further, global data for Sunday 21 July shows it to be the hottest day that's ever been logged. In other words, for the first time, the goal of keeping the annual temperature increase to no more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial average has been breached.

While one year may be put down to a statistical oddity, it does show where we are headed and that not achieving the 1.5°C limit is now a distinct possibility. Our one hope is that this is a one-off, bearing in mind, too, the average is calculated over a decade rather than over just one or two years.

July also brought the news from Stats NZ that our oceanic and coastal water temperatures hit record highs that exceeded global averages over a ten-year period. It seems our oceans are not going to protect us from the excesses of global warming as previously

believed but are going to seriously disrupt both our marine and land ecosystems.

‘If present trends continue,’ writes Pope Francis in *Laudato si'*, ‘this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us.’ [24]

Season of Creation focus

Excessive carbon dioxide and methane production means our earth systems are in crisis, which is the reason the focus of this year's Season of Creation is on the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (FFNPT). Pope Francis notes that, despite the many negotiations and agreements, global emissions continue to increase. ‘The necessary transition towards clean energy sources, such as wind and solar energy, and the abandonment of fossil fuels is not progressing at the necessary speed.’ [Laudate Deum, 55]

The Treaty aims to bring together nations, civil society, and faith groups to reduce fossil fuel use. It is a global effort by the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative to foster international cooperation to speed up a transition to renewable energy for everyone.

The Treaty rests on three pillars.

- Non-proliferation: halting the exploration and expansion of any new coal, oil, or gas reserves immediately.
- A fair phaseout: a just and balanced strategy to gradually reduce existing fossil fuel production in keeping with what science shows is needed to address the climate crisis. Key steps include regulating fossil fuel supply, limiting extraction, eliminating production subsidies, and dismantling unnecessary infrastructure.
- A just transition: accelerating globally the transition to renewable energy and promoting economic diversification away from fossil fuels in a way that is fair and equitable so no worker, community, or country is left behind and the rights of indigenous peoples and affected communities are safeguarded.

To date, 13 countries have called for the Treaty at the United Nations and 120 countries are on record calling for a transition away from fossil fuels at COP28; but not a phasing out – oil can still be extracted according to demand.

Nonetheless, Pope Francis believes that, ‘If we are confident in the capacity of human beings to transcend their petty interests and to think in bigger terms, we can keep hoping that COP28 will allow for a decisive acceleration of energy transition, with effective

commitments subject to ongoing monitoring.’ [Laudate Deum, 54]

Global Day of Action

The Season of Creation runs from September 1 through October 4 and the world's 2.2 billion Christians are invited ‘To Hope and Act with Creation’ during this time. Saturday, 21 September has been scheduled as the Global Day of Action for individuals, communities, organisations, and all levels of government to focus on the ecumenical call to endorse the FFNPT.



Solar panels are seen on the roof of the Paul VI audience hall at the Vatican in 2010.

Photo: Paul Haring/CNS

To nurture and preserve all of God's Creation is fundamental to our Christian faith. Faith leaders and church communities can endorse FFNPT through the Faith Letter for a Fossil Fuel Treaty.

Archbishop Paul Martin and the Ecology Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Wellington have become signatories and endorsed the call. This action joins other Catholic initiatives, such as divestment from fossil fuels and ecological conversion to more sustainable and less fossil fuel-dependent lifestyles. In doing so, we can then hope for a better world free from the monopoly of fossil fuels and from other extractive practices, because, as Pope Francis says, ‘we know that things can change.’

The UN General Assembly will be holding its 79th Session from 10 to 24 September and it is intended that, in this context and as a global Christian family, our voices will show faith communities can be powerful actors for justice and hope across the world.

All signatures collected will also be used by the FFNPT Initiative to influence decision-makers at the next UN conference on climate change, COP29, scheduled for November 2024 in Azerbaijan.

‘The demands that rise up from below throughout the world, where activists from very different countries help and support one another, can

end up pressuring the sources of power. It is to be hoped that this will happen with respect to the climate crisis.’ [Laudate Deum, 38]

What can we do?

We need a world free from the monopoly of fossil fuels. And we can act with hope by supporting FFNPT and:

- participate in the 21 September Global Day of Action; encourage people we know to sign the faith letter;
- hold and participate in events to call on political leaders to sign

the FFNPT; and

- plan and prepare prayer services, public actions, and vigils.

‘The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.’ [Laudato si', 13].

We hope for a world free from the monopoly of fossil fuels. And we can act with hope, this Season of Creation, by supporting the FFNPT.

Useful links:

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative: <https://fossilfueltreaty.org>

Season of Creation 2024:

seasonofcreation.org

Faith Letter: fossilfueltreaty.org/faith-letter#faith-letter

Laudato Si' Movement: www.laudatosi.org/action/climate-protection/the-fossil-fuel-treaty/

Laudate Deum: www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html

Pope Francis' World Day of Prayer 2024 message: www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/cura-creato/documents/20240627-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html

Ki i te Orokohanga: 1 Mahuru 2024 Season of Creation: 1 September 2024

4: 1 Mahuru - 4 Whiringa-ā-Nuku 1 September-4 October



Day of Prayer for Creation

The World Day of Prayer for Creation began 35 years ago, among the world Orthodox Christian community, when the late Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios issued the first encyclical inviting 'all people of goodwill to dedicate 1 September as a special day of prayer for the preservation of the natural environment.' On 1 September, 2015 to mark the occasion, Patriarch Bartholomew, the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch since 2 November 1991, issued an encyclical to call to dwell in harmony with God's creation, 'to remind churches and people of goodwill about the grave risks deriving from growing abuse of energy resources, threatening to increase global warming and the sustainability of the natural environment.'

In an ecumenical gesture of global significance Pope Francis announced in August 2015, that the Catholic Church will also recognise 1 September as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, encouraging the Catholic community around the world to pray for our common home. The day is inspired by Pope Francis' landmark encyclical *Laudato si'*, which calls on 'every

person living on this planet" to care for our shared Earth.

Every year, Pope Francis issues a message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

The theme for 2024 is 'Hope and Act with Creation' which draws its inspiration from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans (Romans 8:19-25).

The Season of Creation

The Season of Creation is the annual ecumenical Christian celebration to pray and respond together to the cry of creation: to unite around the world unites to listen and care for our common home.

The season's 'celebration' begins 1 September, the Feast of Creation, and ends 4 October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology. This year's uniting theme is 'To hope and act with Creation' with the symbol 'The firstfruits of hope', inspired by Romans 8:19-25.

Amid the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, many are beginning to despair and suffer from eco-anxiety. As people of faith, we are called to lift the hope inspired by our faith, the hope of the resurrection. This is not a hope without action but one embodied in concrete actions of prayer and preaching, service and solidarity.

This season, Christians are also uniting through a joint advocacy initiative to support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty which calls for a halt to new fossil fuel projects.

Sources: seasonofcreation.org
tinyurl.com/Season-of-Creation-Guide-2024



"Despite all attempts to deny, conceal, gloss over or relativise the issue, the signs of climate change are here and increasingly evident. No one can ignore the fact that in recent years we have witnessed extreme weather phenomena, frequent periods of unusual heat, drought and other cries of protest on the part of the earth that are only a few palpable expressions of a silent disease that affects everyone. ... I ask everyone to accompany this pilgrimage of reconciliation with the world that is our home and to help make it more beautiful." – Pope Francis in a statement in the lead up to COP28, Dubai 2023, in which he called on world leaders to increase the pace of the fight against climate change, warning some areas of climate change are already irreversible.

Restoration project at Pukekaraka

Pā Peter Healy sm, a member of the archdiocese Integral Ecology Committee, has been working for more than eight years with various community groups to create and restore a native trees' area at Pukekaraka, Ōtaki. His recent planting of 200 more trees, as he describes below, highlights this year's Season of Creation theme: 'To Hope and Act with Creation'.

'The best antidote against the misuse of our common home is contemplation.' – Pope Francis

Pukekaraka, is a wāhi tapu on the ancestral land of Ngāti Kapu. It is a site of spiritual significance for local Māori. Pukekaraka is a 'hill of karaka trees', a hill for karakia and reflection, a hill with a view of our local marae, Ōtaki township and our rural surrounds. The area planted this year was cleared of blackberry vines and boxthorn trees and re-fenced. What was a steep sandhill left to wild exotics and grazing is slowly being regenerated.

Year by year, since 2016, this site is becoming a shelter for birds, insects and microbial life. Our small stand of native trees is becoming a place to contemplate with nature.

Kāpiti Coast District Council provided funding to purchase trees from our local nursery. We were blessed with a fine, winter planting day in mid-July. The local Catholic Worker community, the Carbon Forest group from Energise Ōtaki and a group from Māoriland joined us. A number of young people joined our planting day; this assures us of a future for trees and people. We had our 200 trees in the ground in time for lunch. The lively conversations over soup and scones indicated what a fine community-building exercise tree planting always is.

The planting day began with karakia, we invoked our Creator God, Mary our Mother and the local ancestors in a blessing on the work of the day. We were mindful too, of the 2024 Season of Creation and the *Laudato si'* goals. Tree planting joins us with the goals of the Cry of the Earth, community participation, ecological education and spirituality.

Our puke is becoming both a haven for wildlife and a place of contemplation. As Pope Francis reminds us, it is this practice that is the best antidote for the misuse of our common home.



'To Hope and Act with Creation' – tree-planting day at Pukekaraka assuring a future for trees and people.

Photos: Supplied

Season of Creation prayer walks - all welcome

Sunday 15 September: Ecumenical River Prayer Walk – Te Awa Kairangi | Hutt River, from Harcourt Park Upper Hutt to Petone foreshore, 8am– 6pm. Walk all or any section of river trail. Activity booklet for young people and prayer/songbook available. Visit Facebook: Te Awa Kairangi Prayer Walk (public group) or email Martin de Jong at kesyoung@gmail.com for more information.

Sunday 22 September: Hope and Act with Creation: Kaitiaki at Ōtari – walk with Catholic Parish of Ōtari, St Anne's Anglican Church Northland and St Luke's Anglican Parish Wadestown communities, 2pm start, Ponga Lawn behind Ōtari/Wilton Bush main entrance. Bring kai for afternoon tea on Cockayne Lawn. Wet weather, 2pm, St Thomas More Church, 30 Worcester St, Wilton. Contact Estelle Henrys at ev.henrys@gmail.com for details.

Young Catholics

Action is the antidote for eco-anxiety

Year 10 student at Sacred Heart College, Napier, **Poppy McCaskey**, crafted this article for the 2024 O'Shea Shield Junior Prepared Speech Competition, in which she was placed second in her category. Poppy's article reflects the theme for O'Shea Shield 2024: Te Ahi Kā – 'Sparks of Hope'. It also witnesses to the charisma of her school, which draws on the Visitation of Mary. Just as Mary physically brings Christ into the life of Elizabeth, so we are inspired to go out and ignite the sparks of hope in the lives of others.

Poppy McCaskey

Climate change – two words – is something we all dread to think about. But when you hear the rain, what's the first thing you assume? When the wind picks up, do your toes curl for seemingly no reason? When you hear weather reports, does your stomach churn, bracing for bad news? Worrying about climate change is becoming increasingly common. This is known as eco-anxiety, which is a fear of environmental doom.

Auckland Anniversary Day is usually an enjoyable day off, but in 2023 it turned into harrowing floods. Instead of a hot summer day, Cyclone Gabrielle (February 2023) saw Hawke's Bay residents trying to keep muddy water out of their homes and praying it would just stop raining. In Christchurch, fires in the drought-stricken Port Hills (February 2017 and 2024) meant that families watched their homes go up in flames. These are just three of the recent disasters we have faced, because of climate change, that have left their victims clinging to their last sparks of hope. Climate change played a huge role in the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle which left 10,000 displaced, 1720 injured and 11 dead, and so many with severe PTSD and stress.

"Eco-anxiety is higher in youth because we will bear the brunt of the environmental effects, and it's our futures that will be most affected if we don't act."

Eco-anxiety is not just in New Zealand. A 2021 survey of 10,000 young people aged 16 to 25 from across the globe showed 59% of the participants were very worried about climate change.¹

Eco-anxiety is higher in youth because we will bear the brunt of the environmental effects, and it's our futures that will be most affected if

we don't act. It can feel like we can do nothing about it because we are not in a position to influence law or policy change, even when the outcomes will affect us the most.

The decision-makers have 20 years of consequences – we have 70.

Last term [April 2024], hundreds of school students across the motu turned up to School Strike Climate marches to 'raise awareness about the urgent need for climate action and to demand meaningful policy changes to combat the climate

"Action is the antidote for anxiety. There are sparks of hope everywhere. If we know where to look, and with the right mindset and like-minded people, we can spark hope in others too."

crisis' – desperately trying to spark hope in others through a mass movement. With so many students showing their support, you would think the government would listen. Instead, the Associate Education Minister, David Seymour, said it was 'unacceptable' for students to protest during school hours saying: 'If students feel strongly about sending a message, they could protest during the upcoming school holidays.' As though climate change is a scheduled event that can wait for a free week.

Green Party Co-leader, Chloe Swarbrick, who was with the students, said: 'The world doesn't stop where the classroom door stops, and as you can see here in the energy from our young people, they want a healthy planet.' At least one minister is with us, as is Pope Francis who has stated: 'As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling.'

So, what can we do about eco-anxiety?

It's so easy to get wrapped up in



Student Strike 4 Climate march in solidarity for action.

the tragedy of our climate that we forget that worrying about it will achieve nothing.

We need to take action – not just studying it, not just thinking about it, not just writing it down on paper and hoping that the right people will see it. Action, real action, needs to happen now.

The Pope has urged us to protect God's earth; activism is the perfect way to do that. We can blame our government all we want, but it won't change the state of our whenua.

'Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua | As people disappear from sight, the land remains.' We must spark hope in each other to start a blazing fire of action – not just protesting, but also actioning changes in our daily lives. Changes like having the courage to broach the topic, however uncomfortable it makes people, discussing climate change honestly and without downplaying the urgency, and educating yourself and your peers about it.

At Sacred Heart College, Napier, we have initiatives such as a litter challenge – running around the school with buckets, picking up litter, trying to get the most –



Environmental devastation, Waikanae Beach, Tairāwhiti | Gisborne, January 2023.

Photo: WelCom

proving that sparking hope can be both fun and vying.

Pressure, disaster, and tragedy are what climate change has become; something that we avoid thinking about. But climate change is on our doorsteps and we know we need to act.

Action is the antidote for anxiety. There are sparks of hope everywhere. If we know where to look, and with the right mindset and like-minded people, we can spark hope in others too. However, to do this, we need to change from

complaining to cultivating, from denying to defending our earth, and from eco-anxiety to eco-action.

Poppy McCaskey's article was published in the Nathaniel Report, Issue Seventy-Three, August 2024. It has been republished with permission in WelCom|NauMai, September 2024.

1 Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey. See: [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanph/article/PIIS2542-5196\(21\)00278-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanph/article/PIIS2542-5196(21)00278-3/fulltext). DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(21\)00278-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(21)00278-3)



Students participate in Assumption Day Masses

Students across the dioceses took part in Masses for the Feast of the Assumption 15 August.

Among them were students from Sacred Heart Primary School, Thorndon, who attended the parish Mass at their neighbouring Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Principal Bernadette Murfitt said, 'The staff were so proud of our tamariki who were so reverent and reflective. Fr Patrick Bridgman explained about Heaven beautifully and simply. The Feast of the Assumption of Mary into Heaven is also the patronal feast of the Catholic people of Aotearoa. Special thanks to whānau who supported us.'

Photos: Supplied

Rangatahi Katorika

Bishop John visits Holy Trinity Parish

Young Vinnies at St Joseph's Primary School, Central Hawke's Bay, prepared and served a delicious morning tea spread for Bishop John Adams when he visited Fr Paul Kerridge and the Parish Leadership Team last month.

'The students' dedication and effort not only showcased their

culinary skills but also their commitment to our community's values,' St Joseph's Principal Betty Brown said. 'We are so proud of our Young Vinnies team led by Mrs Cullen for embodying the spirit of generosity and service, truly proving when we hold on to what is good, wonderful things follow.'



Parish Leadership Team representatives from left: Jo McGowan, Phil Dooney, Fr Paul Kerridge, Bishop John Adams, Kevin Symonds, Hamish Kynoch, Liz Symonds, and Young Vinnie representatives Isla, Brooke, Ashtyne and Adrisa.

Photo: Supplied

Young Vinnies' annual Mass

Ann D'Souza

Young Vinnies is the youth arm of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. It is a platform to support young people in their work to understand and address social injustices they see in their communities.

Every year since 1992, a Vinnies Mass has been held by the Archdiocese Catholic colleges in Wellington, Hutt Valley and Kapi-Mana, to celebrate the good works of St Vincent de Paul.

This year's Mass, celebrated on 11 August, was hosted by St Bernard's College Lower Hutt in their new chapel. Several Vinnies college outreach service representatives attended – about 65 in total – including young Vinnies, parents, principals, teachers, SVdP Vincentians, as well as two long-time Vincentians Margaret McIver and Beverley Campbell.

Fr Hayden Powick from St Patrick's College Kilbirnie and Fr Raja from Te Awaraiingā Parish

celebrated the Mass with the sunshine streaming through the stained-glass windows.

As part of the celebrations, the Vinnies each received a badge for their ongoing commitment to service and outreach to those in their local communities in dire need.

Hutt Area Council President Bernice Smith, and Anne Peg SVDP Hutt Area Council member, presented badges to the Vinnies. Bernice Smith also gave an encouraging speech to the students to continue in their service outreach for SVdP.

Director of Religious Studies, Johnny Boon, organised the Mass and celebrations with the help of St Bernard's College students.

Thanks to Simon Stacks, Principal of St Bernard's College, for hosting this year's Vinnies' Mass and providing hospitality.

Visit vinnies-wellington.org.nz/young-vinnies to learn more about the young Vinnies in the Archdiocese.



Several Young Vinnies from the Catholic Secondary schools in the Archdiocese gathered for their 2024 Mass, celebrated at St Bernard's College chapel.

Photo: Supplied

New principal for St Catherine's College

St Catherine's College Kilbirnie, Wellington, welcomed its new principal **Amélie Kelder** in July. Addressing St Catherine's College community at a pōwhiri in her honour, Amélie said the following.

My name is Amélie Kelder. It is with great honour and privilege that I assume the role of Tumuaki o te Kareti o Hāta o Kataraina, the Principal of St Catherine's College.

Originally from Belgium, I have resided in Aotearoa, New Zealand, in Whanganui-a-tara for 15 years, and I proudly identify as tangata tiriti. I reside in Kilbirnie with my husband and our two wonderful daughters.

Education in Aotearoa, New Zealand, offers abundant opportunities for our rangatahi, and I am committed to ensuring that every taurira in our college has access to them. Every girl deserves to take pride



St Catherine's College new principal, Amélie Kelder.

Photo: Supplied

in her heritage and aspirations. With aroha, whanaungatanga, respect, manaakitanga, awhinatanga, and rangatiratanga, I aim to lead our kura. Kindness and compassion are integral to forging a bright future. I eagerly anticipate meeting

you all – ākongā mā, whānau mā, kaiako mā. Upon assuming the role of Tumuaki, I intend to honour Catherine McAuley's legacy by inviting you to share a cup of tea. Haere mai! Kōrero mai! One morning each week, my door will be open to anyone who wishes to engage in talanoa – no agenda, just conversation!

I extend my best wishes for a fruitful term and I am really looking forward to the opportunity to connect with you in Term 3!

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

God bless you all.

Suzanne Aubert Tertiary Scholarship 2025

The Sisters of Compassion invite applications for the Suzanne Aubert Tertiary Scholarship 2025. Applications are open to tertiary students with New Zealand citizenship, living within the Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington or the Diocese of Palmerston North.

The Suzanne Aubert Tertiary Scholarship is offered to 2nd year tertiary students enrolled at a reputable tertiary university or training facility, to financially help with their tuition fees. Three

scholarships of \$3,000 each will be awarded for the 2025 academic year, as a one-off grant.

The Scholarship is open to students studying all disciplines, however, applicants aligned with the tertiary education pathway compatible with the Sisters of Compassion values are given preference.

The Scholarship Committee, which comprises Sisters of Compassion and lay staff members, give all applications comprehensive

consideration.

The Scholarship is being advertised in WelCom, parish newsletters, Voice of Compassion as well as the Sisters of Compassion Facebook page and website www.compassion.org.nz.

The application form will be available on the website from 1 September until 5pm, 1 October.

The Sisters of Compassion community look forward to receiving applications from interested tertiary students.

compassion
te pūaroha

SUZANNE AUBERT
Tertiary Scholarship 2025

APPLICATIONS OPEN | 1 SEPT 2024
APPLICATIONS CLOSE | 1 OCT 2024 AT 5:00 PM

For students studying their second year of tertiary studies in 2025.

For more information on how to apply
visit: compassion.org.nz/schools/scholarships

www.compassion.org.nz | 04 383 7769 | felicity.g@compassion.org.nz

Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori | Māori Language Week

14-21 Mahuru 2024 | 14-21 September 2024



KIA KAHA
TE REO MĀORI

Ake Ake Ake - A Forever Language

Every year since 1975 New Zealand has marked Māori Language Week as a time for all New Zealanders to celebrate te reo Māori - the Māori language - and to use more Māori phrases in everyday life. In 2024, Māori Language Week runs from 14-21 September.

“The New Zealand Catholic Bishops’ Conference wants the liturgy of the universal Church to be inculturated in this land and to reflect the distinctiveness of New Zealand, and therefore have encouraged the use of some te reo Māori for all congregations.”

Te Reo Māori in Catholic Liturgy in Aotearoa New Zealand

Fr Mervyn Duffy sm

The Māori language has been in use in Catholic Liturgy in New Zealand since at least 1840. French missionaries taught hymns and prayers in te reo Māori to their Māori converts. The hymn, *Mō Maria*, was composed by Bishop Pompallier and printed in 1843. In general, te reo and Latin were used by Māori congregations on what was referred to as ‘the Māori mission’ and Pākehā congregations used English and Latin.

With the introduction of the vernacular liturgy after the second Vatican Council, the prayers of the Mass were translated from Latin into English and Māori. The English Missal contained no Māori and vice versa. These liturgical language worlds existed side by side with little mingling. An ordinary parish Mass would be entirely in English with English hymns, and the rarer Māori Masses would be largely te reo.

In the 1970s the Liturgical Subcommittee of the Christchurch

Diocesan Pastoral Council published a hymn book called *Tenei Matou* (Here we are together) which contained about 115 items, 106 in English, eight in te reo and one in Hebrew. Two verses of *Mō Maria* were included.

In 1981 the ‘national liturgical music book’ *Sing Praise* was produced by Mgr Charles Cooper. According to his introduction, 14 per cent of the texts are Māori, selected by the New Zealand Māori Liturgical Commission. All 14 verses of *Mō Maria* are included.

In 2010, when the English translation of the Roman Missal was changed worldwide, the New Zealand Catholic Bishops’ Conference chose to publish a bilingual edition of the Roman Missal in English and Māori. Celebrants now have both languages on the page in front of them.

All of this was in the context of a revitalisation of the Māori language in New Zealand. A 1972 petition to Parliament urged the government to provide teacher training to enable Māori language

to be taught in schools. In 1987 the passing of the Māori Language Act made Māori an official language of



Bishop Jean Baptiste Pompallier – landed in Northland in 1838 as the first Catholic bishop in New Zealand.

New Zealand and established the Māori Language Commission. The first Kōhanga Reo (‘language nests’) were begun in 1981, by 1993 there were 14,027 children attending 809 kōhanga. In 1987 the first dedicated Māori language radio station began

broadcasting full time. Māori Television began broadcasting nationally in 2004.

In public events in New Zealand, it is now normal to hear te reo Māori. National Radio announcers incorporate it in their introductions and conclusions. All children are introduced to some Māori language and waiata in primary schools. It is part of the formalities in secondary and tertiary education. Our national anthem is sung in both English and Māori. We take pride in the All Blacks’ haka. New Zealand English has a remarkable number of gain words from Māori.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops’ Conference wants the liturgy of the universal Church to be inculturated in this land and to reflect the distinctiveness of New Zealand. They have therefore encouraged the use of some te reo Māori for all congregations.

Mervyn Duffy sm is Dean Good Shepherd College – Te Heparā Pai | Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College.

Pompallier, the missionaries and Te Reo

Fr Mervyn Duffy sm

The missionaries from France came to New Zealand in 1838 to evangelise the ‘New Zealanders’ – the Māori of Aotearoa. These first Catholic missionaries were religious priests and brothers accustomed to a routine of liturgical prayer in Latin – the Mass and the Office – and of devotional prayer in their native French, but they learned the language of the Māori and translated the Catholic prayers into te reo and composed hymns and chants in the same language.

In 1842, Br Pierre-Marie Pérénon wrote to the General of the Marist Brothers, Br François Rivat, telling him of his impression of the Māori and a little about what they are teaching them:

All the natives smoke pipes, men, women, and children. They go barefooted and bareheaded, but they cover their bodies. They have lost many of their barbarous habits since they have been mixing with Europeans. [...] Their memories are good and they learn by heart

everything they want to. It is very edifying to see them make the sign of the cross or to hear them respond to the prayers and sing the hymns. Almost all of them know how to read and write. They love their books. The place where we live in New Zealand is called the Bay of Islands and the town is called Kororareka.

The missionaries comment frequently on the Māori ability to quickly learn prayers, hymns and catechism. They have the memory skills of people raised in an oral culture, yet there is a new widespread literacy and a desire for reading materials. Protestant missionaries were teaching reading, but it spread well beyond the mission schools. Māori were teaching Māori to read in te reo.

The teaching of prayers, hymns, and catechism in te reo was the catechesis being provided by the missionaries. They were teaching the Māori to pray, and the prayers were devotional prayers in Māori rather than Latin liturgical prayer. The first prayers taught were the sign of the cross, the ‘Our Father’, the ‘Hail Mary’ and the ‘Creed’.

Even when the Eucharist was being celebrated the congregation was more likely to be praying in te reo. Fr Auguste-Joseph Chouvet, whilst complaining to Fr Jean-Claude Colin about the poor relationship between him and Bishop Pompallier, mentioned that the bishop ‘said the Mass for the natives, and was unwilling for me to assist him, even having the natives’ prayers during the holy sacrifice led by a native’. This gives us a glimpse of a liturgy being celebrated by the bishop, while the congregation are led in devotional prayers. The Māori attended the Mass but in the days before dialogue liturgy were not expected to verbally engage with it and, being catechumens, they would not have received communion. Being present, and praying along with the Mass was the expected behaviour.

Br Claude-Marie (Jean-Claude) Bertrand describes the dynamic to Br Rivat:

I see these fine New Zealanders coming in their canoes to assist at the divine mysteries of our holy Faith, saying their prayers and singing the

hymns the Fathers have composed for them in their own language!

Prayer, karakia, and chants, were already part of Māori culture. The innovation brought by the Catholic missionaries was a new set of prayers, not the idea of prayer. Fr Forest tells Fr Colin about a missionary trip in the very Catholic region of Ōpōtiki:

We continued on our way reciting the prayers in Māori, and chanting the litanies of the Blessed Virgin. We formed two choirs, Fr Reignier and one of the natives chanting the invocation e hata Maria etc [Hail Mary], the other Māori and I chanting the response inoi mo matou, ‘pray for us’. We experienced a joy impossible to express in being able to mingle these consoling chants to the Queen of Heaven with the sound of the foaming breakers dying at our feet.

Towards sunset we came to a Māori pā containing about thirty people, twenty-four of them Catholic and following the prayers of epikopo.

The ‘prayers of epikopo’ are the prayers introduced by Bishop

Pompallier. Epikopo is a Māori gain word based on the Latin for ‘bishop’: episcopus.

Bishop Pompallier instructed his missionaries to not demand that Māori dress in European clothing to come to Church.

Take care that those who turn to the true Church are not seduced by false reasoning and that they are not ashamed to come to prayers in their native dress. God does not require European dress from those who want to serve Him – He wants our hearts and that is all. As regards our bodies, He wants us to dress modestly, whatever our clothing. It is better to go to Heaven having worn native dress, than to go to Hell in European clothing.

The Catholic faith was first communicated to the ‘New Zealanders’ in their own language. The first Catholic publications were entirely in te reo. Māori worshipped in native dress and in their native language.

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The first New Zealand Catholic publication

When Bishop Pompallier, Fr Catherin Servant and Br Michel Colombon arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in January 1838 they encountered a Māori population with a hunger for the printed word.

When they evangelised a village, they taught the people Catholic prayers in te reo, so they could recite these prayers at dawn and dusk. Initially they copied these out by hand. Fr Pezant wrote back to Fr Epalle requesting more writing supplies:

*Ordinary writing paper: you gave me a lot, but I use a lot of it, not so much for myself as for the kaingas; their prayer books have 50, 60 pages, and they keep me very busy in the midst of errands and repairs. Some good ink. I use a lot of it, for the same reasons.*¹

The missionaries wanted a printed version of the prayers. Before the press arrived for the Catholic mission, Pompallier succeeded in getting an eight-page pamphlet printed.² William Colenso, wrote in the records of the Church Missionary Society for 14 January 1840:

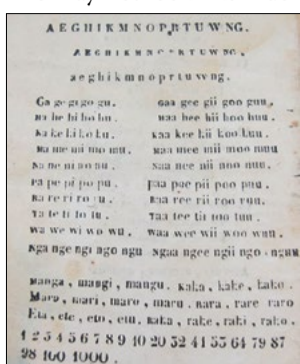
*I send you in the parcel one of the R C Bishop's books, [...] This little book now sent is the only one which the R C Bishop has yet published, I doubt not but that he is busily engaged in preparing others, for he is an active man.*³

Pompallier had seen examples of Protestant publications in Māori and knew what was popular. His first printed leaflet was to address the Māori desire to learn to read and to provide the Catholic prayers which were so much effort to handwrite.

Ko Nga Tahī Pono Nui O Te Hahi Katorika Romana (The First Great Truths of the Roman Catholic Church) starts off on page 1 and 2 with a list of six teachings. The first: '1. There is only one God; For God is a very great spirit, for everything is from him, and he did make all the creatures alive all this time. There are three persons in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And there are not three gods, but there is one God only, and he is spirit.' Then on page 3 the *Apostles' Creed*, page 4 the *Our Father*, the *Hail Mary* and the *Sign of the Cross*. On pages 5 – 7 there is a long hymn (15 verses) 'He Waiata Tapu I Te Atua' teaching the attributes of God.

Then on page 8 is the selling

point: This may not look like much to



us, but to a literate Māori it was everything needed to teach another Māori speaker how to read the printed form of the language. The fifteen letters of the alphabet (taking NG as a single letter) in upper and lower case. A practice with the short and long vowel sounds – using the double letter rather than a macron or an accent. Then some example words and then the numerals and some example numbers.

The student would chant and memorise the information on the page. Since Māori is pronounced as it is written (unlike English) once you know the noise a letter combination makes you can sound out any written word and recognise it. Learning just this page enabled a fluent Māori speaker to gain the skill of reading text printed in Māori. They weren't therefore able to write, nor to read handwriting, but they could read printed matter.

The first printed matter available to them to read was the rest of the pamphlet, so they very quickly learned the prayers and the hymn. Then the booklet could be passed to another person and so on.

Initiated by the Protestant mission school, and then by a Māori-to-Māori dynamic an entire generation taught themselves to read. The mission presses were the first to respond to their demand for reading materials. In 1842 the government began *Ko te Karere o Nui Tireni*, a newspaper. Around 40 different Māori language newspapers then ran for different periods up until the 1920s.

The contribution of the Catholic Church to this revolution in literacy began with an alphabet, a reading lesson, some prayers, and a song.

– Mervyn Duffy sm

Te Reo Katorika Māori o Te Ritenga Rōmana

Charles Ropitini

The language of Katorika Māori is steeped in the development of the Roman Rite. Te reo Katorika mysteriously spread through the East Coast before the permanent establishment of the Māori Missions as those early Marist Missionaries encountered Māori communities already reciting the prayers of the Rosary in te reo Māori. In many ways, just like the mystery of the Urewera, te reo Katorika has continued to develop at a local level among Māori communities with infusion of their local customary practices. As a result, there is no one unified way of doing things across the country and Miha Māori is practiced following local custom from tribe to tribe.

Here at Pakipaki te reo Katorika has developed with the custom of the Miha Māori and the chanted prayers of the Rosary. Our version of te reo Katorika is influenced by the Māori Missioners and their native French language. Many of our Kaumātua were fluent in French and would welcome foreign guests to the marae with whaikōrero in French and Māori.

In those days when Mass was prayed in Latin, the role of the Katekita Catechist was to chant the Mass in te reo Māori facing the congregation so people could understand what was happening in the Mass. This practice is the origin for the role of Katekita today as congregational leaders for the Miha Māori, with a unique tradition of reciting parts of the Miha ordinarily reserved for the priest. This tradition is important for uplifting the mana of the Katekita as the spiritual leaders of the community in the absence of permanent priests. Vatican II fuelled a Māori



Charles Ropitini, Pakipaki

liturgical revival and development of a Māori theology and acculturation through te reo Māori and its customs. This progression is most notable in the Māori Proclamation of Faith chanted after the consecration, which is a condensed mihi whakatau or Māori greeting to the Body and Blood of Christ. This proclamation was developed by Katekita Peter Reo in the 1970s, and is a unique tradition practised today. It is a natural Māori custom to welcome Jesus appropriately after each consecration.

Development of Māori customary practices, te reo Māori, and the traditions and liturgies of the Church have walked together, albeit in a very special and unique localised way from tribe to tribe. At this point in time, it is worthwhile for Katorika Māori to pause and regroup to consider the following questions – where have we come from, where are we now, and where are we heading with all things regarding Te Reo Katorika Māori o Te Ritenga Romana.

Charles Ropitini is the Katekita (Catechist) for the Catholic Church in Heretaunga, Hastings.



Pakipaki Māori Eucharistic Community. Photos: Annette Scullion/WelCom

Guidelines for chanting prayers in te reo Māori

Pakipaki Māori Mission

Generally speaking, the chant for prayers in te reo Māori follows the style of a patere, a fast chant. Once the prayer is begun by the Katekita, the prayer carries on right to the end without a break. The beauty of the chant comes from the variations of the pitch or speed which occur from time to time in the prayer. These variations also help to bring out the meaning of the words.

Pitch: this is set by the Katekita. Everybody follows the Katekita even if the pitch doesn't suit.

Higher is better than lower; if the pitch is set too low the prayers get slower and become a real strain on the voice; it becomes very hard to keep together. The beauty of the prayer is lost, especially because you are not able to bring in the variations of pitch. So it is best to set the pitch fairly high to start with. If the pitch starts to drop the Katekita may have to reset the pitch.

Speed: not too fast and not too slow, if it is too fast the prayer becomes a gabble and the meaning of the words is lost. It becomes hard to say.

Avoid dragging the prayers, faster is better than slower.

Breathing: we don't normally say a whole prayer in one breath. The secret is that everyone takes a breath at separate times so that the prayer carries on without a break. Avoid straining.

It is important to be synchronised, but also to ensure everyone does not take a breath at the same time.

Listen: this is key to saying communal prayers well. Listen to each other. This is the only way to keep together, at the same pace and same pitch. And it stops everybody from all breathing at the same time.

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Catholics Thinking

How does the Declaration on Human Dignity apply in Aotearoa New Zealand?

The Vatican's top doctrinal office published a new Declaration, on 8 April 2024, on the theme of human dignity. Entitled *Declaration Dignitas Infinita, on Human Dignity*, the Declaration from the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, addresses a range of contemporary moral and social issues.

The New Zealand Catholic bishops have approved 'Infinite Dignity = Infinite Love' as the theme for this year's Day of Prayer for Life on 13 October - also known as Support Life Sunday - which draws on the Vatican's document, *Dignitas Infinita - On Human Dignity*.

Emeritus Bishop Peter Cullinane discusses the *Declaration Dignitas Infinita, on Human Dignity* in the following article. Bishop Peter's article is published in *WelCom* in two parts, coinciding with the lead-up to the Day of Prayer for Life. The second part will follow in *WelCom*'s October edition.

Part One

The Key

So much of Pope Francis' pastoral teaching is summed up in the very first sentence of the recent Declaration on Human Dignity - *Dignitas Infinita* issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [published 8 April 2024]: *Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her being, and this dignity prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state or situation the person may ever encounter.*

This is called our 'ontological dignity' because it is grounded in a person's very existence. It is a way of saying the dignity which derives from being called into existence by God is not diminished by anything that can ever happen to us, or by anything we ourselves might do. God loves us 'beyond every circumstance'.

Unsurprisingly, at the end of the Declaration, the Church calls for this fundamental principle to be 'placed at the very centre of our commitment to the common good and the centre of every legal system.' (n 64)

There are, of course, other aspects of human dignity that can be lost or diminished. The Declaration speaks of the dignity that comes with the gift of free will (moral dignity); the dignity that comes from having the necessities of life (social dignity); and the dignity that we experience as a sense of wholeness and well-being (existential dignity).

Corresponding to each of these, we speak of loss of dignity resulting from, for example, the misuse of our freedom, the deprivation of proper living conditions, or lack of deep life-satisfaction. The Declaration explains: 'some people may appear to lack nothing essential for life, but for various reasons still struggle to live with peace, joy and hope [or are affected by] serious illnesses, violent family environments, pathological additions...n. 7.

Concerning all these ways of experiencing deprivation, loss or disability, the document is saying two things:

1. none of these deprivations/diminishments deprives us of the underlying dignity that belongs to us as persons called into existence by God; and
2. our lives as individuals, and as beings who live in a network of relationships with others, require us to work towards overcoming every form of indignity, deprivation and injustice. This is what the second half of the Declaration deals with. It is what we need to reflect on as part of our commitment to the common good, and to see where human dignity needs to be better supported in our legal system.

Instead of attempting to summarise what the Declaration says about the many violations of human dignity it discusses, I shall share a few reflections and pose



Bishop Peter Cullinane

Photo: Jonathan Cameron/Manawātū Standard

some of the questions we all might need to ask ourselves.

Freedom

Becoming authentically human is a work in progress. Ensuring our moral dignity, our social dignity, and our existential dignity are intact involves making choices. It also involves how we understand freedom.

"The dignity which derives from being called into existence by God is not diminished by anything that can ever happen to us, or by anything we ourselves might do. God loves us 'beyond every circumstance'."

A virus within western culture today is the idea that a person is some 'inner self' that is ultimately independent of others, and even independent of one's own body. It is claimed there are no boundaries to how a supposed 'inner self' can choose to be. This kind of thinking is meant to support the view that the act of choosing is self-validating, whatever might be the consequences of one's choice. Choosing is supposedly more important than what is chosen.

Familiarity with technology and its benefits can lead us to assume that what we *can* do, we *may* do? Are we ourselves among those who

have lost a sense of the purposes built into nature, and how they circumscribe what we *may* do - whether to ourselves or to others or to the environment?

Foundations

We will not understand what makes human dignity great if we underestimate the meaning of marriage. Often it is through the

are sexuality's potential for deeply nurturing the love of two people, and the way their love is designed to generate new life.

The joy and sense of wonder which this can bring to husband and wife is heightened by their discovery that love and life are both gifts. Their love is experienced as something not owed but freely given, and the more wonderful for that. Similarly, when new life is the fruit of their love, it is experienced as not owed, and the more wonderful for that.

These are the realms of human experience that are jeopardised when human intentions depart from nature's intentions. Separated from what nature intends marriage to be, sexuality is separated from its meaning. Likewise, separated from the loving union of husband and wife, procreation is separated from the source of its meaning and its dignity. Whatever the sense of loss from not being able to conceive, ultimately a child is never 'owed' to anyone.

I am aware of the struggles of those whose sexual or gender orientations are different, and I reaffirm their right to the same respect that belongs to every person. That right does not depend on their beliefs or actions or sexual orientation. It is securely based on the fact they have been called into existence by God and are loved by God, whatever their circumstances.

It does not follow others have to agree with their beliefs. This can be difficult for some to understand: 'How can you accept me as the person I am if you do not accept what I do?' It's because the respect we owe people is not limited to those we agree with. It is 'beyond every circumstance' - *unconditional* - based on their dignity as persons.

» Part two of this article will be published in the October edition of *WelCom*.



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"...every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter."

- From the opening paragraph of *Dignitas Infinita - On Human Dignity*

The Vatican's Declaration on Human Dignity can be read online at: tinyurl.com/Declaration-on-Human-Dignity

Why do I still believe?

James B Lyons

'I no longer believe!' The words were shouted. And the voice was angry.

But if the statement was meant to shock me, it didn't. I simply asked the person to tell me what they no longer believed, and the following conversation unfolded.

'You know, all that stuff about God and Jesus. I just don't believe it now!'

'Why did you stop believing?'

'I guess I grew up.'

'Why are you telling me?'

'I want to know why you still believe!'

I wasn't expecting that! I was prepared to suggest ways that could help someone's faith to return or to be rekindled, but now I was being asked to put into words what exactly supported my own faith. Why do I still believe?

We know there were times in Jesus' ministry when he was amazed at the absence of faith among people he thought he knew.

In his hometown of Nazareth, many could not accept that someone they'd grown up with and who, like them, wasn't particularly well educated, could possess gifts of wisdom and healing. Their antagonism – and perhaps jealousy – clouded their vision. They couldn't see beyond appearances; they had no capacity to take in what couldn't be seen on the surface.

The disciples panicked when a storm threatened to swamp

their boat. They accused Jesus of not caring they might drown. He calmed the storm but then berated them for their lack of faith.

Jesus himself doubted, crying out in agony in the Garden of Gethsemani, *My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*

Faith requires an openness to wonder and a willingness to trust. It's bound to be shaken from time to time.

There are voices around us that shout down belief as foolish and totally unnecessary. Religion, we're

"Faith involves trust, and an acceptance that I can never see or know everything as clearly as I would wish."

told, is nothing but a collection of fairytales; that the evolution of the human mind is enabling discoveries to enhance happiness and fulfilment as never before, rendering any kind of God redundant.

So why do I still believe?

The 17th century painter, Rembrandt, created many beautiful and powerful interpretations of biblical moments. Using colour, facial expressions, light and shadow, he illustrates both his admiration of faith – despite his own struggle to believe – and his appreciation of mystery which places the object of faith always just a little out of reach.

Faith involves trust, and an acceptance that I can never see or

know everything as clearly as I would wish.

One small Rembrandt painting captures the Holy Family at rest during their 'flight into Egypt'. They're shown sheltering in a cave-like structure; the child Jesus is fanning the fire. They're camped beside a stream; other travellers are nearby. In the safety of the hills above is a well-lit castle.

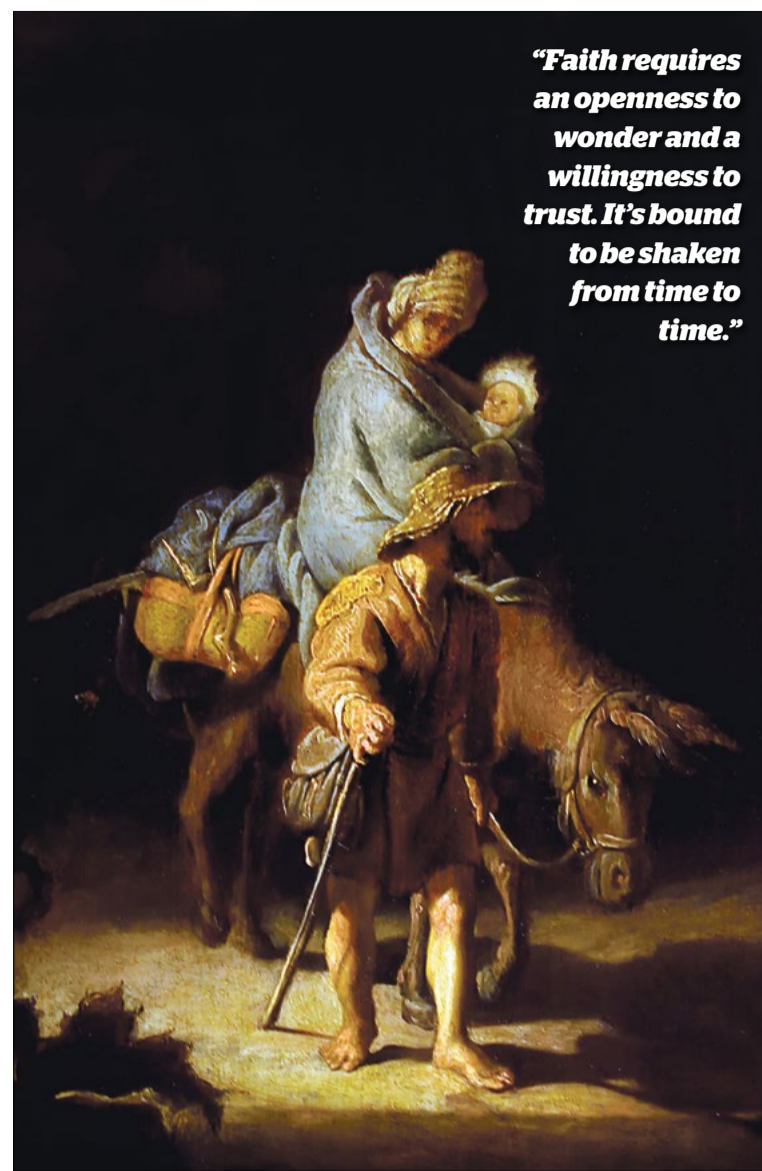
Here I saw a refugee family, strangers in unknown territory, and was amazed at their calmness.

Fleeing for their lives, with few possessions, there is, however, a tangible trust in their exposure and their vulnerability – a trust rewarded by the presence of water, the warmth of a fire and the closeness of neighbours: elements of security, refreshment and comfort.

This family still had a hard journey ahead, but here they are at peace. There's a Hindu expression – *Faith is a bird that feels the light even while the dawn is still dark.* Feeling what can't be clearly seen, they know not to be afraid.

My faith is encouraged and strengthened by these kind of images. And they're not hard to find, especially in the lives and situations of people.

My faith is not a set of rules or dogmas that must be believed. They have a place. But faith, belief in a God who is love, is endorsed over and over by words and actions that tell me I matter, I'm loved and I'm not alone.



"Faith requires an openness to wonder and a willingness to trust. It's bound to be shaken from time to time."

'The Flight into Egypt', Rembrandt, 1627. The Holy Family still had a hard journey ahead, but here they are at peace. Image: Wikimedia Commons

Catholics honouring Mary

Rebecca Taylor-Hunt
Director, Catholic Enquiry Centre

The number of people contacting us at the Catholic Enquiry Centre with questions about the Catholic faith is increasing. These are often former protestant Christians who find themselves drawn to Catholicism for a variety of reasons, yet they struggle with aspects of Catholic belief. The most frequent questions centre around Mary, Mother of God, and our special relationship with her.

There is so much misinformation about how we as Catholics view Mary – for example, particularly on TikTok – which leave newcomers genuinely confused: do Catholics worship Mary, or not? The answer, of course, is not. And yet, as I told my teenage daughter when she brought home her first boyfriend, 'if someone comes into our house and disrespects your mother, he's disrespecting you'. She didn't see that boy for very long, thankfully.




Rebecca Taylor-Hunt

When we pray to Mary, we are not worshipping her, rather we are asking for her intercession on our behalf. We believe she is so close to God in Heaven that when she prays for us, our prayers are amplified by hers. We venerate or honour Mary, but that isn't the same as worshiping her. We worship God alone. Yet Mary's 'yes' to God is incredibly important to our faith; we owe so much to this brave young woman who journeyed with her son throughout His life, and suffered at His Passion in a way that is painful to imagine.

One newcomer recently said the words in some of the prayers to Mary seem so close to worship, that it makes him uncomfortable. The easy answer is these are not the prayers for him. He also wanted to know, in percentages, how often I pray to Mary compared with Jesus. I told him there was no comparison, that Jesus is at the centre of my prayers, which seemed to reassure him. We meet Mary when the time is right, and for some that is sooner, and others later. The newcomer admitted he had tried praying the Rosary and had found it an incredibly powerful experience.

He is fortunate he connected with this prayer so quickly, and Mary may have had something to do with that. I wonder if his struggle with Mary is because she is making herself known to him in ways that are hard for him understand. He may think she is knocking on the door, but it looks to me like she has already made herself at home.



Feast of the Nativity of Mary, 8 September
This feast day commemorates the birth day of Mary. There are only three birthdays on the liturgical calendar: Mary, Jesus, and John the Baptist.



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Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

²⁴ Now when the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, ² they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands.

³ For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders.

⁴ And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds.

⁵ So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, 'Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?'

⁶ He responded, 'Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written:

"This people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts." ⁸ You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition.'

¹⁴ He summoned the crowd again and said to them, 'Hear me, all of you, and understand.

¹⁵ Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.

²¹ From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder,

²² adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly.

²³ All these evils come from within and they defile.'

Maaka 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

¹ Nā, ka huihui ki ā ia ngā Parihi me ētehi o ngā ngā karaipi i haere mai i Hiruhārama, ² ā nō tō rātou kitenga i ētehi o āna ākongā e kai taro ana me te noa anō ngā ringa, arā kihai i horoia.

³ E kore ngā Parihi me ngā Hūrai katoa e kai ki te kāhore i āta horoia ngā ringa, e pupuri ana hoki i te whakarereanga iho a ngā kaumātua.

⁴ E kore hoki rātou e kai ina hoki mai i te kāinga hokohoko, ki te mea kāhore i horoi. He maha hoki ērā atu mea tuku iho kia puritia e rātou, ngā horoinga o ngā kapu, o ngā pāta, o ngā mea parāhi, o ngā moenga.

⁵ Kātahi, ka ui ngā Parihi me ngā karaipi ki ā ia, 'He aha āu ākongā te haere ai i runga i te whakarereanga iho o ngā kaumātua, ā, kāhore e horoi i ngā ringa ina kai taro?'

⁶ Na, ka whakautu ia, 'Tika rawa tā Ihāia i poropiti ai mō koutou, mō te hunga tinihanga, te mea hoki i tuhituhia:

"Ko te iwi nei, ko ō rātou ngutu hei whakahōnore i ahau; ⁷ ko ō rātou ngākau ia matara noa atu i ahau; otirā mōmōu karakia noa rātou ki ahau," ⁸ Ko ō rātou nei hoki e whakaako ai ko ngā whakahau a te tāngata.'

¹⁴ Nā, karangatia ana anō e ia i te hunga ki ā ia, ā mea ana ki a rātou, 'Whakarongo mai koutou katoa, kia mātau hoki. ¹⁵ Kāhore he mea o waho o te tāngata ka tapoko nei ki roto ki ā ia hei whakanoa i ā ia, mā ēnā e noa ai te tāngata.

²¹ Nō roto hoki, nō te ngākau o te tāngata te putanga o ngā whakaaro kino, o ngā moepuku, o ngā tāhae, o ngā kōhuru, o ngā pūremu, o ngā hiahia apo, o ngā kino, o te tinihanga, o te hiahia taikaha, o te kanohi kino, o te kohukohu, o te whakapehapeha,

²³ o te wairangi. Nō roto te putanga ake o ēnei kino katoa, mā reira e noa ai te tāngata.'



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Pupurita, Kōrerohia Mō Āke Tonu

Hold It, Speak It Forever

He Kupu Āta Whakaaroaro nā Rikona Danny Karatea-Goddard

A reflection by Dcn Danny Karatea-Goddard

There is a Māori song we grew up with:
*Hear listen to the Māori language which calls (you).
Hear listen to the learnings that weave us together.
It is gift from God to us all
Hold it, speak it for ever.*

Te Reo Māori Language Week reminds us all that we can all recommit to listening, learning and speaking Māori. No matter how big, how small, absolute beginner or highly competent, together we can contribute to the promotion and survival of the Māori language. It's wonderful to witness parish liturgies, schools and gatherings using te reo Māori. Our bishops and leadership continue to encourage the use of te reo Māori and embrace Māori culture and celebrations such as Matariki.

In today's Gospel I reflect on these words:
'Hear me, all of you, and understand.

Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.'

At a time where there is political agenda to save pennies, cut costs and limit the use of te reo Māori let us continue to enhance life rather than defile it. Creation is clean and beautiful. It's what we do with or to Creation that weakens or defiles it.

The Māori language.

It is God given to us all.

Hold it, speak it ... forever.

Hear ... listen.

Arā te waiata nāna ō tātou taringa tamariki i mirimiri.
*Whakarongo ki te reo Māori e karanga nei.
Whakarongo ki ngā ākoranga ranga-tira.
Nā te Atua i tuku iho ki a tātou e
Pupuritia, kōrerohia mō āke tonu.*

He whakamahara ana te Wiki o te reo Māori ki a tātou kei reira te reo Māori hei mea whakarongo, hei ako, hei kōrero mā tātou. Ahakoa te nui rānei, te iti rānei, te taumata rānei o te reo mā tātou te reo Māori e whakaora.

He ataahua te kite atu i te whakamahinga o te reo e ngā parihe, ngā kura me ngā huihuinga tāngata. He kaha tonu ō tātou pihopa me ō tātou kaihautū ki te akiaki i a tātou ki te whakatairanga me te whakaū i te reo me te ahurea Māori pēnei me ngā kaupapa ahurea pēnei i a Matariki.

Ka hoki ngā mahara ki tēnei rerenga kōrero nō te Rongopai o te rā nei:

'Whakarongo mai koutou katoa, kia mātau hoki. Kāhore he mea o waho o te tāngata ka tapoko nei ki roto ki ā ia hei whakanoa i ā ia, mā ēnā e noa ai te tāngata.'

Ahakoa ngā wero o te wā pēnei i te niho torangapū e whata ana i ngā pūtea, e haukoti ana i te tupu o te reo, ko tō tātou he ū ki te ora engari tonu te whakanoa. He mea mā, he mea māori te Orokohanga. Ko tā te tāngata rawake tōna matenga.

Ko te reo Māori.

Nā te Atua i tuku iho ki a tātou katoa.

Pupuritia, kōrerohia ... mō āke tonu.

Whakarongo.

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DATES AND EVENTS – WHAT’S ON

If you would like to list your parish and school events free on this page, please email welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz with event name, date, time, location and contact details.

Sunday 8 September

Nativity of our Mary our Mother – Catholic Fijian Community invites all migrant communities join them at the Home of Compassion, 2 Rhine St, Island Bay, to celebrate Mary’s Nativity Feast Day, Mass at 12.30pm, followed by hosted lunch.

Sundays 8, 15 September; 3, 10 November

‘Love is a Decision’ – marriage preparation. Archdiocesan courses for engaged couples. Visit website at tinyurl.com/Marriage-Ministries to register or email marriage@wn.catholic.org.nz for more information.

Thursday 12 September

St Theresa’s School, Plimmerton – 75th Jubilee, Mass celebrated by Archbishop Paul Martin sm followed by blessing of art installation and sharing past and present stories. Morning tea. Please RSVP to: forms.gle/9FDv6t8efe3hBbrj9 for catering purposes.

Sunday 15 September

Ecumenical River Prayer Walk – Te Awa Kairangi | Hutt River. [Details p 11.]

Sunday 22 September

Hope and Act with Creation: Kaitiaki at Ōtari – ecumenical walk. [Details p 11.]

Saturday 28 September

➤ Come & See morning – opportunity for men interested in priesthood to hear priests share vocation stories, ask questions, learn about discernment and pray and share. Hāto Mere | St Mary’s Parish, Ōtaki, 10am–12pm. Email Lucienne at l.hensel@wn.catholic.org.nz for more information and to register.

➤ Manawatu Christian Meditation Community Day – St Mary’s Catholic Church Centre, 58 Osier Rd, Greenmeadows, Napier, 9.45am–3pm. Guest speaker Dr Richard Egan, Associate Professor, Otago University. Please bring dish for lunch; tea, coffee provided. Contact Malcolm Byford at 027 263 3708 or bmbbyford@xtra.co.nz to register. Koha entry.

➤ Fill the World with Love: Music and Song for Soul and Spirit – Cathedral of Holy Spirit, 7pm, featuring Kathi Craig MNZM and Voices of Inspiration. Koha entry.

Tuesday 1 October

Alpha – 10-week course, Sacred Heart Parish, Inglewood, Tuesdays, 5.45pm–8pm. Conversations about life and faith. Open to all to learn more about Christianity. Registration due 22 September. Contact parish office at stjpwaitara@xtra.co.nz for details and to register.

Friday 4 October

Feast of St Francis of Assisi – Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission and St Francis of Assisi Parish Season of Creation Liturgy at St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish, 7pm cuppa for 7.30pm start, 37 Doctor Taylor Tce, Johnsonville. All welcome.

Monday 8-Tuesday 9 October

Seasons For Growth – Children and Young Persons’ professional development training, knowledge and tools to plan and facilitate educational intervention programme supporting young people with change, loss and grief. St Anthony’s Church, Seatoun. Cost \$420. Email Jess at: seasons@wn.catholic.org.nz for application form and to register.

Wednesday 16 October

Liturgy workshop series – Sunday Eucharist: It’s Impact on our Lives, 7pm–9pm, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Thorndon. (Please note: venue has changed from previously advertised location at St Theresa’s, Plimmerton.) Presented by Fr Patrick Bridgman, liturgy adviser for archdiocese.

Friday 18, Saturday 19 October

Liturgy Workshop – Sunday Eucharist: Liturgy of the Eucharist. Friday 7pm–9pm, or Sunday 10.30am–12.30pm, Our Lady of the Bays Parish Centre, Richmond. Presented by Fr Patrick Bridgman.

Friday 15-Saturday 16 November

NZ Catholic Medical Assn – Catholic Medical Retreat, Home of Compassion, Wellington. Go to: www.newzealandcatholicmedical.co.nz/2024-retreat-wellington for details and to register.

Ngā Parirau | Wings – ‘Soaring with faith’

Kevin Dobbyn fms

As the next meeting on synodality happens at the global level we need to do our best to ensure that those who spent time on prayer in putting forward their hopes and dreams for change.

One of the ways we are attempting to do this in the Palmerston North diocese is to give voice to the plea for continuing faith formation.

Several parishes have launched Alpha programmes, some for a second round. Yet another programme, home grown through the National Centre for Religious Studies (NCRS), has also begun – initially in Dannevirke and the Cathedral parish, which has also included Our Lady of Lourdes parish.

Several other parishes are expressing interest; helped by people keenly aware of the need for more

focus and all that is life-giving.

Some remember a programme in the early eighties, also through the work of NCRS, called Walk by Faith, but as technology has developed, we now say, ‘Why walk when we can soar?’

Ngā Parirau | Wings has just launched with three small groups to start. After Alpha or other experiences of Mystery and connection, people grow curious and are keen to grow their faith and know more deeply our deep Catholic Tradition. One of its blessings is the formation of small groups. The advantage of small groups is they are the seedbed of trust. When people feel safe enough to trust, then the blossoming of faith begins where the faith of all believers takes flight in their common baptism, giving birth to a truly synodal church. Bishop John Adams remarked several weeks ago that parishes are thriving where



Ngā Parirau |Wings Fully Catholic Fully Alive Soaring With Faith

small groups are alive and well. They become communities of mission making Jesus known and loved in which the ordinary of today’s church in the world is where real holiness is found.

Contact Kevin Dobbyn fms at kdobbyn@pndiocese.org.nz or ph 021 755 270 for more information.

Br Kevin Dobbyn is Te Ahi Kaa o Mātauranga coordinator and Te Kupenga Catholic Theological College site coordinator.

‘So much more than a meal’

Growing up in West Auckland and experiencing hardship firsthand, Kaira Mitchell developed a deep sense of empathy and understanding. As a support worker at the Compassion Soup Kitchen, she knows well the struggles of our whānau, the most vulnerable in our community.

Helping whānau with daily challenges they face is part of the Compassion Soup Kitchen ministry, which launched its appeal ‘So much more than a meal’ on 19 August. The theme is inspired by the conviction that conversation, compassion and caring are integral parts of the mission Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert started 123 years ago.

In recent years, the demand for food and warm meals at the Compassion Soup Kitchen has increased. Many people come not just for a meal, but also for a sense of companionship or a moment of respite in lives, often marked



‘So much more than a meal’ – please donate online at soupkitchen.org.nz to support the Soup Kitchen Appeal. Image: Supplied

‘Whānau can sometimes feel people don’t understand or respect them, and that’s where a lot of mistrust comes from,’ she says.

Kaira’s role as a support worker is to make the Compassion Soup Kitchen more than just a meal, and to help people feel accompanied, listened to and understood.

Continuing to offer ‘So much more than a meal’ depends on all of us – Sisters, staff, volunteers, supporters, people who pray, serve, and give of their time, money and skill.

Your support will help provide a space for some of the most marginalised and isolated members of our community to take a break from the relentless challenges of daily life. Even a small contribution will help Kaira and Compassion Soup Kitchen staff to continue to deliver conversation, compassion, and caring.

Appeal donations can be made at soupkitchen.org.nz

Church Calendar

September:

- 1. Day of Prayer for Creation
- 7. Blessed Virgin Mary
- 8–14. Social Justice Week
- 9. St Peter Claver
- 21. St Matthew Apostle
- 27. St Vincent de Paul



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Social Justice Week: 8-14 September 2024 Te Wiki o te Whai Tika: 8-14 Mahuru 2024



Choose forgiveness, know peace Kōwhiria te murunga hara, me mōhio ki te rangimārie

Grace Morton and Peter Lang
Advocacy Analysts, Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand

Caritas' Social Justice Week 2024 is coming up and this year it runs from 8-14 September. During this week, Caritas invites you to join Catholic parishes and schools across New Zealand in exploring how we can give effect to peace and forgiveness in our lives. We have produced a range of resources for parishes and schools to help get involved with Social Justice week 2024.

Social Justice Week was established by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference in 1997. It serves as an ongoing commitment in the Catholic calendar to consider, reflect and act on a particular current social justice issue through the lens of Catholic social teaching.

Imagine Peace for All! Pohewatia te Rangimārie mō te Katoa!

Last year Caritas introduced a three-year Social Justice Week theme on peace and conflict, with the resources each year expanding on the previous year's material. The overarching focus for the three years is 'Imagine Peace for All! | Pohewatia te Rangimārie mō te Katoa!'

Choose forgiveness, know peace Kōwhiria te murunga hara, kia mōhio ki te rangimārie

The Social Justice Week tagline for 2024 is 'Choose forgiveness, know peace | Kōwhiria te murunga hara, kia mōhio ki te rangimārie.'

The focus is on forgiveness and reconciliation.

We are shifting the perspective from personal peace – which we explored last year – and we are looking at how to relate to others from a Christian view and rebuild peace that may have been lost or broken.

Forgiveness is something we all experience, whether we are giving it or receiving it. When we decide to choose forgiveness, we are on the right track to peace.



Caritas CEO Mena Antonio holding Social Justice Week 2024 poster.

Photo: Supplied

Reflection and liturgy guides

Caritas has prepared a reflection guide for individuals or prayer groups to explore these themes. The guide looks at each step in the process of forgiveness and reconciliation, drawing on case studies and Catholic social teaching, while encouraging prayer and reflection. There is also a liturgy guide to assist parishes developing a Mass with this focus.



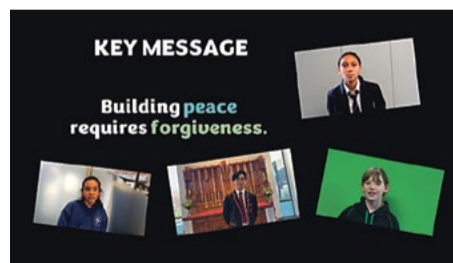
Comprehensive resources for schools

Caritas has also prepared comprehensive resources to inspire learners in Catholic schools. These include stories with activities, liturgies and action templates for students. Daily prayer videos in English, New Zealand Sign Language, te reo Māori, and Tongan are also included.



Video series

Schools and parishes across the country have contributed reflections on peace to a video series that is available on our website.



Caritas hopes the resources will be a starting point for reflection, discussion, and action, to encourage peacebuilding, reconciliation and forgiveness in our communities. They can be used at any time of the year, and by anyone.

All Social Justice Week resources for 2024 and 2023 are available on the Caritas website at: caritas.org.nz/parishes/social-justice-week

Join us in celebrating Social Justice Week from 8-14 September!

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