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A newspaper for the Wellington and Palmerston North Catholic Dioceses

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WINNER OF THE 2023 AUSTRALASIAN CATHOLIC PRESS ASSOCIATION (ACPA) AWARD FOR BEST LAYOUT AND DESIGN FOR A PRINTED PUBLICATION

Apostolic Nuncio presents letter of introduction



The new Apostolic Nuncio to New Zealand and the Pacific, Archbishop Gábor Pintér, formally presented his letter of introduction to Bishop Steve Lowe, the President of the New Zealand Bishops Conference, in the presence of New Zealand's other bishops and four Eastern Rite bishops from Australia and New Zealand, at the 7pm Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Sunday 10 November. The Nuncio was the main presider. Archbishop Pintér thanked Pope Francis for 'the faith he has placed in me as his personal representative to this country of Aotearoa New Zealand'. He went on to say, 'As for my own mission in this vibrant and diverse country, I wish to discover and appreciate the beauty and the richness of the many different cultures of this country, I wish to be close to the members of this local Church where Christ dwells, especially among those who suffer, the poor and the vulnerable.'

Archbishop Gábor Pintér, pictured front centre, is with New Zealand's bishops and four Eastern Rite bishops. Back (l-r): Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay olm (Maronite Eparch), Bishop Rober Rabbat (Melkite Eparch), Archbishop Amel Nona (Chaldean and Assyrian Eparch), Bishop Richard Laurenson, Bishop John Panamthottahil cmi (Syro-Malabar Eparch); front (l-r): Bishop Michael Gielen, Cardinal John Dew, Archbishop Paul Martin sm, Bishop Steve Lowe, Bishop Michael Dolan, Bishop John Adams.

Photo: Annette Scullion

Treaty Principles Bill 'divisive' - Church leaders

Michael Fitzsimons

The Hikoi mō Te Tiriti, a nationwide protest against the Treaty Principles Bill, culminated in Wellington on 19 November where more than 40,000 participants walked from Waitangi Park through the heart of the city to Parliament grounds.

As the leaders of the Hikoi arrived at Parliament, the march stretched back through the CBD to Taranaki Street. It is thought to be New Zealand's largest-ever protest.

Many members of the Christian and Catholic communities were involved in the Hikoi, including Catholic Peacemakers and Challenge 2000. On the morning of the Wellington march, about 130 people gathered at St Mary of the Angels to pray before the national shrine to Mary, Mother of God | Whaea o te Atua.

'The group then joined the thousands who moved slowly through the city towards

Parliament, making a powerful statement of support for Te Tiriti as a basis for a peaceful, just and inclusive way forward for the country,' said Vicar-General of the Wellington Archdiocese Mons Gerard Burns who was one of the group.

'People from many backgrounds and nations joined Māori in this well-organised and coordinated action. The atmosphere was positive, welcoming and full of chants, songs, haka, creative signs and sharing of stories. Interesting conversations took place along the route,' said Msgr Gerard.

'One grandmother confided to me that in her history her Māori mother was not welcomed into her father's family and so had always felt she had to 'hide' her Māori genealogy and defer to her husband's side. This meant the children did not grow up knowing their own connections well, nor their language. She rejoiced this

was now more possible but it was still a challenge to re-discover those connections. She was walking for her grandchildren.'

Msgr Gerard said he saw Te Tiriti in terms of a covenant, similar to the covenants of the Scripture.

'It's a covenant for everyone. It's for Māori. It's for others - like my family - who moved here a few generations ago,' he says. 'But it hasn't always been honoured.'

'I have been involved in various social justice issues for a long time and one of the longest is the question of Māori rights, given the marginalisation of iwi Māori during the European settlement and colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand since 1840. All in contravention of the promises made by the British Crown in the Treaty of Waitangi.'

Msgr Gerard said that in the last 40 years, the Treaty had been given new life by Māori advocacy, solid academic and historical work, and



Tino Rangatiratanga flags fly as the Hikoi passes St Mary of the Angels. Photo: Michael Fitzsimons

a broadening of knowledge about this country's history.

'This has filtered into everyday life, the law, practice of institutions, art, theatre, education, religious ceremonies. Generally this has been positive for our country.'

'A variety of legislative projects are looking to roll back some of these developments and for what reason? I think to promote the possibilities of wealth for a few, under the guise of promoting debate, ensuring democracy, etc.'

Msgr Gerard Burns is the Administrator of Te Pariha of Te Ngakau Tapu in Porirua, which was among many parish communities hosting whānau from across the country attending the Hikoi.

Open Letter

Catholic leaders, including Archbishop Paul Martin sm, Bishops Michael Dooley and Steve

» Continued on p 3

From the editor

Annette Scullion

Tēnā koutou kātoa

The word 'synodality' has been at the forefront of Church dialogue over the last few years with much focus on the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops – referred to as the Synod on Synodality – and which concluded on 27 October 2024.

Within the Church, 'Synodality' has been defined as: 'journeying together as the People of God. It indicates a way of listening to each individual person as a member of the Church to understand how God might be speaking to all of us.' The Church's Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity notes the term synodality: '[b]roadly [...] refers to the active participation of all the faithful in the life and mission of the Church.'

In New Zealand we readily recognise and use the word 'hikoī' as a coming together in a journey for a shared purpose. It was with profound respect that thousands joined the Hikoī mō Te Tiriti, a nationwide protest against the Treaty Principles Bill, culminating in Wellington on 19 November. More than 40,000 participants walked through the city to Parliament grounds in unity to demonstrate their

commitment with pride, dignity and mission. Among them, many Catholics there to listen, support and journey in solidarity on this historic day. See pp 1 and 3.

WelCom's own Hikoī Whakapono: Journey of Faith, which began in 2017, has been visiting all the parish communities of our two dioceses to hear and share their stories with our readers. Our hikoī concludes in this edition with a visit to Pukekarakā, Otaki, one of New Zealand's earliest mission stations and flourishing as an active faith and cultural community today. See pp 10 and 11.

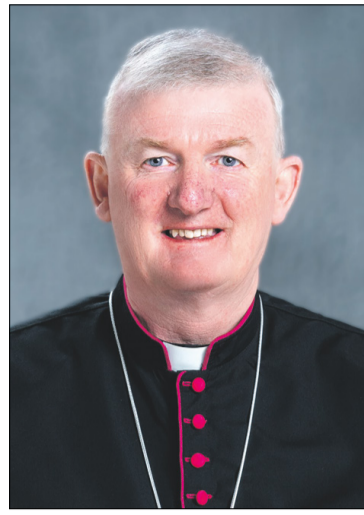
Pope Francis' 2025 Jubilee 'Pilgrims of Hope' also involves a faith journey, which begins later this month on Christmas Eve with the opening of the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica and concludes on 6 January 2026. See pp 8 and 20.

As we journey through the Advent Season in preparation for the birth of Our Lord, WelCom extends to you and your families every good wish for a Happy and Holy Christmas.

Ngā mihi



Christmas: a way of hope to peace and love in the world



Bishop John Adams
Catholic Bishop of Palmerston North

A new year has begun in the Church, and very soon the great festival of Christmas will be upon

us. Once again, we will be invited into the great mystery of God's love for us. A 'love', as St Augustine reminded us – whose quality makes us feel 'as if we were the only one...'

The reception of Mary and Joseph upon their arrival into Bethlehem has become the reality for so many in our world. But like them, we are invited not to yield to the mistrust, the suspicion, the discouragement of the world. No, in the dark and stillness of the stable in Bethlehem there is another way presented to us – a way of hope – the way of peace. In a world that suggests intolerance and conflict can only be remedied with greater amounts of the same, the star of Bethlehem illumines another path.

Yes, the poverty of that little babe in our manger on Christmas night invites us to hope in something as radical as it is profound. That this little baby, our Saviour, the little baby Mary caresses and keeps

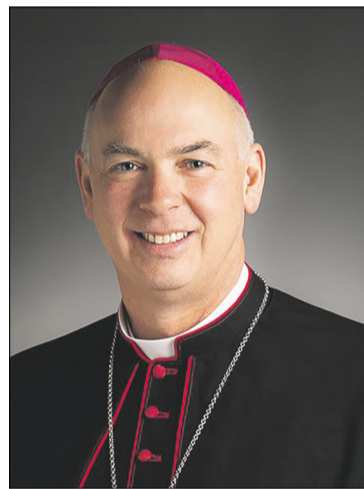
warm, is the answer to our deepest longings.

Let's not simply sentimentalise the Christmas story. How about we decide something this Christmas? That like countless Catholic Christians who have gone before us, we might become performers rather than spectators of the Christmas mystery. That the birth of Jesus might bring to life something inside of us which makes us credible and visible witnesses to peace and love in the world.

Unto us a child is born – unto us a son is given. The Christmas mystery is soon to be renewed. The child born in Bethlehem 2000 years ago was also born for the women and men of our time. Consider the invitation contained in this truth – and pray for the grace to respond.

Best wishes to you all.
+ John

Advent and Christmas message



Archbishop Paul Martin sm
Archbishop of Wellington

So often we come to this point of the year and we find it hard to believe that another year is coming to an end. We can look back on all that has happened and marvel at the moments of joy and delight and recognise the moments of struggle, sadness and challenge. All of this makes up the tapestry of our own lives and our life as a Church community.

Yet we know we are part of a life that is so much more than any particular year. This Christian life, lived in relationship with Jesus Christ, and as members of his body, the Church, means we join with all those who have gone before and with our brothers and sisters now in trying to fulfil our baptism as followers of the Lord. This is the work of our whole lives and isn't captured in the course of just one year, but over all the years of our life.

This is why we take the time to give thanks for what has been happened this year and been graced by God, why we take time to ask forgiveness for the moments or occasions when we missed the mark, or when we did something that was actually against our calling as Christ's disciples. In all of this God has been with us, walking beside us, carrying us, giving us his grace and strength, especially through the Sacraments. We are never alone.

We are reminded of this again as we enter into this time of Advent, of waiting for the coming of the Christ child. We take these four

weeks to prepare our hearts to celebrate again the wonder and mystery of God becoming man. Of the willingness of Mary to answer the call to be the mother of God, of Joseph's openness to trusting in God's plan to be the foster father of the Jesus. We see God speak through the prophets, through angels, through those who listen and pass on the message to others. We remember and delight in the fact that we are all part of this wonderful work of God as well in our time.

May this time of Advent be one of blessing and grace for you and your family. May Christmas be a time for rejoicing in God's presence and work in our world. May we remember and care for those for whom this is a time of sadness or difficulty or struggle. May our hearts be open and grateful to the Christ child, God who is with us, whose birth we celebrate again as 2024 comes to a conclusion.

May you and all who you love be blessed in this Christmas season.
Ngā mihi nui

WelCom www.welcom.org.nz

Published by The Archdiocese of Wellington and the Diocese of Palmerston North.
Editor: Annette Scullion. Ph: (04) 496-1712. welcom@wn.catholic.org.nz
Advertising: Ph: 0274 800 209. welcomadvertisements@gmail.com
Catholic Centre, PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140
December 2024/January 2025 WelCom was published on 2 December 2024.

Sending articles to WelCom

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

Contributed articles should be no longer than 300 words unless by arrangement with the editor. Please send as a MS Word document attached to an email or pasted into an email message including your name, address and phone number. Articles may be edited for length or clarity at the editor's discretion.

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

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

Deadline for February 2025 issue: Monday, 27 January 2025

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

Member of Australasian Catholic Press Association (ACPA).

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Divine Renovation Open House: a nation united for parish renewal

The Catholic Parish of New Plymouth hosted the Divine Renovation Open House, an inspiring event, last month, that gathered over 200 people from every diocese across the country. The attendees included priests, bishops, and lay leaders, all united in their commitment to parish renewal and evangelisation.

Keynote presentations were delivered by a stellar lineup of speakers: Bishop John Adams, Bishop Michael Gielen, Msgr Trevor Murray, and Cheryl Surrey, New Zealand Regional Lead for Divine Renovation. Together, they shared insights and strategies for moving parishes from 'maintenance to mission'.

Fr Simon Story and the parish team hosted the event, which explored essential themes such as the role of leadership in parish transformation, creating a culture of evangelisation, and fostering trust and collaboration within parish communities. Participants left with renewed energy, practical tools, and a clear message: parish renewal begins with bold leadership and a focus on mission.

This gathering not only strengthened connections across dioceses but also inspired a shared vision for the future of the Church



Over 200 people from every diocese across the country gathered at the Catholic Parish of New Plymouth united in their commitment to parish renewal and evangelisation. Photos: Supplied

in New Zealand. It was a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when leaders work together to

ignite faith and bring the Gospel to life in their communities.

Julia Lynch: A Dedicated Life

Exhibition at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery Te Pūkenga Whakaata June to September 2025

The Gallery is on a nationwide callout for portraits of students painted by the renowned artist Sr Lawrence (Julia B) Lynch (1896–1975) for inclusion in this upcoming exhibition.

Jaenine Parkinson, Director of the New Zealand Portrait Gallery, in Wellington, says 'portraits of her students will play a crucial role in bringing to life an exhibition that honours Julia Lynch's legacy and her remarkable impact on both portraiture and education.'

Curator Penelope Jackson explains. 'This exhibition will not only showcase Julia Lynch's remarkable artistic achievements but also provide a profound reflection on her significant contributions as a mentor, educator and woman of faith. The display will be enriched by public programmes designed to delve into and celebrate Lynch's lasting impact on the art world. We invite you to participate in this nationwide celebration of Julia Lynch's legacy. By sharing your portrait stories, you will help us pay tribute to a true icon of New

Zealand's art history.'

For more information, and to submit your portrait for selection, upload a photograph and complete the form online at: nzportraitgallery.org.nz/exhibitions/2024/julia-lynch

Sources: NZ Portrait Gallery and Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand



Self-portrait by renowned artist Julia B Lynch (1896–1975) who joined the Sisters of Mercy and taught at St Mary's College in Wellington from 1924. Image: Supplied



MEN'S MEETINGS

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

Wellington NB - NO MEETING IN DECEMBER Contact: David 027 447 7280	Palmerston North Our lady of Lourdes, Shamrock Street Tuesday 17 December, 7:00pm Contact: John 027 688 7750
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'As for me and my house we will serve the Lord' - Joshua 24:15

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» Continued from p 1

Low were among 400 church leaders who signed an open letter to MPs in September, calling on them to vote down the Treaty Principles Bill at its first reading.

The Christian leaders expressed their concerns that should the bill advance past its first reading, it would drive more divisiveness within Aotearoa.

The letter states: 'As Christian leaders from across Aotearoa New Zealand we express our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We affirm that Te Tiriti o Waitangi protects the Tino Rangatiratanga of hapū and iwi. That rangatiratanga over land and taonga is to be upheld.

'We therefore express our opposition to the proposed Treaty Principles Bill.

'The proposed bill is inconsistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi in that it does not recognise the collective rights of iwi Māori or guarantee their relationship with the Crown. It would undermine what Te Tiriti guarantees, and what decades of law, jurisprudence and policy have sought to recognise.

'We call on all Members of Parliament to do everything in their



Msgr Gerard Burns (front right) leads a cohort of Catholic peacemakers. Photo: Supplied

power to not take this bill to select committee and to work towards the ongoing restoration of the Tiriti relationship,' the letter said.

The purpose of David Seymour's bill is to seek to define in law the principles of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi and require, where relevant, those principles to be used when interpreting legislation. The effect of the bill would be to limit Government action in respect to its Treaty partner. The bill would curtail the ongoing implementation of Government policies which

redress injustices, address inequities and honour the Treaty principles of partnership, reciprocity, and the Article 2 promise of rangatiratanga.

The closing date for submissions on the Treaty Principles Bill is 7 January 2025. Submissions can only be made via the portal on the Parliament website or via post. Common Grace Aotearoa, a Christian action group, has more information on making a submission: www.treatyandbelonging.nz/speakup



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Abuse in Care apology

On Tuesday 12 November 2024, survivors of abuse in care received a formal apology from the Government at an event in Parliament that was livestreamed across New Zealand.

The national apology was given by the Prime Minister, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, followed by a

statement from the Leader of the Opposition, Rt Hon Chris Hipkins. The national apology followed an earlier event at Parliament where the chief executives of several agencies also made apologies and the voices of survivors were heard.

The Final Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into

Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions, *Whanaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light*, was publicly released in July 2024.

The Prime Ministers' apology can be read online at this link: www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/prime-minister-apologises-abuse-care

Bishops Issue Pastoral Letter on Occasion of Royal Commission Apology

At Catholic Masses on 16/17 November, the following pastoral letter from the New Zealand Catholic Bishops was read out.



Te Huinga o ngā Pīhopa Katorika o Aotearoa

New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

Pastoral Letter on Occasion of the Prime Minister's Apology to Victims and Survivors of Abuse in Care

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Earlier this week, we bishops gathered together and listened as the Prime Minister apologised to those who suffered abuse in state and faith-based care. It was an important moment in our nation's history.

Many of you have told us of the horror, grief and outrage you felt as you read the Royal Commission's report and survivors' accounts of abuse and the scale of that abuse. The sins and the crimes of our people – priests, religious and lay – working in Catholic settings fill us all with shame.

In addition to reading these accounts, we have also met with many survivors. They have shared their personal accounts and have told us of the catastrophic impact of the abuse they suffered. They have told us how the response of Church leaders was often inadequate, inappropriate and, in many cases, added to their grief and trauma.

In this week of apology, we renew our **sincere and unconditional apology to victims of abuse in the Catholic Church** [online at: tinyurl.com/Catholic-Church-Apology]. We do so knowing that words alone can never replace what was stolen and can never fully restore that which was destroyed.

We cannot change the past, but we can shape our future. Survivors, and many of you, have demanded that the Church has an unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety of children, young people and others who are vulnerable in our Church community.

Again, many of you have asked that we work with survivors. We assure you of our ongoing commitment to do this. In meeting with and listening to survivors, we are learning much from them. We honour them for their courage.

We are continuing to reflect on the lessons of the Royal Commission. At the same time, we acknowledge the burden you feel as members of a Church within which so many people were harmed. You have told us how the impact of abuse has strained or broken relationships. You have shared how your faith has been tested by seeing people who claimed to serve God revealed as abusers.

The readings at Mass today speak of 'shame and everlasting disgrace'. But they also speak of the hope we share, a fruit of our faith in God. Starting from the place of shame and disgrace, but emboldened by hope, we as the faith community must continue working to ensure that history does not repeat itself.

Over the past three decades we have made significant changes to our procedures and protocols. We have become more aware of the warning signs of abuse. We know that some earlier responses and solutions were ill-advised and had devastating consequences. We recognise that the police are best placed to investigate criminal allegations. We are striving to create better opportunities to assist those who have been harmed. We have learnt that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We are guided by the words of Pope Francis: 'Looking back to the past, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead to the future, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated.'

May the Lord strengthen and guide us, to ensure we care for those harmed within the Church and create and maintain safe environments for all.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

- ✠ Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Auckland, NZCBC President
- ✠ Michael Dooley, Bishop of Dunedin, NZCBC Vice President
- ✠ Paul Martin SM, Archbishop of Wellington, NZCBC Secretary
- ✠ Michael Gielen, Bishop of Christchurch
- ✠ John Adams, Bishop of Palmerston North
- ✠ Richard Laurensen, Bishop of Hamilton

At Masses on 16/17 November, parishes also led a Litany of Lament [catholic.org.nz/assets/Litany-of-Lament.pdf] a specific type of prayer that can channel our anger and rekindle our thirst for justice in an unjust world.

Visit www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz to find out more about the Church's work to nurture a culture of Safeguarding. On this site you can also find a pathway to share your story or make a formal complaint about abuse within the Church community, with the National Office for Professional Standards.



Coloured ribbons have been tied to the fence of the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on Hill St, Wellington, adjacent to the parliamentary precinct. Tying ribbons to church fences is a movement that symbolises breaking silence and becoming a voice for those who have been abused by clergy within the Church.

Photo: WelCom

On being watchful, alert and courageous



Kevin Plant
Archdiocese Safeguarding
Coordinator

While I am out and about visiting parishes and delivering safeguarding workshops, I'm struck by the passion and commitment of our many volunteers in support of

this work. Volunteers have been, and continue to be, the backbone of our Church. Their selfless commitment is an inspiration.

I find question time during the workshops to be a source of both information and knowledge where attendees share experiences, not only of safeguarding but of life.

At a recent safeguarding workshop, at Our Lady of Kāpiti Parish in Paraparaumu, we were challenged to be 'Watchful, Alert, Courageous', under the umbrella of Christianity.

On looking at each of these words in a safeguarding context, they take on profound meanings and challenges for us, which I would like to share with you.

Let's take this challenge on board and, as we head towards Christmas, ensure no one misses out on the joys of this special season.

Blessings to you and yours.

Watchful

- Being aware of our surroundings and those within them.
- Having our antenna out to ensure everyone we are connecting with is feeling comfortable, accepted and acknowledged.
- Ensuring no one is being left on the periphery or being left behind.

Alert

- Are people within our orbit being treated with dignity and respect?
- Is the language being used around us appropriate and able to be understood by all?
- Are our practices inclusive and reaching out to others?

Courageous

- When we see things happening we don't think are 'quite right' do we feel empowered to speak up?
- Are we ready to stand up and advocate for those who haven't the 'words' to express themselves?
- Do we understand that as a Christian it is our duty and responsibility to keep everyone safe no matter what?



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A heartfelt Mass of commemoration: honouring Pahiatua's Polish children and their families

Ela Polaczuk Rombel

The 80th anniversary celebration of the arrival of Pahiatua's 'Polish children' in 1944, took place from 1 to 3 November 2024. Events were held in Pahiatua and Wellington including a deeply moving traditional Latin Mass at St Mary of the Angels Church to honour the enduring legacy of the Polish children and their families who were brought to New Zealand towards the end of World War II. This emotional service, celebrated in both Latin and Polish, provided a moment of reflection and reverence for the remaining members of the Pahiatua Polish children who were rescued from Soviet-occupied Poland in 1944.

The Mass, led by Fr Kevin Mowbray, was attended by a large crowd. Polish veterans, local dignitaries, members of the local parish and the Polish community from around the country, including 33 of the original children participated. For many, it was a reminder of a traumatic past, but also a celebration of survival, resilience, and the bonds forged through adversity.

The traditional Latin Mass was a central feature of the ceremony, with beautiful hymns sung in both Polish and Latin, blending the sacred traditions of the Catholic Church with the cultural heritage of the Polish people. Standards, carried with reverence, were accompanied by young people in traditional Polish costumes, adding a layer of historical significance to the occasion. The sight of the young faces in folk attire, standing proudly alongside the elderly survivors of the Polish community, underscored the passing of the torch between generations.

One of the surviving members of the Polish community said, 'This Mass is a beautiful reminder that, though many years have passed, the spirit of the children who came to New Zealand is still with us. It lives on in our hearts, in our culture, and in the next generation of Polish New Zealanders.'

The story of the Pahiatua Polish children began during World War II, when 733 Polish orphans and 105 caregivers, were brought to New Zealand in 1944 as part of a resettlement effort after they had been displaced by



1. Over 30 'Pahiatua Children' assembled in front of the altar for a group photo following the commemorative Mass at St Mary of the Angels Church. 2. Halina Kania surrounded by her family and friends. 3. An emotional reunion between lifelong friends. 4. Members of the Polish Association, President Ela Polaczuk Rombel and Edward Polaczuk and members of SPK Tadeusz Wypych and Zbyszek Ceregra prepare to join the entry procession bearing the Polish standards.

Photos: Supplied

the war and Soviet occupation. Many of these children had endured unimaginable hardships, having been taken from their homes in Poland and placed in Soviet labour camps. The New Zealand government, under the leadership of then-Prime Minister Peter Fraser, welcomed them with open arms and provided sanctuary, allowing them to rebuild their lives in a safe, new environment in the small township of Pahiatua.

The commemorative Mass for the Pahiatua Polish children was a poignant reminder of the strength of the human spirit, the importance of remembering history, and the

power of community to heal and preserve the past for future generations.

Following the Mass, a luncheon was held at Shed 5, a restaurant on Wellington Harbour's waterfront, where attendees shared stories further strengthening the bond between the community's past and its future. There was a sense of unity, as people of all ages came together to celebrate their shared history and look toward the future with optimism.

The weekend of remembrance and celebrations concluded with a wreath-laying ceremony at the plaque dedicated to the memory of the arrival of the children 80 years

ago, on the Wellington waterfront.

Ela Polaczuk Rombel is the current President of the Polish Association in New Zealand Inc. Ela's uncle Zdzisław Gawronek was one of the Pahiatua Polish children who arrived in New Zealand during World War II. Ela's grandfather Michal was fighting in Ander's Army of Polish Armed Forces during her uncle's recuperation in Iran. After his stepmother died, he was cared for as an orphan until, after the war, he was found and reunited with his dad and two older sisters in New Zealand. They all settled in this country.



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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF EACH OF US HAS ITS INFLUENCE ON OTHERS (ROMANS 14:7)

The season of Advent opens us to the great gift of God's love, made visible in Jesus Christ. His life, death and resurrection point the way for every person. Following him gives purpose to our living and to our dying and ensures the influence we have on others is always one that gives great hope.

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Archbishop of Canterbury resigns

The Church of England's most senior bishop, Justin Welby, has resigned 'in sorrow', saying he had failed to ensure there was a proper investigation into allegations of child sexual abuse by a volunteer at Christian summer camps decades ago.

Archbishop Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury and spiritual leader of 85 million Anglicans worldwide, had faced calls to resign after a new report concluded he had taken insufficient action to stop a person it described as arguably the Church's most prolific serial abuser.

In his resignation letter, Archbishop Welby said he must take 'personal and institutional responsibility' for lack of action on

the 'heinous abuses'.

'The last few days have renewed my long-felt and profound sense of shame at the historic safeguarding failures of the Church of England,' he said in a statement.

Archbishop Welby resigned five days after the independent Makin Report singled him out for criticism over his handling of abuse allegations dating back to the 1970s.

The report said John Smyth, a UK lawyer, had subjected more than 100 boys and young men to 'brutal and horrific' physical and sexual abuse over a 40-year period.

Smyth was chair of the Iwerne Trust, which funded the Christian camps in Dorset in England, and Archbishop Welby worked at them as a dormitory officer before he



Archbishop Justin Welby.

Photo: AP/Ben Curtis

was ordained.

Smyth moved to Africa in 1984 and continued to carry out the abuse until close to his death in 2018, the report said.

The Church of England knew at the highest level about the sexual abuse claims at the camps in 2013, and Archbishop Welby became aware, at the latest, about the accusations in the same year, months after he became archbishop, according to the report.

If the claims had been reported to the police in 2013, there could have been a full investigation, and Smyth might have faced charges before he died, the report said.

Source: SBS News



Synod proposals form part of the ordinary magisterium of the Church.

Photo: Croix International

Synod priorities – time to implement

Pope Francis has published a note calling on local churches to accept and implement proposals from the final document of the Synod of Bishops on Synodality.

The document 'participates in the ordinary magisterium of the successor of Peter, and as such, I ask that it be accepted,' the Pope wrote.

'Local churches and groupings of churches are now called upon to implement, in different contexts, the authoritative indications contained in the document, through the processes of discernment and decision-making provided by law and by the document itself,' he wrote nearly a month after the Synod's close.

The final document outlined key priorities for the Church, including increased participation of laity through new ministries and adjusted governing structures, greater transparency and accountability among Church leadership and creating space for previously marginalised groups.

After Synod members voted

to approve the final document, Pope Francis announced he would not write the customary apostolic exhortation after the Synod but would instead offer the document to the entire Church for implementation.

In his note, Pope Francis clarified that while the document is 'not strictly normative' and must be adapted to contexts where it is applied, it still obligates 'local churches to make choices consistent with what was indicated' in the document.

He also underscored the need for time to address broader Churchwide issues, such as those assigned to the 10 study groups he set up to explore issues raised during the Synod, including women's ministry, seminary education, relationships between bishops and religious communities, and the role of nuncios.

Source: CNS

Church struggling in occupied Ukraine

More than two and a half years after the Russian invasion, the Church in Ukraine has lost more than half of the parishes in the occupied regions, says the new Greek Catholic bishop of the Donetsk exarchate.

Bishop Maksym Ryabukha, 44, told Italian daily *Avvenire*: 'The situation is increasingly worrying. We have already lost more than half of the parishes. And with the advancing Russian army, dozens of other churches have been evacuated.'

Bishop Ryabukha's diocese is divided under Moscow's control, separated by almost 500 kilometres of trenches.

According to the Italian media, in the churches of Pokrovsk, Mirnohrad, and Kostiantynivka



Bishop Maksym Ryabukha.

Photo: Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church

– areas taken by Russian forces – there are no more remaining liturgical furnishings, pews, or adornments.

Bishop Ryabukha said the priests 'stay close to the population and visit the refugees who have left their homes'. He said he is now 'a bishop in a time of pain, drama, injustice, and helplessness' as he sees his Church suffering.

Bishop Ryabukha said that in the Russian-occupied areas, 'those who openly call themselves Catholics disappear: some are shot, others are imprisoned. There is no right to freely profess the faith. Our faithful keep saying: "We're holding up, but it's like being locked up in a prison."

'We know that the war will end. But we all want this to happen as soon as possible and with peace in the name of justice,' he added.

Source: CNA

Less pomp for papal funerals

The Vatican has issued new rules to simplify papal funerals, reflecting Pope Francis' years-long commitment to reducing papal pageantry.

The changes – which include reducing the number of coffins in which the pope's body is laid to one from three, and allowing the pope to be buried in a church other than St Peter's Basilica – are another testament to Francis' longtime embrace of a more down-to-earth, informal style that has been a trademark of his papacy.

From the beginning of his papacy, Francis has made a

point of using symbols to break from the formality and pomp that has long marked the Roman Catholic Church. He has worn Casio watches and used modest cars, and instead of living in the apostolic palace, he has lived in Casa Santa Marta, a residence next to St Peter's where he takes his meals in a communal cafeteria.

With the new rules, experts say, Pope Francis has taken another step to seal it into his legacy.

'It's more like the funeral of a diocesan bishop rather than of a Roman emperor,' said Massimo Faggioli, a professor of theology at Villanova University.

Pope Francis had previously said he wanted to be buried in Santa Maria Maggiore Basilica in Rome, not in St Peter's like most of his predecessors.

According to the new rules, the body of the pope will lie for the viewing directly in the coffin, not on an elevated bier [stand] as in the past. The pope's cypress coffin will also no longer be inserted into a second coffin made of lead, and then in a third one made of oak or another wood.

Source: New York Times

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Catholic support for US immigrants

United States Catholic organisations have reiterated their 'solidarity with immigrants' and shared what the first 100 days of a second Trump administration may bring on immigration policy.

President-elect Donald Trump campaigned on hardline immigration policies, including his call for mass deportations, arguing in a presidential debate those without legal status 'destroyed the fabric of our country.'

In a recent post on his social media website, Mr Trump quoted a post claiming his administration would be 'prepared to declare a national emergency and will use military assets' for a mass deportation programme, adding, 'TRUE!!!'

He did not offer specifics on how he would carry out such a programme.

Calls for mass deportations run contrary to the Second Vatican Council's teaching in *Gaudium et Spes* condemning 'deportation' among other actions, such as abortion, that 'poison human society,' a teaching St John Paul II affirmed in two encyclicals on moral truth and life issues.

Three US bishops issued a joint



A family of migrants arrives at a shelter run by Annunciation House in El Paso, Texas, 13 December, 2022. Photo: OSV News/Ivan Pierre Aguirre/Reuters

statement of pastoral concern on 14 November pledging support for immigrants.

'Compelled by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and recognising the inherent dignity of each person as a child of God, we stand in firm solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters who live and labour in these United States,' wrote US Conference of Catholic Bishops president Archbishop Timothy Broglio, El Paso Bishop Mark Seitz

and Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto.

Karen Sullivan, director of advocacy for the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, a nonprofit that provides training and support for more than 400 Catholic and community-based immigration law providers in 49 US states, said the organisation 'will keep a close eye' on border and asylum policies in the first 100 days after Inauguration Day.

Source: OSV News, NCR Online

White Catholics swinging to GOP

While the exact breakdown of the Catholic vote in the 2024 United States election remains unclear, one expert notes exit polling data that is available suggests in future elections, white Catholics can be pencilled in as a significant GOP voting bloc. 'White Catholics in every election cycle are becoming an increasingly stronger GOP voting bloc,' Ryan Burge, an associate professor of political science at Eastern Illinois University, told *Crux*. 'I think now we can just assume the Catholic vote is going to be 60-40, Republican vs Democrat, and it might even go up from there as things change.'

Fossil fuel divestment

Twenty-seven religious institutions have announced their decision to divest from fossil fuel companies, calling for an end to the fossil fuel era, and sent a clear and bold message to the leaders and negotiators gathered at COP29 in Baku last month. The religious leaders said the decision 'is an act of faith and a commitment to consistency with Christian values.'



Banner at COP29 climate summit in Baku.

In a statement they said: 'With this action, we wish to be consistent with our faith, as well as to invite the faithful to consider their finances, since this is part of the conversion journey for all of us. This call is profound: to recognise that every decision, even financial, has an ethical and spiritual dimension.'

Rome prepares for Jubilee Year

As the Church's 2025 Jubilee celebrations rapidly approach, much of the city of Rome remains a building site. Key monuments are hidden by scaffolding, while statues are covered with plastic sheeting as the city undergoes a facelift. Rome mayor Roberto Gualtieri said the works are on track and that 'all the main targets and milestones have been met'. The Italian capital is expected to see the arrival of 33 million people in 2025 for the jubilee, a year of pilgrimage declared by Pope Francis.



Sites in Rome are under construction for the Jubilee.

The Italian capital is expected to see the arrival of 33 million people in 2025 for the jubilee, a year of pilgrimage declared by Pope Francis.

Genocide in Gaza

Pope Francis called for an investigation into accusations of genocide in Gaza, in a new book published in November. 'According to some experts, what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of a genocide,' the Pope said in *Hope Never Disappoints*, a book for the 2025 Jubilee. 'It should be carefully investigated to determine whether it fits the technical definition formulated by jurists and international bodies.' In a response posted on social media, the Israeli Ambassador to the Holy See said his country had suffered 'a genocidal massacre' on 7 October 2023.

Irish bishops reject assisted suicide

In the lead-up to the Irish election on 29 November, The Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference reiterated its total rejection of legalised assisted suicide in restricted circumstances. The bishops said: 'Over recent years, we have witnessed a diminution in the respect for human life in our political discourse. The value of people's lives seems to be calculated as if it were simply part of a cost-benefit analysis. Where is the hope in this?'

Westminster Cathedral on Christmas stamp

London's Westminster Cathedral will be featured on a Christmas stamp from Britain's Royal Mail.

The leading church of the Diocese of Westminster is the only Catholic representative of a series of five stamps featuring cathedrals in the United Kingdom. The other stamps will show the Anglican cathedrals in Edinburgh, Liverpool, Armagh, and Bangor.

'I hope that seeing the image, people will understand a church is a place where God dwells and where that sense of God's presence is intense, comforting and consoling,' said Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the Archbishop of Westminster.

Westminster Cathedral is the largest Catholic church in England and Wales.

'The presence of a church points directly to the birth of Jesus, because that is the way in which God comes into our world in flesh and blood. In order to honour and praise him, we create buildings of beauty - places of prayer - and Westminster Cathedral is an outstanding example of that,' Cardinal Nichols said.

The cathedral was designed in a neo-Byzantine style by John Francis Bentley, a Catholic convert. He began working on the church in



Image: Royal Mail

1895, and it was completed in 1903.

Source: *Crux*

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Preparing for Pope Francis' 2025 Jubilee

Archbishop Paul Martin SM

One of the things that struck me when I was in Rome for the Synod in October were all the places that were undergoing renovation or restoration or repair in preparation for the Holy Year 2025, which will begin on 28 December 2024. It is a reminder that so many people will be heading there on pilgrimage next year to celebrate this Jubilee Year of Hope.

Jubilee years are an ancient biblical time of renewal and renovation. Fields were left fallow for the year for recovery, debts were wiped, particular praise was given to God for all he has given to his people. It was part of the fabric of the Jewish life cycle. The Christian community took these Jubilee years and made them part of their praise and worship as well.

This coming Jubilee Year of Hope is focusing on being pilgrims of Hope. This is a virtue we are very much in need of in our current age when so many seem to have so little to hope in or for. This is a time for Christian people to be reminded again of our own hope in Christ and his resurrection and what that means for us. It is a chance to reflect on the gift of the Holy Spirit who gives us gifts to live this life well. It is a chance to celebrate the hope we have in the promise of eternal life with God.

Pope Francis is calling us to be Pilgrims of Hope and, in this year, we look at how we do that practically in our communities and in society. This means working for peace and

justice, caring for God's creation, bringing the Good News to those who have yet to hear it.

Over the course of the year there will be many opportunities to celebrate and give thanks for various groups and activities within the Church community. There is an extensive programme in Rome, and our dioceses are looking to do different things during the year to celebrate the Jubilee year. Some will be on a diocesan level, many will be at parish level, but all are a chance for us to stop and reflect and pray and celebrate our faith, centred on the virtue of hope.

In the Archdiocese we will be opening the Jubilee Year on 26 January. This is in recognition of the fact so many of us are not in our parish communities in the holiday period. My hope is we will take this sacred time, to take part in the liturgical events and other occasions planned. I encourage you to make the time in your lives for this, to prioritise it above other things, which may usually fill your diaries. A time of Jubilee is a chance to look again at our priorities, and if necessary to reschedule our lives, or our time, to make space for Christ and his people, our brothers and sisters in faith.

I look forward to being with you all in the coming year of Jubilee at the different events that will happen and I pray for all of us it will be a time of grace, reconciliation and spiritual growth.

Let us pray for our Church and our Archdiocese as we begin this time of Jubilee.

Faith, Hope and Love

Bishop John Adams

'Hope' the 'middle child' of the three theological virtues; faith, hope and love, is surely the antidote to the booming sectarianism of our times. The opposite to 'hope' is 'despair' – but this word ought to never be part of the Christian vocabulary. The word 'despair', comes from the Latin words 'de' (down from)

'sperare' (hope), meaning an abandonment of hope. But no, for the Catholic, for the Christian, we are continually 'looking forward' to the resurrection from the dead and the life of the world to come. It is this well-founded hope that spurs us on.

We look forward in Hope to opening the Jubilee Year in the Diocese of Palmerston North on 2 February 2025.

>> 2025 – Jubilee Year for our local churches, p 20.



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Final Mass and closure for Sacred Heart Church Manaia

Mary Mulligan

The first Catholic Church in Manaia, South Taranaki, was built in 1886 and served the local Catholic people until 1968, when it was demolished. In 1968 a new church was built and opened and continued to serve the Catholic community.

In 2007, the Manaia Parish amalgamated with St Joseph's Parish in Hawera. Saturday evening Mass was held every first and third weekend of the year until 2019. From then onwards all Sunday Masses were held at St Joseph's Church, Hawera. After discussions with the Bishop and Palmerston North Diocese the decision was made to close and deconcentrate Sacred Heart Church with a final Mass to be celebrated in October 2024.

The Mass itself was held at 10.30am on Sunday 20 October, with Bishop John Adams and parish priest Fr Vince 'Onesi



Group photo of everyone after the final Mass and closure of Sacred Heart Church, Manaia, 20 October 2024.

Photo: Supplied

concelebrating. St Joseph's Parish Council chairperson welcomed everyone to the Mass. Over 100 people were in attendance, consisting of past and present parishioners. It was a beautiful celebration with the readings read by people who had a link with the church.

At the conclusion of Mass, one of the parishioners from the original Manaia parish gave a short history

about the church and about those priests who served the parishioners over the years. A group photo was taken of everyone, followed by a cup of tea and chat.

Many thanks to all who attended the final Mass at Sacred Heart Church and our thanks to all past priests, religious and parishioners who worshipped at this church throughout the years.

Jubilarians clergy honoured for many years of missionary service

Emma Dodsworth

On 29 October 2024, the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit hosted a special Jubilarians Mass to recognise the long-standing service of several priests and deacons. Led by Bishop John Adams, the Mass celebrated the milestone ordinations of clergy members who have served across the Diocese of Palmerston North and beyond. Among those honoured were Bishop Owen Dolan (70 years), Fr Nicho Verkley oco (50 years), and Fr Barry Scannell sm (30 years). Deacon Danny Karatea-Goddard (10 years) and Fr Percy Kimble sm (50 years) were also acknowledged, though they were unable to attend.

The event brought together a diverse gathering, including priests from the Archdiocese of Wellington and the Diocese of Christchurch, as well as parishioners from the Cathedral Parish and from other parts of the diocese.

In his homily, Bishop John reflected on the themes of dedication and unity in the priesthood, drawing from the day's readings, Ephesians 5:21-33 and Luke 13:18-21. Citing St Paul's message to the Ephesians,



Among the jubilarians celebrating are (l-r): Fr Nicho Verkley oco (50 years), Bishop Owen Dolan (70 years), Bishop John Adams, Fr Barry Scannell sm (30 years).

Photo: Emma Dodsworth

he highlighted the concept of the 'mutual discipline of love', as central to both marriage and priesthood.

Bishop John presented St Paul's 'holy triangle' – the partnership of husband, wife, and Christ – as a model for priests, who in turn form a 'holy triangle' with Christ and the Church. This framework, he suggested, underscores the calling to a priesthood rooted in a shared devotion to God's service and the community of believers.

Referencing Luke's Gospel

reading, where Jesus likens the Kingdom of God to a mustard seed growing into a large tree, Bishop John encouraged the jubilarians and their fellow clergy to remain steadfast in their faith, likening their roles to the mustard seed and a portion of yeast that, though small, bring growth and sustenance to the community.

Congratulations to this year's Jubilarians, and thanks to all those from the diocese and beyond who came along to support them.



Bula Vinaka! The archdiocese Catholic Fijian Community celebrated their first Mass at the re-opened Metropolitan Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on Sunday 10 November. Fr Tom Rouse ssc was the celebrant. The Fijian Community Mass was a response from the multicultural Mass celebrated in July, where Archbishop Paul Martin sm declared the cathedral as 'home'. The Catholic Fijian Community has invited other ethnic communities to join them with the hope many others will celebrate their own cultural Masses in our cathedral. In typical Fijian style, the Mass was followed by festive kai.

Words and photo: Maya Bernado

Caring for creation in the Hutt Valley

Catherine Gibbs

The urgency of getting more people involved in caring for, and protecting all of creation is increasing every year. In September, the Season of Creation was celebrated in the Hutt Valley in a number of practical ways.

The Passionist Family group from Ss Peter and Paul parish enjoyed a walk, talk and afternoon tea. We explored Māwai Hākona stream, restored to health by a group of volunteers over ten years. To see the swift-flowing stream cleared of choking weeds and native shrubs thriving on the weed-free banks, is hopeful. The flourishing

birdsong and fish life now make this a very spiritual place to visit in Silverstream. Our visit showed how grassroots environmental work as kaitiaki is having an impact.

Blessed with blue sky and spring weather, another group walked Te Awa Kairangi River Trail from the foothills at Akatarawa to the river estuary entrance to Wellington harbour. It was an ecumenical event combining friends from St James Anglican and Catholic parishes of Te Awakairangi and St Joseph's Upper Hutt. Walkers joined at different parts of the journey. We enjoyed a welcome 'cuppa' hosted by St James' choir before completing the journey with a prayerful liturgy, where the river meets the sea at

Petone. Now in its fourth year, 'For the Life of the River 2024' aims to increase awareness, appreciation and care of the awa, which flows through the most heavily populated river plain in Aotearoa.

After an awareness-raising event to learn more about Te Awa Kairangi | Hutt River in 2023, St James Anglican Church, now an eco-church, hosted a day focused on the question 'How well do we know our local stream?' The Opahu stream, which meanders through the lower valley, is visible only in sections because of the dense residential nature of the city. Members of the Mountains to Sea group shared what is happening with stormwater and pollution in the stream that flows behind the church, through the city park and Sacred Heart College.

Armed with new knowledge, we can all begin to make changes for the better.

Photos: Supplied



Rā Maumaratanga at Korokoro Catholic Cemetery

Gerard Duignan

A ceremony of remembrance (of the dead) and recommitment (to the care of the place) at Korokoro Catholic cemetery drew a crowd, on Sunday 1 December, the day after November, the month for all souls. They gathered beside the grave of famous chief Wi Tako buried in 1877 where, at that time, thousands were present for his burial, including many parliamentarians.

Early Catholics – Māori and European – who are buried at the cemetery were remembered and the four corners of the urupā blessed. Led by Msgr Gerard Burns, members of Te Wairua Tapu | Holy Spirit and Te Awakairangi parishes shared prayers, waiata and kōrero about the heritage of this cemetery, originally gifted to the Catholic Archbishop of Wellington in perpetuity through notable chief Te Puni.

Following the ceremony a walk via Te Puni cemetery in Pito-one | Petone led to a refreshing kaputī, cuppa, at Sacred Heart Church.

The Petone Stewardship Team in Te Wairua Tapu | Holy Spirit Parish and members of the Love Whānau, descendants of Wi Tako, have been meeting for about five years, initially with Deacon Danny Karama - Goddard as



Fr Raja Kommareddy svd blesses the grave of famous chief Wi Tako, watched by Love whānau members.

Photo: Supplied

Cardinal John Dew's representative and latterly Pā Gerard Burns. Tui Lewis, Deputy Mayor of Lower Hutt, has also supported the project.

This event followed previous ceremonies at the Korokoro cemetery, firstly led by Cardinal Tom Williams and later by Cardinal John Dew.

In 1956 the cemetery was closed by Act of Parliament as part of the construction of SH2/Western Hutt Road.

Support our seminarians

Throughout December, Archbishop Paul invites you to contribute to the Archbishop's Appeal, which supports the formation of the archdiocesan seminarians. The donations will help cover the costs of the seminarians' education at Holy Cross Seminary in Auckland, as well as their travel to and from the

archdiocese and ongoing pastoral care. Please consider making a gift to help nurture and support those preparing for a life of service to the Church. Donations can be made to 02-0536-0003306-13; Reference: your name; Code: AB Appeal.

Memorial Mass celebrated

Sue Seconi

The Catholic parish of Whanganui – Te Parihi Katorika Ki Whanganui celebrated its annual memorial Mass at St Mary's Church, on Thursday evening, 7 November, to pray for those parishioners who had died during the year.

Family members of loved ones who had passed were personally invited to gather for Eucharist. When their name was read aloud, the family approached the table and lit a candle in memory of their loved one.

Organisers Anne and Kevin Foley thoughtfully prepared the liturgy respecting the sadness of all who still grieve.

Supper was served afterwards.



Table with candles lit in memory of loved ones passed. Photo: Sue Seconi

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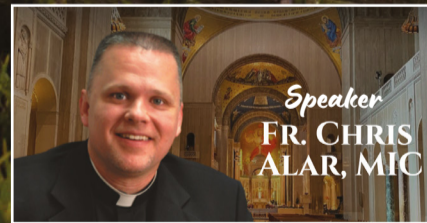
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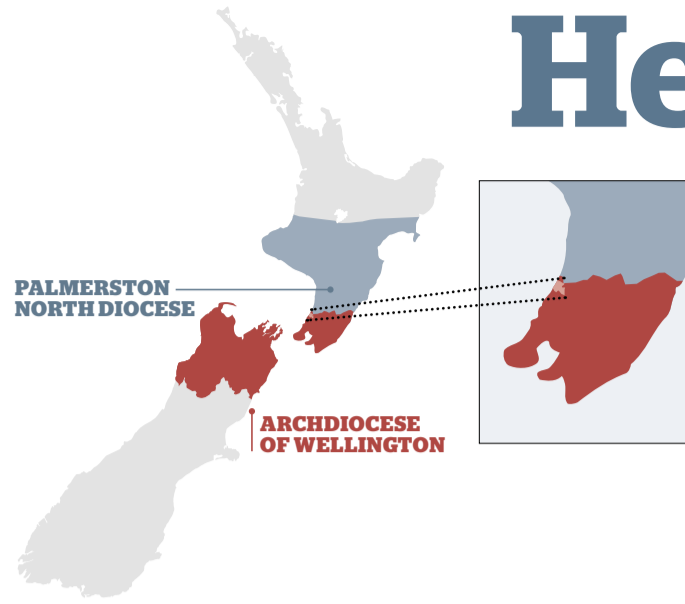
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He Hiko Whakapono



This month we arrive at the end of WelCom's now eight-year Hiko Whakapono: Journey of Faith, with a visit to the historic Pukekaraka - *hill of the Karaka trees* - a spiritual, cultural and community hub of Ōtaki.

We began our faith journey in February 2017 at Te Wairoa Parish, Northern Hawke's Bay - one of the earliest Catholic communities in New Zealand and Palmerston North Diocese's northern-most parish on the East Coast of the North Island. From there, over the years since, our faith journey has visited each of the many pastoral areas, parishes and schools of the two dioceses in both the North and South Islands, to learn and profile to our readers more about their histories, their stories, their people and their faith communities.

We now conclude our Hiko Whakapono at Pukekaraka in Ōtaki - the first Catholic Mission created in the region of Wellington at the invitation of Ngāti Kapu rangatira Tonihi in 1844. Set in the heart of Ōtaki, Pukekaraka with its marae, church and school, is surrounded by the Tararua Mountains, Ōtaki River, and Kāpiti Island.

Photos: Annette Scullion; Paul Bayliss

WHAKARAUPAPA

- 1844:** Ngāti Kapu rangatira Tonihi extends an invitation to French priests of the Society of Mary - Marist missionaries - to create a Mission at Pukekaraka, establishing a foundation for an enduring Catholic faith partnership.
- 1840s:** The first church, a simple raupō structure, is erected at Pukekaraka, serving as a spiritual centre for both Māori and Pākehā.
- 1851:** The Katorika Mission is formally established on land provided by Tonihi, and later endorsed in the Māori Land Court by his daughter Te Raiti the named owner at the time, symbolising a significant alliance between Ngāti Kapu and the Marist Order.
- 1859:** St Mary's Church built, solidifying Pukekaraka as a growing Katorika hub. Oldest Catholic Church still in constant use in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 1862:** Māori gave money for bell; now near the new church.
- 1881:** A landmark decision affirms ownership of the land under Te Raiti Tonihi.
- 1887:** Statues of St Mary and St Joseph gifted to the church by resident priest Fr Melu's sisters in France.
- 1894:** St Peter Chanel School opened.
- 1894:** Te Ohaki, small ware built on top of Pukekaraka, site of first church and presbytery.
- 1897:** Presbytery built.
- 1904:** 60th jubilee - St Peter Chanel statue added to St Mary's Church. School gave St Peter Chanel stained-glass window and Māori gave Mary stained-glass window to church.
- 1901:** Grotto built as a shrine to Mary; present grotto dates from 1905.
- 1904:** 'Roma', first whareniui, built. Catechists of time were Te Aomarere, Te Pokaitara, Te Hiakai, Taiaroa, Tutuohe (of Ngapuhi) and Hakaria Rangikura. Hakaria rang church bell for over 40 years and bell in Ōtaki Church is still named Te Pere O Rangikura in his honour.
- 1905:** 'Hine Nui O Te Ao Katoa', larger whareniui, built.
- 1907:** Statue of St Peter at top of hill unveiled, symbol of the Rock, 'kohatu' on which Catholic Faith founded.
- 1946:** Pukekaraka hosts the inaugural Hui Aranga, a Māori Katorika Easter celebration that cements its role in the wider Māori Katoria community.
- 1964:** Māori tabernacle carved as a 'pataka' by John Gardiner of Weriwari, for St Mary's Church.
- 1976:** Pukekaraka hosts the Hui Aranga for the third time, furthering its legacy as a spiritual and community hub.
- 1992:** New St Mary's Church blessed and opened.
- 1996:** 50th jubilee of Hui Aranga hosted by Pukekaraka in Ōtaki.
- 2014:** Ōtaki combined with Levin. Fr Percy Kimble sm appointed as parish priest under Marist stewardship. Ōtaki formally separated from Levin in 2021.
- 2020:** A Kawenata (covenant) between Ngāti Kapu, the Society of Mary, and the Catholic Archbishop of Wellington is reaffirmed, reinforcing the initial partnership and a vision for Pukekaraka's future.
- 2024:** Hato Maria is internationally referred to as a Shrine, continuing as a place of faith, community, and cultural celebration, with new initiatives planned in health, education, and technology.
- 2024:** Ngāti Kapu tangata whenua, led Pukekaraka Catholic community to begin World 24-Hour Rosary, 7 October, in prayer for Jubilee year 2025.

Pukekaraka: a legacy of Faith, Whakapapa, and Community

Contributing writers: Oriwia Raureti, Wawata Johnson, Debbie and Mike McAsey, Urutākai Cooper, Fr Alan Roberts, Fr Phil Cody sm, Fr Peter Healy sm.

Ko ngā Wawata o Te Raiti Tōnihi

Nestled in the heart of Ōtaki, St Mary's Church, known as Hato Maria, represents a sacred partnership between Ngāti Kapu and the Catholic Church, enduring since its founding in 1844. This historic site, Pukekaraka, where faith and whakapapa (heritage) converge, stands as a beacon of unity between Māori and Katorika traditions. Hato Maria embodies a welcoming spirit, where generations have nurtured a community of spirituality, culture, and connection. Through shared values and traditions, Pukekaraka has flourished as both a spiritual and cultural home, inviting visitors and residents alike into its rich, storied heritage.

Nga āhuatanga a te hapōri

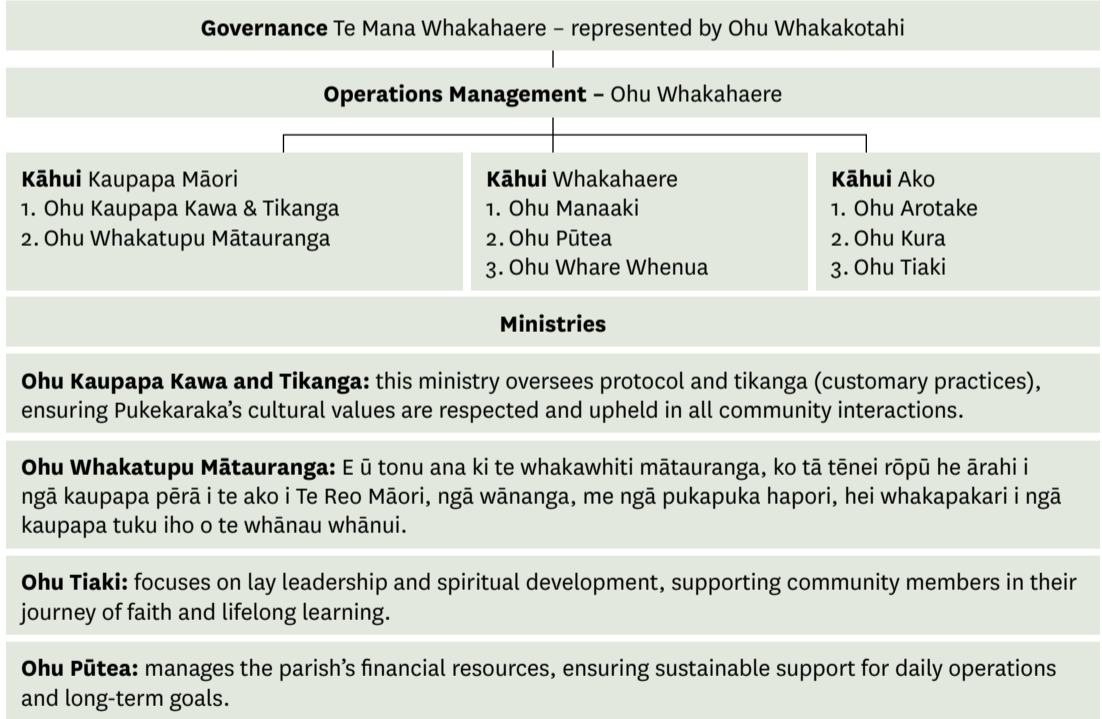
The Pukekaraka community is a sanctuary where whakapono (faith), hapori (community), and whakapapa blend seamlessly, driven by shared responsibility

and a collective vision. Its unique governance structure, known as the Ohu model, fosters participation from every community member, reflecting the kaupapa Māori principles of unity and shared purpose. The governance body, Te Mana Whakahaere, represented by Ohu Whakakotahi, includes both Ngāti Kapu and archdiocesan leaders who work together to

uphold the vision and strategic direction of Pukekaraka.

Within the Ohu model, the community is organised into three Kāhui divisions, each with distinct roles. Kāhui Kaupapa Māori focuses on cultural and educational values, Kāhui Whakahaere oversees logistical support and resource management, and Kāhui Ako is dedicated to education

and spiritual development. Together, these groups create a cohesive structure that supports Pukekaraka's mission and embodies a model of shared responsibility. Each community member's contribution is valued, reinforcing resilience and a deep-rooted sense of connection that defines Pukekaraka.



Hato: A Journey of Faith

Te Rōpū Mariana

Since its foundation in 1844, the Marist community has been an integral part of Pukekaraka, invited by Ngāti Kapu to support the spiritual and educational growth of the Katorika mission. The Marists, known for their dedication to Māori mission work, embraced te reo Māori and immersed themselves in local traditions, becoming valued spiritual and community leaders. The transition of leadership in 2015 allowed the Archdiocese to assume daily management while Marist priests continued their involvement in community life.

Today, figures like Fr Phil Cody sm, Fr Peter Healy sm, and Fr David Gledhill sm remain pillars of support, alongside Fr Alan Roberts of the Archdiocese. Together, they lead regular Mass, pastoral care, sacramental preparation, and community outreach. Their commitment preserves a vibrant community where Ngāti Kapu and Catholic faith remain deeply interwoven, providing a strong foundation for future generations to draw upon.



Fr Alan Roberts (front) leads Pā Peter Healy sm, Pā Phil Cody sm and Cardinal John Dew in procession at the conclusion of an outdoor Mass at Pukekaraka, January 2023.

Te Pūtahi Whakawhiti

Joining the Pukekaraka community in 2018, parish priest Fr Alan Roberts has become a vital presence, respected for his deep commitment to Pukekaraka's mission and Ngāti Kapu's vision. Representing the Archdiocese, Fr Alan has worked tirelessly to uphold the community's founding principles, supporting the mission's core intentions while supporting an inclusive leadership model that honours Pukekaraka's whakapapa. His collaborative approach with the Archdiocese and close work with Ngāti Kapu leadership has strengthened the community's sense of unity, reinforcing both faith and cultural values. Fr Alan's guidance has been instrumental in maintaining Hato Maria's status as a sanctuary, ensuring that each Mass, programme, and outreach activity embodies the spirit of shared responsibility and mutual respect.

Te Kura Māori

Hato Petera Kaniera, or St Peter Chanel School, once a boarding school led by the Sisters of St Joseph, is at the heart of Pukekaraka's educational mission. Founded in the late 19th century, the school has offered generations of tamariki (children) an education grounded in both Māori values and Catholic teachings. Led by a principal from Ngāti Kapu, the small yet dedicated teaching team includes Urutakai Cooper, a full-time teaching Principal and DRS, Jay Pué, a 0.8 classroom teacher, and Fountain (Uruorangi) McNaught, a kaiāwhina (support worker), who work to create

a nurturing environment where students can grow in self-identity and faith.

Hato Petera aims to renew its curriculum, aligning it more closely with Katorika Māori identity. Integrating te reo Māori, tikanga-ā-iwi (societal customs), and teachings focused on the example of Maria (Mary), the school provides a unique educational experience that connects students to both wairuatanga and whakapapa. Supported by a partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Archdiocese of Wellington, the school aims to meet



the academic and cultural needs of Ngāti Kapu whānau, ensuring that Hato Petera remains an anchor for the community, shaping future generations in faith and knowledge.

Jean-Baptiste Comte

Arguably the most successful of the early Catholic Māori Missions in New Zealand, was that established in 1844 at Pukekaraka Marae in Ōtaki. The first church at Pukekaraka was built in 1844 by Fr Comte (Pā Kometa) and local Māori.

Jean-Baptiste Comte arrived from France to the Hokianga in 1839, aged 27. He learnt and spoke fluent Māori and spent 14 years in the Mission field. A man of vision, Fr Comte could see the impact the arrival of increasingly large numbers of Pākehā would have on the lives of Māori particularly in the areas of social disruption, technology and pressures on their lands. In 1840, he left the Bay of Islands to begin a mission among Māori in Akaroa. After returning to Kororaraka in 1842 he accompanied Bishop Pompallier in 1844 for a visit down the East Coast and was left at Wellington to assist Fr O'Reily with pastoral care among Māori from Wellington to Whanganui. By 1845 Fr Comte had settled at Ōtaki.

As a Marist, Fr Comte was not interested in acquiring land, but in education and evangelisation and he worked hard among his congregation. At Pukekaraka he introduced flour mills, rope making equipment, and bullock drays, and encouraged trade by acquiring a schooner, the *Elizabeth*, to convey produce to Wellington. This vessel made a number of voyages during



Jean-Baptiste Comte – Pā Kometa. Photo: Marist Messenger

1853–1854, including at least one commanded by Māori captain, Terawatu.

When Fr Comte went back to France in 1854, lack of personnel and resources to maintain the Mission Station at Pukekaraka caused a decrease in ministry in the Māori Mission. In the mid-1880s the momentum was regained under Fr Melu (Pā Werahiko) – who took up residence in Ōtaki in 1883 – Fr Cognet, Vibaud and later Fr Delachienne with periodic visits made by Marist priests including Fr Petitjean, Fr Seon, Fr Maillard, Fr Pertuis and Fr Moreau followed by many more Marist resident priests over the decades.

Source: Marist Messenger

Ngāti Kapu ki Pukekaraka

Ngāti Kapu's role as tangata whenua (people of the land) is central to Pukekaraka's history and future. Since 1844, this partnership with the Catholic Church has been grounded in shared values of faith and stewardship. Ngāti Kapu's responsibility as kaitiaki (guardians) encompasses not only the physical land but also the spiritual life that thrives within Pukekaraka. The Kawenata signed in 2020 formalises this role, ensuring that Māori traditions, language, and spiritual beliefs are integral to all aspects of Pukekaraka's operation.

The vision of Ngāti Kapu continues to shape Pukekaraka's future, emphasising education, health, and community development initiatives that celebrate Māori culture and spirituality. This commitment extends beyond Pukekaraka's



At an outdoor Mass, January 2023, Cardinal John Dew commissioned Ohu Whakakotahi to their governance role in accordance with *He Kawenata, I-r*, Maxine Hakaraia, Debbie McAsey, Wawata Johnson, Oriwia Raureti, Mike McAsey, Alex Hakaraia, Urutakai Cooper, Fr Phil Cody, Fr Peter Healy. Seated left is Fr Alan Roberts.

boundaries, inspiring other communities to foster partnerships that respect both tradition and progress. Ngāti Kapu's leadership

ensures that Pukekaraka remains a living example of wairuatanga (spirituality), kotahitanga (unity), and aronga (shared purpose).

He Tirohanga Whakamua – A Vision for Tomorrow – Pukekaraka E Oho

As Pukekaraka looks to the future, its vision is clear: to remain a place of faith, unity, and resilience, where every generation finds purpose and belonging. Anchored in the values that have shaped its past, Pukekaraka envisions a thriving community where Māori and Katorika traditions continue to grow side by side, enriching each other through shared knowledge, faith, and compassion.

Pukekaraka seeks to inspire others, embodying a model of partnership that respects whakapapa while embracing progress. Guided by the Kawenata and the strength of Ngāti Kapu, Pukekaraka aims to be an example of hope and unity for all who seek peace, connection, and spiritual growth. As the world changes, Pukekaraka's spirit endures – founded in its past, alive in the present, and envisioned for a future

where every person is welcomed, every story valued, and every contribution cherished.

For those who walk its grounds, Pukekaraka is more than just a site – it is an experience of a living faith, a thriving community, and a future that remains firmly anchored in the values that matter most.

Nā Maria te timatanga; mā Maria te whakaotinga.



Young Catholics

Polish sisters' legacy honoured

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the arrival of 733 Polish refugee children in New Zealand in 1944, the Trustees of the Ogonowska Education Charitable Trust are pleased to announce the Trust's 2024 Awards.

These awards reflect and commemorate the 80th anniversary of the arrival of the Polish refugee children in New Zealand in 1944, among whom were Irena and Teresa Ogonowska.

The Trustees are Halina Ogonowska-Coates, Gordon Noble-Campbell and Jenny Gordon MNZM.

Gordon Noble-Campbell, Teresa's son, considers it is important to remember and honour these two sisters' lifelong commitment to education and their faith in overcoming life's many obstacles. 'It is important to acknowledge and reflect on the contribution and commitment of these two women, and the significance of their arrival



The Polish children's camp near Pahiataua – the first home in New Zealand of Irena and Teresa Ogonowska.

Photos: Supplied

in New Zealand as Polish refugee children,' he says.

Pahiataua was the first home for the Polish refugee children following their arrival in Port Nicholson, Wellington, on 31 October 1944. They arrived aboard the *USS General Randall*, after a two-week voyage from Mumbai, India.

The 2024 Trust Awards recognise

the work of students at St Anthony's School Pahiataua in acknowledging this journey.

The Trustees congratulate these students and their families: **Hazel Brass; Quinn Elliston; Charlotte Fouhy; and Meri Thomson.**

Each of the students produced artwork relating to the 80th anniversary, which has been judged



Irena and Teresa Ogonowska.

and selected by the school as worthy of special recognition.

Given the importance of the 80th anniversary, the Trustees announced four further awards to go to outstanding students from the four Wellington Catholic Secondary Schools, still in existence, that welcomed Polish students from the Pahiataua Camp from 1945 through



Irena and Teresa Ogonowska as young women.

to the 1950s.

The students, all nominated by the respective principals from these four schools, are: **Marianna Boless** – St Mary's College, Wellington; **Laito Fauchelle** – St Patrick's College, Silverstream; **Sam Glynan** – St Patrick's College, Wellington; and **Viktoriya Lyubich** – Sacred Heart College, Lower Hutt.

Young entrepreneurs celebrate regional win

A group of Year 12 business students from Sacred Heart College Napier have won the Hawke's Bay North Regional Finals in this year's Young Enterprise Scheme (YES).

Adalyn Homan, Amber Wright, Sneha Jenson, Sophia Unwin, Chahat Dhami, and Violet Unwin created Road Ready NZ, an innovative app designed to help young drivers practice essential skills.

The students' success at regionals earned them the prestigious Tumu Company of the Year Award, a \$1,000 scholarship each from Massey Business School, and the chance to receive mentorship from leading Hawke's Bay professionals,

supported by Fingermark and Folkl.

Road Ready NZ CEO Chahat said when the team got the email saying they'd made it to regionals, they said, 'This is what we worked so hard for, so winning feels incredible.'

Business and Enterprise Teacher Simon Rutherford praised the students' dedication, and their impressive preparation and teamwork. The team has set its sights on Nationals in Wellington on 5 December.

What started as an idea just nine months ago is now in the final stage of product-testing by a master's student at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.



Sacred Heart College students Chahat Dhami (left), Violet Unwin, Sophia Unwin, Adalyn Homan and Sneha Jenson won the Hawke's Bay North Regional Finals with their business Road Ready NZ. Photo: Supplied

The app utilises GPS technology to allow users to practice skills required to complete a restricted test around the driver's chosen area with traffic lights, roundabouts, and parking manoeuvres. Voice commands guide users through the simulated test routes, offering tips and highlighting common mistakes to enhance learning and preparation.

The team is collecting localised data from councils around the country to put into the app.

For more information visit: @roadreadynz on Instagram, Road Ready NZ on Facebook, or on their website roadreadynz.co.nz.

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Redwood House transformed for boarders

St Patrick's College Silverstream is 'thrilled to showcase' Redwood House's recently refreshed foyer. Redwood House is a supportive and inclusive home for the college's boarding students.

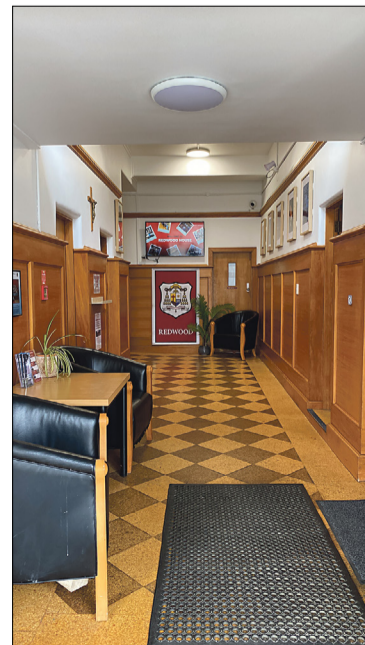
'The latest update, though simple, has brought new life and warmth to the heart of our boarding school, creating a welcoming first impression for both students and visitors alike,' said Mr Sam Dean, Assistant Rector, Boarding/

Pastoral. 'The foyer has been newly painted and decorated, introducing a bright, clean aesthetic that reflects the college's vibrant community spirit.'

Adding to the transformation is the inclusion of culturally relevant artwork, which celebrates the diversity of boarding students and acknowledges the different backgrounds that come together at Redwood House.

For information on Redwood

House and boarding please contact Mr Sam Dean on enrolments@stream.school.nz or ph: 04 9394224.



The recently refreshed foyer of Redwood House, St Patrick's College Silverstream. Photo: Supplied

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REAL ESTATE

Rangatahi Katorika

College honours rising sports stars with top award

Jyde Low and Jayden Parker's sporting achievements on the national and international stage have earned them St John's College, Hastings, highest sporting honour: the Russell Brothers Trophy for Outstanding Contribution to Sport.

'It feels really rewarding to have our hard work recognised like this. It makes you want to push even further,' Jayden says.

For year 11 student Jyde, it is his second award, having also been crowned Male All-Rounder at the Hawke's Bay Secondary School Sports Awards.

Jyde has excelled in a wide range of sports, including ocean swimming, cyclocross, multisport, orienteering, cross-country, mountain biking, athletics, and road cycling. Competing internationally, he placed ninth in the 19-and-under category at the Aquathon World Championships

in Townsville, World Triathlon Multisport Championships.

Jyde says it's 'pretty cool' to be recognised for his hard work. 'The adrenaline and knowing there's always room for improvement keep me going,' he said. 'There's no such thing as talent - it's all hard work.'

Jayden, a Year 12 student and a member of the Hawke's Bay Canoe Club, specialises in canoe slalom, canoe polo, and wild water canoeing. He made his international debut this year, placing 12th at the Planet Canoe Junior U23 World Championships in Slovakia.

Jyde and Jayden say St John's College has helped them balance their sporting commitments with their studies, offering flexibility and extra support when they need it.

Jayden added that teachers have 'gone the extra mile' to provide lunchtime tutoring sessions, enabling him to stay on track academically.



St John's College students Jayden Parker (l) and Jyde Low (r) - top sports achievers. Photo: Supplied

Looking ahead, both athletes have big goals and hope to one day represent New Zealand at the Olympics.

St John's College Principal George Rogers says: 'We are extremely proud of these young men who are performing on such a big stage.'

Cultural artworks unveiled at St Brigid's School

St Brigid's School in Johnsonville recently celebrated a vibrant addition to their main entrance with the unveiling of stunning new artworks created by Māori and Pasifika students in collaboration with renowned artists Margaret Holland and Moses Viliamu. Over a week, students worked alongside the artists to design and produce artworks that represent their rich cultural heritage.

Principal | Tumuaki Jennifer Ioannou envisioned the project as a way to enhance the school's environment by incorporating Māori and Pacific cultures into the school's entrance and serve as a celebration of culture and a source of pride for students as they enter the school. 'It was important for our students to see their cultures represented in such a prominent place, and to feel a deep sense of pride in who they are,' Jennifer said.

Year 8 student Kaylani Mu'au shared her enthusiasm about the art opportunity: 'It was amazing to work with Margaret and Moses. Seeing our ideas come to life in the artwork made me feel really proud and connected to my Samoan culture. It

was a fun experience.'

When asked what they wanted the murals to represent, students unanimously chose Tāne and the three kete of knowledge. Jennifer noted, 'It was wonderful to hear their understanding of the pūrākau (legend/story) of Tāne. Tāne's pursuit of knowledge inspires us to never stop learning and growing, embracing challenges as opportunities for growth and discovery. His actions emphasise the importance of living in harmony with nature and fostering a sense of guardianship and stewardship for the land. It was amazing to see the students' drawings of this pūrākau incorporated into the final design, and they are thrilled with the outcome.'

The installation of the art sparked vibrant discussions and excitement throughout the community. The school marked the occasion with a hui whānau and fono, where the artistic contributions of Margaret Holland, Moses Viliamu and the students were celebrated and acknowledged, signifying a proud moment for the St Brigid's School community.



St Brigid's students with their new artworks.

Photo: Supplied

Students seek living wage for college ancillary staff

This article is by the Year 13 students of St Catherine's College who initiated support of their Board of Trustees for the Living Wage Schools Campaign.

The living wage recognises all people deserve a fair wage for their labour, offering a way to lift people out of poverty. This is why, for our social action assessment in Sociology in our last year at school, we approached our Principal and Board of Trustees to support the Living Wage Schools Campaign.

This campaign aims to ensure all school cleaners, caretakers, canteen staff and grounds keepers are paid a living wage, by calling on the Government to provide new funding to schools.

We talked to Finn Cordwell, the Community Organiser in Wellington for the movement, who



Miranda, BoT Student Rep; Sr Stephanie, BoT, Living Wage Movement Official; Genesis; Mrs McDonald, Dep Principal; Gemma; Mrs Dai, Librarian; Ms Dixon, Yr 13 Sociology Teacher; Mr John Kennedy-Good, Catholic Representative on Living Wage Movement; Ms Kelder, Principal. Photo: Supplied

gave us lots of ideas on how to move our social action forward. Gaining the support of our Principal, Ms Amelie Kelder, gave us confidence to present our proposal at the October BoT meeting where Board Members were very responsive and agreed to sign the pledge recognising, as a Mercy School, paying the living wage is essential.

We feel proud St Catherine's is the first Catholic school in Wellington to sign up, and we were the first student-led campaign in Aotearoa New Zealand to support the campaign. We have learned young people can make a positive change in our communities if they are brave enough to take a chance and stand up for what is right.

Catholic Schools Day 2025

The next Catholic Schools Day will be celebrated on 28 May 2025. Our Catholic schools are the outward sign of a long commitment from both the Church and parents of Catholic children in 'helping form Christ in the lives of others'. Catholic Schools Day provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and showcase our unique identity to both our communities and our wider nation.



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St Patrick's School fundraiser - 800 cans donated to the Vinnies Annual Food Drive in Christchurch.

Society of St Vincent de Paul New Zealand

Drowning in debt and rising seas

Caritas has released a new report exposing how debt and climate impacts are compounding vulnerabilities in nations like Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga.

Entitled 'Weathering the Storm,' the report examines the tensions between debt and climate challenges in the Pacific.

Launched to coincide with COP29 UN climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, 11–22 November, the report highlights the staggering reality faced by many Pacific nations.

'The vicious cycle connecting climate impacts and debt distress is something we've known for a long time,' stated Tuvalu's climate minister Maina Talia at the report's launch. 'When countries are burdened by debt, they're forced to spend less on adaptation, making them even more vulnerable to future disasters.'

With Pacific countries swamped by surging climate debt, New Zealand has the moral authority to head off a regional debt crisis, says Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand.

The report reveals that each year, Pacific Island nations need approximately USD \$1.5 billion for climate adaptation, but they receive only a fraction of this – between USD \$200 million and \$600 million annually. This funding gap forces countries to make impossible choices between debt and survival.

In Fiji, where climate debt servicing costs outstrip spending on health and education, the government faces impossible

trade-offs that deepen climate vulnerability. Pacific countries are left with limited choices: take on more debt to recover from each cyclone, flood, or drought, or leave communities to bear the full brunt of climate impacts without sufficient adaptation measures.

'Our Caritas teams have seen the reality on the ground,' says Tony Sutorius Caritas Advocacy Lead. 'Communities across the Pacific are losing their fresh water to salination, their food sources are dwindling, and their very land is slipping beneath the waves. Yet these same countries, already devastated by climate change, are shackled with debts they can't sustain. We must face the devastating implications of this reality.'

Tony Sutorius notes New Zealand has the rare distinction that all of our contributions to global climate mitigation are delivered in the form of grants, rather than debt.

'We feel this is something to be proud of and provides this country with real authority to lead and encourage action on the global stage, to head off the emerging Pacific debt crisis,' he says.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates \$850m is needed annually just to cover climate adaptation in the Pacific.

In Fiji, the government spends more money each year servicing its existing debt than it does on health or education services, let alone climate adaptation. Adaptation



Pacific Island nations are facing an existential crisis – not only from rising seas and stronger storms but also from the mounting debt required to build resilience against these threats, says Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand in its newly released climate report.

Photo: Caritas

spending in other countries is also drowned out by debt servicing costs.

Many Pacific countries have significantly increased their debt to GDP ratios in recent years. The Caritas report examines this debt in the context of an urgent requirement for these countries to invest in climate adaptation and mitigation, and to cover climate related loss and damage.

The report's findings underscore what Caritas is seeing across the region.

'Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand works extensively with local partners and communities across Oceania,' says Tony Sutorius.

'Climate change isn't a future thing for communities in the Pacific – it's happening right now.'

'We work with communities losing their food sources due to changing ecosystems, their fresh water to salination, and even their land to the ocean. With the new cyclone season starting, the fear of unprecedented devastation from winds and seas is very real.'

'Meanwhile, Pacific countries impacted by climate damage are now emerging with debts that are accumulating at an alarming rate. This has serious implications for our region.'

Cardinal Soane Mafi, Bishop of Tonga and Niue and President of Caritas Oceania, said, 'For those of us in the Pacific, the connections between debt and climate disasters are important ones to consider. In many developing countries, and countries that are vulnerable to climate change, governments are paying more in interest and other debt servicing obligations than they are on health, education, or climate adaptation. Action must be taken to forgive debt and prevent it in the future.'

Caritas' report has three clear recommendations:

- An immediate increase of climate finance – additional to official aid to the Pacific to ensure that mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage are adequately funded.
- The delivery of finance as grants,

not loans, via a UN vehicle rather than banks.

- A response to the sovereign debt crises, allowing for the cancellation or restructuring of unsustainable and illegitimate debts, alongside better assessments, more transparency and greater protections for vulnerable countries.

The report is available on Caritas website: www.caritas.org.nz/media

Source: Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand

With a central focus on climate finance, COP29 brought together nearly 200 countries in Baku, and reached a breakthrough agreement that will triple finance to developing countries, from the previous goal of USD 100 billion annually, to USD 300 billion annually by 2035; and secure efforts 'of all actors' to work together to scale up finance to developing countries, from public and private sources, to the amount of USD 1.3 trillion per year by 2035. COP29 also reached agreement on carbon markets, which is expected to help countries deliver their climate plans more quickly and cheaply, and make faster progress in halving global emissions this decade.

Source: UNFCC

Keeping the Faith alive



When you hear the word 'charity' what comes to mind? Perhaps it is feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and sheltering the homeless. These are vital **material needs** and the Catholic Church has carried them out since her inception.

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Middle East war - an open letter



Emeritus Bishop Peter Cullinane wrote an open letter in October to the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the dire situation in the Middle East and the need for somebody to call the USA to account. Israel is getting its deserved criticism, he says, but the USA is getting off scot-free.

Photo: Jonathan Cameron/Manawatū Standard

The Hon W Peters, MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Wellington

Re: Middle East war – an Open Letter
26th Oct 2024

Dear Mr Peters,

I have appreciated comments you have made concerning the self-inflicted impotence of the United Nations, and so I feel sure you won't mind hearing from one of the many New Zealanders who are distressed by what is happening in the Middle East, but who also feel a certain impotence which is why most don't bother to speak up.

Numerous media commentators, aid agencies and the UN itself have made it plain that Israel's actions go way beyond anything that can rightly claim to be self-defence, and include violations of international and humanitarian law. Israel's present government has a wider agenda. It is also widely acknowledged that the only reason why Israel can continue its pursuit of that agenda is because the USA continues to supply it with the means of doing so – even as it speaks of the need for the war to stop.

Even allowing for Mr Biden's own domestic reasons for wanting an end to the war, it is nevertheless hard to avoid the impression that USA's much publicised pursuit of cease-fire talks is not much more than an attempt to pre-empt 'day-after' charges of complicity in war crimes, because the reality is that the USA could stop the war tomorrow if it was really serious about doing so.

I realise that NZ is in a difficult position because of its dependence on USA for both its security and its trade. But when the 'day after' does come, it would be good if history could show that we at least did what we could within our limits. For too long – decades – western nations have looked the other way while Israel continued to encroach on Palestinian lands and destroy Palestinians' livelihoods and lives. In that way we helped to breed Hamas and Hezbollah. The present problem did not start on Oct 7th last year.

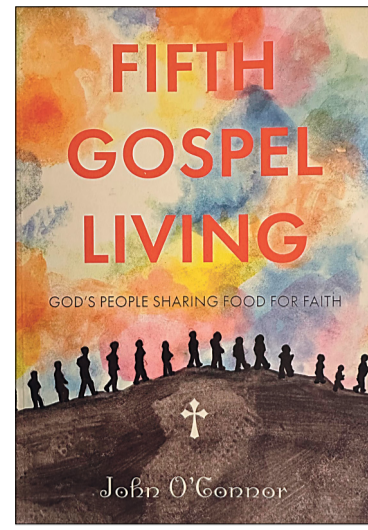
I understand there is an established protocol that entitles/requires you as Minister to call any Ambassador to account for unsatisfactory conduct by that Ambassador's country. If that is correct, has the United States' continuing support for Israel's actions which responsible judicial bodies have condemned met the requirement for activating that protocol?

Does not the USA's ambassador owe it to allies like NZ, and to fair-minded Jewish people living in this country, to explain the USA's double-speak – i.e. professing its desire for a cease-fire while enabling Israel to continue what it is doing? The USA's contempt for the role of the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court is equally despicable, and all the more because of the impotence of the UN itself. Perhaps the ambassador could even explain how Mr Biden's self-confessed position as a Zionist is consistent with his talk of a two-State solution, given that Zionism does not allow for a two-State solution. I'm sure there would be plenty to talk about!

With good wishes,

Peter Cullinane
Bishop Emeritus, Catholic Diocese of Palmerston North
[address supplied]

Book Review



Title: Fifth Gospel Living: God's People Sharing Food for Faith
Author: John O'Connor and contributors
Publisher: The Copy Press, Nelson, 2024
Price: \$35, paperback, 198 pages
Reviewer: Jo Woods

Fifth Gospel Living: God's People Sharing Food for Faith has something for everyone. The seeker, the regular Mass goer, the half-in – half-out Catholic hoping for bigger Church change than apologies and those that see themselves as people of faith but no longer participate in a faith community.

The author, former Co-Director of the Catholic Church's National Liturgy Office, Fr John O'Connor, stated in 2019, 'if we get the liturgy right, all aspects of the life of the Church will fall into place easily'. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains 'Liturgy is an "action" of the whole Christ' (Vatican, CCC,1136). Through his *Food for Faith* online ministry, Fr O'Connor has made it his lifetime mission to translate Christ's liturgy, in the context of daily life, through plain language stories and reflections, making it easily accessible for all seekers at all stages of faith. He seeks to make faith in Christ relevant in a complex time when much of the

Church's teachings and actions can be seen as irrelevant, or at worse harmful and in an entirely different direction from Christ.

In this book, O'Connor takes a slightly different approach. Early this year, he made an Easter invitation asking people to share one story of 400 words of their personal experience of God and Jesus Christ. The result is this book. Although O'Connor writes a thought-provoking introduction about journeying to and with God, this book belongs to the contributors whose personal stories range from survival miracles, experiencing God through dying people to seemingly ordinary events that have greater meaning. There is something of value in each story.

Fifth Gospel Living, following in the tradition of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John's accounts of Jesus Christ, can also be read in many ways. However, I believe, the book is best read by dipping in and out, reading a story and reflecting or meditating on that story taking a slow approach.

Published in time for Christmas, this book would make a lovely gift for someone who is seeking or a person of faith needing hope, as each story is life affirming. In this difficult and often cruel time, it is easy to forget that we live in a world where so many people do good for others on a daily basis, and the liturgy of Christ encourages this for us all. God is not experienced as a one-off special event but as something we experience and have faith in daily. At the end of the book, O'Connor extends his invitation to other readers to share one personal experience of God, so this people empowering action continues.

Fifth Gospel Living can be purchased online from Copy Press, copypress.co.nz/shop/fifth-gospel-living at \$35 per copy.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention

During the month of January 2025 Pope Francis' intention is: *for the right to an education.*

Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

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Catholics Thinking

Columnist **Ian Munro** draws on Pope Francis' third encyclical (papal letter, 3 October 2020) *Fratelli Tutti* 'on fraternity and social friendship', to discuss some of the current issues demonising people's differences.

Life is to be lived in differences



Ian Munro

Over the years I've observed that when a nation's politics move away from the centre towards right or left extremities, it usually reflects a growing polarisation within its society. Leaders who arise during these periods tend to exploit and encourage this polarisation, first for political gain and then to maintain power.

Inclusivity and social, cultural and religious diversity begin to fade, and certain sections of society become more and more demonised to varying degrees – be it gangs, immigrants, Māori, Jews, Christians, Muslims, beneficiaries, journalists, political opponents, public servants, teachers, farmers, cyclists or climate scientists and others with expertise.

They are often singled out as the cause of society's ills when, in many cases, their situation actually results from the social ills caused by social and political policy inadequacies. This demonisation serves as a political distraction from those inadequacies and it doesn't just happen in countries we might regard as oppressive; it also happens in more benign democracies, including our own.

The most insidious intolerance is usually reserved for racial and religious differences.

Fratelli Tutti¹

Pope Francis discussed these issues in *Fratelli Tutti*. He described how spreading despair and

discouragement using extremist and exaggerated statements, often under the guise of defending particular values, is used to dominate and gain control over people.

'Employing a strategy of ridicule, suspicion and relentless criticism, in a variety of ways one denies the right of others to exist or to have an opinion. Their share of the truth and their values are rejected and, as a result, the life of society is impoverished and subjected to the hubris of the powerful. Political life no longer has to do with healthy debates about long-term plans to improve people's lives and to advance the common good, but only with slick marketing techniques primarily aimed at discrediting others. In this craven exchange of charges and counter charges, debate

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself." – Matthew 22:37-39

degenerates into a permanent state of disagreement and confrontation.' [*Fratelli Tutti*, 15]

I wasn't all that surprised, then, when ACT Party leader David Seymour recently attempted to belittle more than 400 church leaders who had criticised his Treaty Principles Bill, telling them to stop playing politics and get back to focusing on their core business. Rather than discussing the issue with them he suggested their involvement in politics (one could alternatively say 'involvement in social justice') might just be the reason church attendance was declining.

It seems that citizens and their opinions soon come to be seen as having no intrinsic value and therefore are not to be listened to and respected.

'This way of discarding others can take a variety of forms, such as an obsession with reducing labour costs with no concern for its grave consequences, since the unemployment that it directly generates leads to the expansion of poverty. In addition, a readiness to discard others finds expression in

vicious attitudes that we thought long past, such as racism, which retreats underground only to keep re-emerging. Instances of racism continue to shame us, for they show that our supposed social progress is not as real or definitive as we think.' [20]

This political environment sees governments introduce punitive policies to bury social issues rather than policies that actually address them. They usually involve financial penalties that tend to impact on those in society already struggling.

While I wasn't surprised by David Seymour's comments, I was surprised by our Prime Minister's Marie Antionette moment when Christopher Luxon recently stated in a Newstalk ZB interview, 'Let's be clear, I'm wealthy and I'm sorted.'²

'While one part of humanity lives in opulence, another part sees its own dignity denied, scorned or trampled upon, and its fundamental rights discarded or violated.' [22]

Migrants are frequently exploited for political purposes and New Zealand politicians haven't been averse to using fear of immigrants to gain votes, even though every one of us is a product of immigration over the last 800 years. New Zealand First leader, Winston Peters, has campaigned against immigration levels and 'non-traditional' immigrants in the past, and Labour MP Phil Twyford appeared to blame people with 'Chinese-sounding' names for Auckland's housing problems.³

When this sort of thing happens, immigrants become less able to participate in the life of society.

'No one will ever openly deny that they are human beings, yet in practice, by our decisions and the way we treat them, we can show that we consider them less worthy, less important, less human. For Christians, this way of thinking and acting is unacceptable, since it sets

certain political preferences above deep convictions of our faith: the inalienable dignity of each human person regardless of origin, race or religion, and the supreme law of fraternal love.'⁴ [39]

Francis points out that every brother or sister in need, when abandoned or ignored by society, becomes an existential foreigner. They may be citizens yet are treated like foreigners in their own country. In particular, 'racism is a virus that quickly mutates and, instead of disappearing, goes into hiding, and lurks in waiting.'⁵ [97]

Our society also has members he describes as 'hidden exiles'. Many people with disabilities feel that they exist without belonging and without being able to participate.

Individualism

At its introduction, social media was portrayed as a vehicle to bring the peoples of the world together in harmony, but instead it's become a vehicle for exactly the opposite. Online campaigns of misinformation, hatred and destruction are creating groupings united against individuals or other groups perceived as the common enemy.

Online relationships aren't building community; 'instead, they tend to disguise and expand the very individualism that finds expression in xenophobia and in contempt for the vulnerable. Digital connectivity is not enough to build bridges. It is not capable of uniting humanity.'⁶ [43] Instead we just 'delete' people or situations we find unpleasant and thus we create what Francis calls a virtual circle that isolates us from the real world in which we're living.

There's a populist political movement, strong in the USA, and, I've observed, also sitting on our own political fringes, that aims to eliminate differences and traditions in a quest for what is seen as unity. However, such a levelling out, or what I would call homogenisation, destroys each person's rich gifts and uniqueness and what they have to offer society. It deprives the world of 'its various colours, its beauty

and, ultimately, its humanity. For the future is not monochrome.'⁷ [100]

This cult of individualism is supposed to make each of us free, more equal, more fraternal and in control of our own destinies. However, that isn't the case. Francis calls this radical individualism a virus that is extremely difficult to eliminate. Like a virus, he says, it is clever, making us believe that by giving free rein to our own ambitions and by pursuing ever greater ambitions we're somehow serving the common good.

'Differences of colour, religion, talent, place of birth or residence, and so many others, cannot be used to justify the privileges of some over the rights of all. As a community, we have an obligation to ensure that every person lives with dignity and has sufficient opportunities for his or her integral development.'⁸ [118]

Life is to be lived in differences⁴

As we all come together in our differences to celebrate the birth of Jesus later this month, it seems to me, a great time to also remember His clear statement of both the greatest commandment and the second:

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'⁵

1 Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*: Encyclical Letter on Fraternity and Social Friendship, Vatican, 3 October 2020

2 Stuff, 1 October 2024, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/politics/350435767/pm-christopher-luxon-brushes-scrutiny-over-capital-gains-wellington-property>

3 Stuff, 17 July 2015, <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/money/70155168/labours-half-baked-property-data-turns-chinese-buyers-into-scapegoats>

4 Pope Francis, in meeting with young people of Scholas Occurrentes, Jakarta, 4 September 2024

5 Matthew 22:37-39

Ian Munro is a Wellington writer and columnist and a member of Our Lady of Hope Parish, Tawa-Titahi Bay.

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Looking ahead during Advent

Andrew Hamilton sj

In the Catholic Church Advent is a time of waiting. In our lives there will be many times when we are waiting for someone or something to arrive. It can be a time of unmixed joy, as when we wait for the homecoming of someone we love or wait for the great holidays we have planned. It might also be a time of fear and dread, as it is for people in Gaza and South Sudan who wait for bombs to fall. Sometimes it may be a time of mixed joy and anxiety: students, for example, may rejoice at having finished their examinations and school life, but may also await anxiously the results that will affect their future lives.

Advent is a time of waiting for Christmas, the feast of Jesus' birth. In our culture and especially for children Christmas is a happy time to which we look forward. It is a time for presents, for the end of school, for families to gather, for Santa to come, and for holidays from work. In Churches it is the time for singing Christmas carols and for the crib with its straw, its animals, with Mary, Joseph, a few shepherds, the three wise men, and at its centre the baby Jesus. Christmas revolves around children in its beginnings, in its Christian celebration and in its place in our culture.

The focus of Christmas on children and family, of course, makes it a painful time for people whose memories of family and childhood are ones of poverty, neglect or violence. Advent is a time for gratitude at the ways in which we have been blessed and for compassion for those who have been deprived.

The word Advent, however, referred to an event that sparked

anxiety as well as joy. In the Roman Empire it described the arrival of the emperor and his troops in a city. It was a solemn event, long planned and waited for. The emperor would arrive on a chariot preceded by lines of foot soldiers and cavalry to the sound of drums. When he arrived, his local officials would be examined, some rewarded and some arrested, crimes and acts of rebellion would be punished, and he would ordinarily reward the city. People looked forward to his arrival for the boost to local business it provided and for the notice given to their town. But they would also be anxious about the judgments and punishments that might affect them.

For Christians Advent looks forward both to the coming of God's Son as a child at Christmas, a welcome guest. It also looks forward, however, to the coming of Christ at the end of time to judge the world. In the Roman Empire purple was the colour of Emperors. Like Lent it is a time for us to prepare for Christ's coming by examining the books of our lives and being ready for God's judgment. But it also reminds us of what kind of a king Christ is and of what we can expect from his coming. It is not about terror and anxiety but about confidence and gratitude for God's love for us, and for reaching out to people less fortunate than us, just as God has reached out to us.

Fr Andrew Hamilton writes for Jesuit Communications and Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne. His article is republished in WelCom with permission.

To view and download WelCom's 2024 Advent Calendar, published in our November edition, go to: tinyurl.com/WelCom-Advent-Calendar-2024

The excitement of waiting and meeting

A reflection for Christmas

James B Lyons

We're in the season of getting together. Family members coming home. Friends re-connecting. Christmas!

Think of how you feel as you wait for someone to arrive. I know for myself there's excitement – a joyfulness about seeing someone again, perhaps after a long time apart. But there's also a hesitation – will they have changed? Will we still feel the same about each other? What will they think of me?

Then, at the moment of meeting, all the doubts get swallowed up. The friend walks into view and suddenly nothing and no one else matters. You are the only people in the world as you rush to welcome one another.

This is the season of getting together because it's our holiday season. But our wanting to be together and the expectation of meeting are keys to the understanding of what Christmas is about.

Christmas can easily get displaced by the heavy commercial blanket that drapes over it, but there is still enough Christian DNA in the atmosphere to more than suggest there is something extraordinarily special about this season.

Whatever your opinion of Christmas – your faith, your curiosity, a family tradition – whatever it is, there is also a hope, even a flickering hope, that this is real – that God really has come to be with us – that there IS a power greater than me, that can help me through uncertainty, calm my fears and steer us all to a life of peace, harmony.

For many people religion is not good news. It's rigid and bitter, and better at dividing than uniting people. Modern-day terrorists promote this, using religion as their cover. Their brutality destroys trust and creates a world where no one is safe.

If you take Christmas seriously, you have a huge part to play in

Christmas crib at St Mary's Church, Pukekaraka, Otaki. Photo: WelCom



restoring confidence in the gift of God.

Pope Francis, since his election almost 12 years ago, has been living a message of mercy, calling us to recognise that the God who visits us in Jesus Christ, is not a God of condemnation but a God of compassion; one who understands our confusion and our weakness, and who wants to meet with us, walk with us, embrace our hurt, heal us.

He has backed this up in October this year with his fourth encyclical letter. Entitled, *He Loved Us (Dilexit Nos)*, it focuses on the Sacred Heart of Jesus and its relationship to our world – which seems to have lost its heart.

In Christ Jesus we have the assurance that God does not cease in his love for the whole of creation.

Surely, we all want to believe in such a God, but like waiting to meet friends we can start wondering if we'll measure up and what might be expected of us.

Christmas holds out to us a pregnant maiden full of expectation. From being very afraid, Mary opens her life to the presence of God and gives the world its best and only hope: Jesus, the Christ, the Chosen One – God in human flesh.

This is our answer. God has touched us in the most intimate way possible, by becoming one of us. Some time ago, I read that *the future is not predetermined by the mistakes of the past but is waiting to be made*. That means we have choices. We can give in to fear and watch everything collapse, or

we can embrace the pain of giving birth and be part of the rebuild.

Hold on to the joyful, if hesitant, expectation you felt as you waited for friends to arrive, and in this Christmas encounter with your faith, give thanks for the hope it contains and the love it brings.

Take up Pope Francis' call to activate our faith and help give a new heart to our broken world. What a Christmas present that would be!

Sing all the world

*Sing to the Lord a new song
Sing with full voice.
Shout loud and long in joyful praise
For unto us a child is born.*

*Sing Mary, sing Joseph
Your dream is fulfilled.
Your doubt and your fear
Melt away in this birth.*

*Sing shepherds, sing searchers
Who watch and who journey.
Come softly, come humbly
Come home.*

*Sing all the world a song of joy
Lift weary, troubled hearts.
Sing all creation Christ has come
To love and heal and free.*

*Sing to the Lord a new song
A new day dawns among us
Sing thanks, sing hope, sing welcome
And glory to God forever.*

James B Lyons

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is universally celebrated on 8 December. This year, because 8 December is celebrated as the Second Sunday of Advent, the Solemnity of the Immaculate

Conception is transferred to Monday, 9 December 2024.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is the Patron of the Archdiocese of Wellington.



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Gospel Reading: Sunday 8 December 2024

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – LUKE 3:1-6

The Preaching of John the Baptist

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert.

³ John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled

and every mountain and hill shall be made low.

The winding roads shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth,

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’

A reflection on Luke 3:1-6

Fr Patrick Bridgman

During this season of Advent, we recognise Jesus coming to us. We are aware of his presence with us today, his presence we look forward to at the ‘end of time’, and his presence when he was born among us as a babe in Bethlehem.

In an article published by one of the major news websites there was an investigation into the historical Jesus of Nazareth. Trying to find the article again, while preparing for this reflection, I came across many recent articles on Jesus. Even one on how AI is creating modern images of the Lord!

The article that I cannot find quoted, among others, the scripture passage from Luke’s Gospel proclaimed this Sunday. Such precise dating of John’s ministry; the historical leaders at the time,

the places in which they ruled, all setting the scene and placing this passage in historical context. Yes, Jesus did exist, he was not a fairy tale; that was the article’s outcome. There were accounts from non-believing historians and philosophers who mention Jesus and mention his followers and what they were saying happened to the one they followed. There was even a telling piece of ancient graffiti, which mocked the followers of Jesus, yet in doing so the artist confirmed for all time that this Jesus lived, was crucified, and in the experience of his disciples Rose from the Dead.

We don’t need proof, as it were, to know Jesus. For we meet him in our daily lives. When we gather in his name we recognise him in each other. In the Word proclaimed and the Bread broken we recognise his Risen presence. When we listen to his words in prayer we can see him,

hear him, know his loving care.

John, son of Zechariah, takes up the ancient call of Isaiah, ‘prepare a way for the Lord!’ There is our task in the first weeks of Advent. We have the witness of the Scriptures to know that Jesus will return in Glory. How are we to prepare for his return? What in our lives is able to be smoothed, straightened, filled in?

If you were to identify this era in the time in which we live who would be the leaders and countries you would mention, as St Luke did in today’s Gospel passage? How would you write such a passage to call people to preparation for the Lord’s coming? Could it be a prayerful exercise, to take up a pen, a piece of paper, and to write for our own time the call of the prophet Isaiah and Luke? This may help as we seek in Advent to ‘judge wisely the things of earth and to love the things of heaven.’

Parting shot...



St Joseph’s Church, Hiruhārama | Jerusalem, located in a beautiful and peaceful setting in a remote green valley beside the quiet waters of the Whanganui River. Built in 1893, the church is part of the second Catholic Māori mission station established on the Whanganui River, and is closely associated with the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion and their founder Venerable Mother Mary Joseph Aubert (1835–1926).

Photo: Michael Fitzsimons

Night falling

*It’s getting late.
In the tow of evening,
eyes accustomed to the dark,*

*I go looking for the river,
where winter trees shine
their naked glory
on the surface of the water,*

*and pied stilts and shags
make invisible moves
In the shallows.*

*Past the swing bridge
and the old weatherboard
church,*

*I go looking in the silences of
the river,
in the velvet gloom.*

*I go looking for you everywhere,
I always will.*

– Michael Fitzsimons




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DATES AND EVENTS – WHAT’S ON

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.

Saturday 7 December

- > Come and See Vocations Morning – explore vocation to priesthood with Fr David Dowling, Rector of Holy Cross Seminary, 9am–1pm, Archdiocese office, 204/2 Thorndon Quay. Email l.hensel@wn.catholic.org.nz or text 021 164 5800 if you would like to join us.
- > Carmel’s ruby jubilee – celebrating 40 years of RNDM life, 11am Mass, St Joseph’s Church, Dannevirke, followed by light lunch in parish hall. Please bring a plate of food to share.

Saturday 7 - Sunday 8 December

Bake sale fundraiser – after each weekend Mass for ongoing restoration work of Cathedral of the Sacred Heart; and Car Boot Sale on Sunday 8 December. (See details this page).

Tuesday 10 December

World Human Rights Day.

Saturday 14 December

Youth Christmas Concert – St Joseph’s School Field, Hastings, 6pm, food stalls, cultural entertainment, Christmas carols, raffle with prizes. Koha appreciated.

Monday 16-Sunday 23 December

Cribs on Kāpiti – nativity scenes display, 7pm–9.30pm, Our Lady of Kāpiti Church, 1 Presentation Way, Paraparaumu.

Saturday 18 December

International Migrants’ Day.

Saturday 4 January 2025

World Braille Day.

Tuesday 14-Saturday 18 January 2025

Life Teen Aotearoa Summer Camp 2025 – hosted by Hamilton Diocese. Visit lifeteen.nz/camp/summer-camp-info for information.

Friday 24 January

International Day of Education.

Friday 24-Monday 27 January 2025

Festival One – join Palmerston North diocesan group heading to Festival One, Aotearoa’s largest Christian music festival, Hartford Farm, Karapiro. Please talk to your local youth minister or contact Nick at the Youth Office: niwilson@pndiocese.org.nz for further information.

Sunday 26 January

Jubilee opening Mass for Archdiocese – all welcome, 10am, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Thorndon. (See p 20.)

Friday 31 January-Sunday 2 February

Come and See Vocations Weekend Away – for those considering vocation to priesthood, Magnificat Retreat Centre, Cross Creek, Featherston. Please contact Lucienne Hensel at l.hensel@wn.catholic.org.nz or ph 021 164 5800, by 20 December 2024. Registrations essential.

Sunday 2 February

World Wetlands Day

Friday 14 February

Celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage in Year of Jubilee 2025 – 6pm, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Thorndon, followed by refreshments.

Thursday 20 February

World Day of Social Justice.

Sunday 2 and 9 March

Love is a Decision – programme for engaged couples preparing for marriage. Wellington location to be confirmed. Email marriage@wn.catholic.org.nz or register online: tinyurl.com/Love-Is-A-Decision-2025

Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 March

Seasons for Growth – Children and Young People’s Programme Companion Training, NET Pasifika Hub, 2 Dudley St, Hutt Central. Email seasons@wn.catholic.org.nz for link to register or for more information.

Friday 24-Sunday 26 October 2025

St Catherine’s College 75th Jubilee – Labour Weekend 2025. Former students and staff invited to weekend celebrations. Please send name and email address to sccjubilee2025@gmail.com to receive information about this exciting weekend of reconnecting, remembering and fun.

Christian perspectives on Treaty Principles Bill – participate

The Government is introducing a Treaty Principles Bill that ‘will seek to define in law the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi Treaty of Waitangi’. Even if the bill doesn’t become law, the conversations about it will influence how the Treaty is understood by many in years to come.

During Advent, Common Grace Aotearoa invites you to gather submissions in your faith community or with a group of friends and have your say on the Treaty Principles Bill.

This can be done by gathering together to watch a 90-minute video to learn about what the bill proposes, key concerns about it, and how to make submissions. Common Grace encourages people to gather submissions between **Monday 25 November and Sunday 15 December**.

Visit: ‘Stand up for Te Tiriti – Christian Perspectives on the Treaty Principles Bill’ at treatyandbelonging.nz/speakup to access the video and to sign up to equip your faith community to participate in this significant moment in our nation’s history.

This invitation is supported by the Archdiocesan Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission.

Church Calendar

December

1. Advent Sunday
3. St Francis Xavier, Memorial.
9. Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary – patronal feast for Archdiocese.
25. Christmas Day.
29. Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

January

1. Mary, Holy Mother of God; World Day of Peace.
6. Epiphany of the Lord.
12. Mass celebrated at Totara Point to mark anniversary of first Mass in New Zealand by Bishop Pompallier on 13 Jan 1838.
24. St Francis de Sales.
26. Word of God Sunday.

February

2. Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life; Presentation of the Lord.
6. Waitangi Day
9. World Marriage Day – Marriage Encounter.
11. World Day of Prayer for the Sick.

Christmas Day Mass times

Christmas Mass times across the Archdiocese of Wellington will be listed from mid-December on: www.wn.catholic.org.nz

Shine TV - Christmas Day

The Christmas Day Mass on Shine TV will be broadcast at 3pm for people unable to attend Mass in person.

Palmerston North Young Catholics

18-35-year-olds are invited after each Sunday 6pm Mass to the Cathedral lounge at 7.15pm, to meet like-minded people and form new friendships.

Christmas Appeal 2024: Facing challenging times

As we approach Christmas, the need for support in our community is greater than ever. The Sisters of Compassion Christmas Appeal has been launched to help meet the increasing demand for the Compassion Group’s essential services.

In these challenging times, with many people facing unemployment, businesses closing, costs rising, and homelessness increasing, the Group’s resources are being pushed to the limits. The Compassion Soup Kitchen is serving an additional 1,500 meals every month, while the demand for Compassion Housing remains high.

Through their work in both areas, the Compassion Whānau remain committed to assisting those who are struggling with uncertainty, loneliness, poverty,

and, at times, violence.

Thanks to the generosity of donors and partner organisations throughout the year, the Compassion Group have been able to continue providing warm and nourishing meals, as well as accommodation and shelter, carrying on the mission that founder Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert began so many years ago.

This Christmas, making a meaningful impact depends on all of us. Your kindness and generosity can help ensure that each individual experiences the dignity and support they deserve.

Everyone is encouraged to support the Compassion Christmas Appeal. Together, we can make a difference.

For more information on how to donate, please visit compassion.org.nz or ph 04 383 7769.

“I see the difference a warm meal and a conversation can make to someone in need.”

– Ruth from the Compassion Soup Kitchen



Cathedral fundraising events

The fame of Sacred Heart Cathedral’s after Mass bakesale delights now extends beyond the parish, with people coming knowing of the delicious treats that await.

New fundraising items are available for sale including elegant mugs with the Cathedral symbol, wrapping paper with the image of the Cathedral ceiling, and now cards with the icon of Our Lady entrusted to Bishop Pompallier by Pope Pius IX in 1847. A stunning array of religious jewellery is also on offer, crafted by a parishioner and proving very popular.

On **Sunday 8 December** will be the celebration of the archdiocesan

Feast of the Immaculate Conception at the 10am Mass, with the presence of Sacred Heart Cathedral School, followed by a further Bake Sale, a Car Boot Sale, and various fun activities for children young and older.

The Car Boot Sale is from 11am–2pm at Sacred Heart Cathedral School. Please book a car spot for \$30. Special rate applies for commercial sellers. Contact Joy at msh.fundraising@gmail.com or ph 021 0481216 for enquiries.

All are welcome to come and enjoy these events and to spend time at the Cathedral – a spiritual home for all.



Monica Franklin and Mary-Jane Monaghan with the Cathedral mugs and other fundraising items for sale in the Cathedral foyer. Photo: Supplied

CEC: Q&A

Rebecca Taylor-Hunt Catholic Enquiry Centre

What is a Chaplet?

This question came from a woman returning to the Catholic faith.

A chaplet is a devotion that uses beads and repetitive prayers, such as the Rosary. The structure of these prayers can vary widely, and many have their own sets of beads, shorter than Rosary beads.

Catholics have been using chaplets as forms of devotion for centuries, each with its own unique prayers and structure. Some commonly prayed chaplets include the Chaplet of the Sacred Heart, the Chaplet of St Joseph, and my personal favourite, the Chaplet of St Anthony. There is a meditative quality to praying this way, and chaplets can prove to be powerful. It is a way of connecting with our saints and with God.

Exploring different kinds of prayer brings us closer to God, and that’s the point of it.

Visit the Catholic Enquiry Centre online at catholic.discovery.org.nz or email info@catholicenquiry.nz or Rebecca at rebecca@catholicenquiry.nz with any Catholic enquiries.

2025 - Jubilee Year for our local churches

2025 - Te Tau o te Tiupirī mō ō tātou whānau whakapono

Pope Francis has declared 2025 as a **Year of Jubilee** with the theme 'Pilgrims of Hope', giving voice to his desire for the year to foster a greater sense of global sisterhood and brotherhood, solidarity with the poor and caring for the environment.



A Jubilee or Holy Year is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

For the coming Jubilee Year, Pope Francis has invited Catholics to renew our hope and discover a vision that can 'restore access to

the fruits of the earth to everyone'. We are also invited to rediscover a spirituality of God's creation in which we understand ourselves as 'pilgrims on the earth' rather than masters of the world.

A Jubilee Year is celebrated by the Church every 25 years. The 2025 Jubilee Year begins on Christmas Eve 2024 with the opening of the

Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica and concludes on 6 January 2026. There are Holy Doors in the four papal basilicas in Rome, which are destination points for pilgrims who travel to Rome during a Jubilee and pass through seeking the graces of God's mercy.

A full schedule of Jubilee events is planned for the Archdiocese of

Wellington and the Palmerston North Diocese as outlined below. Details are available on the diocesan websites: wn.catholic.org.nz/jubilee-2025 and tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz/2024/11/year-of-jubilee-2025/

Diocesan calendars of events

Archdiocese of Wellington

January 2025

Sunday 26 January

Jubilee Year Opening Mass – 10am, Sacred Heart Cathedral

February 2025

14 February

Jubilee of Married Couples – 6pm, Sacred Heart Cathedral

March 2025

8–9 March

Jubilee of Parish Volunteers

28 March

24 Hours for the Lord – Sacred Heart Cathedral

April 2025

6 April

Jubilee of the Sick and Health Workers – 5pm Mass, St Anne's Church, Newtown

30 April

Jubilee of People with Disabilities

May 2025

11 May

Jubilee of Teenagers Archdiocese colleges' event

25 May

Jubilee of Children World Children's Day

June 2025

8 June – Pentecost Sunday

Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and Communities

July 2025

Tuesday 15 July

Jubilee of Priests

27 July

Jubilee of Families, Grandparents and Elderly

August 2025

2–3 August

Jubilee of Youth Archdiocese events

15 August – The Assumption

Jubilee of Marian Spirituality National celebration at St Mary of the Angels National Shrine

September 2025

14 September

Jubilee of Migrants Archdiocese event – Sacred Heart Cathedral

October 2025

5 October

Jubilee of Consecrated Life Evening Prayer – 6.30pm, Sacred Heart Cathedral

19 October

Jubilee of the Missions

November 2025

16 November

Jubilee of the Poor

23 November

Jubilee of Choirs and Musicians

December 2025

14 December

Jubilee of Prisoners

28 December 2025

Jubilee Year Closing Mass – 10am, Sacred Heart Cathedral

Diocese of Palmerston North

February 2025

2 February

Opening of the Year of Jubilee

8–9 February

Jubilee of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel

15–16 February

Jubilee of Artists

22–23 February

Jubilee of Deacons

March 2025

5 March

Ash Wednesday

8–9 March

Jubilee of the World of Volunteering

8 March

Pilgrimage to Hiruhārama Jerusalem, Whanganui

9 March

Rite of Election

28 March

24 Hours for the Lord

April 2025

5–6 April

Jubilee of the Sick and Healthcare Workers

18 April

Good Friday

19 April

Easter Vigil

20 April

Easter Sunday

26–27 April

Jubilee of People with Disabilities

May 2025

3–4 May

Jubilee of Workers

10–11 May

Jubilee of the Eastern Churches

17–18 May

Jubilee of Seminarians

24–25 May

Jubilee of the World of Education

31 May–1 June

Jubilee of Families and Children

June 2025

7–8 June

Jubilee of Ecclesial Movements, Associations and New Communities

8 June

Pentecost Sunday

14–15 June

Jubilee of the World of Communications

28–29 June

Jubilee of Bishops and Priests

July 2025

26–27 July

Jubilee of Grandparents and Older Persons

28 July–3 August

Jubilee of Youth

August 2025

16–17 August

Jubilee of Musicians

September 2025

13 September

Pilgrimage to Hiruhārama Jerusalem, Whanganui

20–21 September

Jubilee of Justice

27–28 September

Jubilee of Catechists

October 2025

4–5 October

Jubilee of Migrants

11–12 October

Jubilee of Marian Spirituality

18–19 October

Jubilee of the Missions

25–26 October

Jubilee of Consecrated Life

November 2025

15–16 November

Jubilee of the Poor

30 November

First Sunday of Advent

December 2025

13–14 December

Jubilee of Prisoners

25 December

Christmas Day

26 December

Boxing Day

27 December

Feast of the Holy Family

February 2026

1 February

Closing of the Year of Jubilee

Pope Francis stated in his February 2022 letter announcing the Jubilee 2025:

'We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire...'

More information about Jubilee events and materials can be found on the Vatican website: jubilaeum2025.va/en.html.



Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.

May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Te Karakia Tiupirī

E te Matua i te rangi, whakaarahia anōtia i roto i a mātou te tūmanako tapu mō te taenga mai o tō Kingitanga, mā roto mai i te whakapono ki tāu Tamaiti a Hēhu Karaiti, tō mātou kiritahi, tērā whakapono nāu anō i homai, anō me te kōpura o te aroha e whitangia nei i ō mātou ngākau e te Wairua Tapu.

Ko tō keratia hei mea hangahou i a mātou hei kaiwhakatō i ngā kākano o te Rongopai.

Ko ērā kākano anō ka tupu ki roto tahi i te hunga tangata me te taiao hei hangahou i te rangi me te whenua i runga i te tūmanako kia kauparehia te Īweri, ko tō korōria tērā ka tiaho mai mō āke tonu atu.

Kia oho anō te keratia o te Tiupirī ki roto i a mātou, arā ngā Manene o te Tūmanako e manako nei ki ngā homaitanga o te rangi.

Ko tērā keratia anō kia hora anō i te koa me te mōrie o tō mātou Kaiwhakaea ki runga i te mata o te whenua.

Māu e te Atua, te korōria me ngā kupu whakapai katoa mō āke tonu atu. Amene.



Pope Francis' Prayer Intention



During the month of December 2024 Pope Francis' intention is: *for pilgrims of hope.*

We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthen our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in our daily lives, and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.