

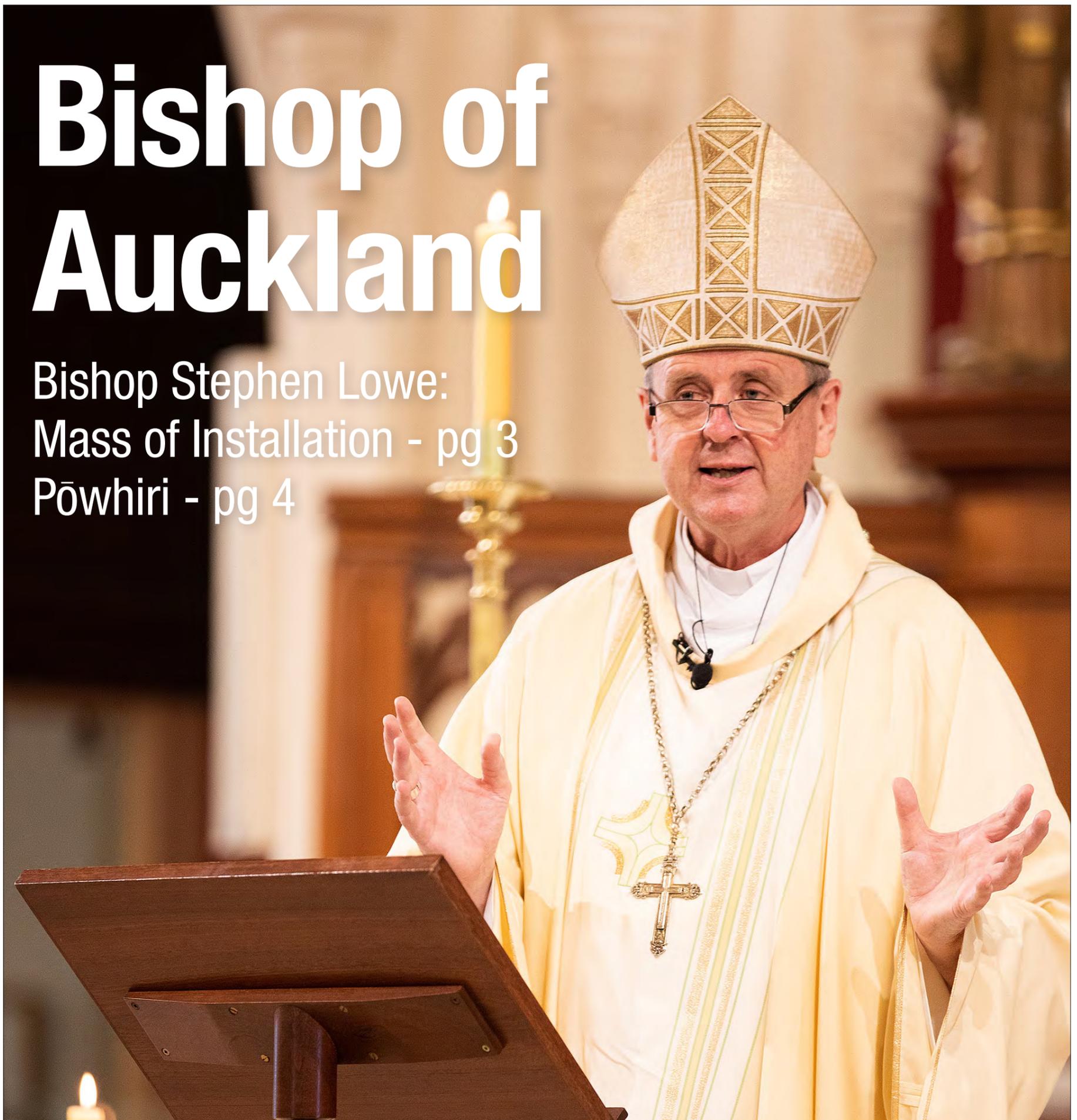
NZ Catholic

The national Catholic newspaper

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Bishop of Auckland

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On the front cover: Bishop Stephen Lowe preaches during the Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral on February 19 at which he was installed as Bishop of Auckland (Photo: CDA)

NZCatholic

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St Dominic's Catholic College

Founded by the Dominican Sisters
Catholic School For Girls Years 7-13

- Student Executive 2022 badge commitment ceremony filmed to show in form classes and send to parents and caregivers.
- **Melitta Cadelis** and **Mairedad Graham**, special character leaders.
- Much fun was had at year level House athletics activities, to keep everyone safe.
- **Ruby Bray**, Yr 13, local electorate Youth Member of Parliament for 2022.

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Packers at St Vincent de Paul's Onehunga hub

SDVP responds swiftly for Tonga

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The New Zealand St Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP) has swiftly responded to the devastating volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga with two 20-foot containers of urgently needed materials.

The January eruption destroyed the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic island to the north of the Tongan capital Nuku'alofa. More than four-fifths of the Tongan population has been affected by the subsequent tsunami and falling ash.

SVDP immediately launched an appeal to its members to put together the material aid requested by the society in Tonga, said Arthur Schultze, the society's liaison person with Tonga and Oceania. Under the society's "twinning" arrangements, the society in New Zealand is partnered with Tonga, and provides support as a donor country.

"The need in Tonga is very great," Mr Schultze said. "The biggest challenge up there at the moment is dealing with the volcanic ash which is having a huge impact on the drinking water. They have a deep spring from which they can draw bottled water and that's being used full-on. Plus emergency water supplies are being brought in from the Australian and New Zealand Governments.

"I am in regular contact with SVDP's national president in Tonga, Sakapo Lolohea. There are many families who are coming to the main island Tongatapu from the outlying islands which have been worst hit. The society in Tonga is supporting these displaced people, along with other agencies."

Mr Schultze said a real strength of the society's aid effort is that it is meeting needs identified by the society on the ground in Tonga. Aid being provided includes water bottles, water filters, face masks, water blasters, protective eyewear, wheelbarrows, blankets, clothing, chainsaws, hoses, gloves, gumboots, safety boots and batteries. Some of the items being provided are not available in Tonga.

The first 20-ft container was loaded from the Society's hub in Onehunga and was dispatched from Auckland direct to Nukualofa in mid-February. A second container-load is planned for mid-March.

"We have a strong relationship with the society in Tonga and I'm in regular contact with the Society's president there," Mr Schultze said. "They have a great crew on the ground in Tonga, and the support being provided will make a real difference. It's a very targeted approach. People responding to the appeal know exactly what their money is being spent on."

The New Zealand national president, Terry Jordan, is delighted with the response from SVDP members all around New Zealand.

"The strength of the society is really evident in times like these. When the need is there, the conferences step up, and we have such a close relationship with Oceania. The need is right on our doorstep."

Anyone wanting to donate to the St Vincent de Paul Tonga Tsunami Appeal can deposit their donation in the Society's Appeals bank account : 02-0528-0208598-027 REF: Tonga Appeal

Caritas Aotearoa NZ grateful for donations

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

As of mid-February, Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand had raised \$345,000 in its Tonga appeal set up in the wake of the volcanic eruption and tsunami that hit the Pacific nation on January 15.

Caritas spokesman Roger Ellis told NZ Catholic that "we have been delighted with the generosity of the New Zealand Catholic communities — including schools, parishes, religious congregations, families and individuals, who have given so generously during Tonga's time of need."

"We want to thank all those who have contributed to help the people of Tonga," he said.

Mr Ellis said that Caritas in this country continues to work with their partners Caritas Tonga to assist with the response.

Cleaning up the ashfall has been a major piece of work, Mr Ellis said. Other tasks include checking water supplies and the quality of them. Food insecurity issues are also being assessed at the moment, he added.

"Communications have been disrupted again this week," Mr Ellis said on February 18.

"Last week we were in daily touch with Caritas Tonga," he said. "The current Covid situation and lockdown in Tonga means it is more difficult for Caritas Tonga to carry out its work of planning, assessment and engagement with various local communities. Before the country went into lockdown, pre-positioned emergency supplies, set up

with Caritas New Zealand in December 2021, were distributed in several villages. This included distributing WASH (Water And Sanitation Health) kits and first aid kits.

Mr Ellis said that it is likely that the joint Caritas response (including solidarity funds and public appeal funds) will focus, in the early stages at least, in the areas of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

"DRR would likely include ensuring pre-positioned supplies are well maintained and fully stocked, as well as providing community level training, which could incorporate things like how to respond to disasters in the future, how to prepare for potential disaster events, water security initiatives, climate change adaptation methods etc."

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand will be there for the long-term recovery, as opposed to a simpler short-term response, Mr Ellis said.

"Due to the generosity of our donors and supporters, Caritas has the resources and the flexibility so that we are very well-placed to support a phased recovery. Caritas Tonga, with support from Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand, will respond to the situation as it continues to unfold, and address the most pressing needs when they arise."

People are able to donate here: www.caritas.org.nz/donate-online

An one-day online fundraiser for Tonga on February 12, featuring Auckland auxiliary Bishop Michael Gielen, had raised just over \$29,000 as of February 18.

Bishop Lowe installed as twelfth Bishop of Auckland

by MICHAEL OTTO

“Christ — he must be our first word. But he is the Word. Christ calls us, Christ empowers us and Christ sends us.”

That is how Bishop Stephen Lowe started his homily at the Mass, celebrated at St Patrick’s Cathedral on February 19, during which he was installed as the twelfth Bishop of Auckland.

Bishop Lowe finished his homily similarly, saying “And I end where we began, with Christ. He must not only be our first word, he must be our last word, as the diocese of Auckland. For Christ calls us all. Christ empowers us all, and Christ sends us out to be the one body of Christ”.

In between, Bishop Lowe preached on several topics, including the fact that the office of bishop is filled by men with human limitations, the call to go out beyond our comfort zones, the diversity of Auckland diocese, the abuse scandal, and divisions in the Church.

“I will tell you a little secret about bishops,” Bishop Lowe told the congregation, which was limited in size under the red Covid-19 protection framework setting.

“We have limitations. We have our blindnesses, shortcomings and our sins,” Bishop Lowe said.

“We are often overwhelmed before the office that the Lord calls us to, and by the challenges that we have to face every day, and by the decisions that we have to make. We are not perfect, and not everything that we say or do is going to suit everyone.”

But he added that the office of bishop must be grounded in humility.

“[A]nd . . . our exercising of our office of bishop is going to be shaped by our relationship with our God, with you, the holy people of God.”

■ Perfectionism

Bishop Lowe reflected upon the fact that bishops, with all their imperfections, carry out their office today in an age of perfectionism.

But Christ is the one who works with imperfections.

“I have discovered this in my life. I have discovered how the Lord is patient with me, how he shapes me and changes me, as he calls me beyond myself to be more the person he calls me to be. I am a work in progress. I am on the journey, as we all are,” Bishop Lowe said.

“I hope the Lord will grace you to be patient with me, and give you the right words to challenge and critique me so that I don’t become enclosed in myself, but rather I become the person God calls me to be.”

Bishop Lowe pointed to the post-Resurrection encounter between Christ and Peter, which was described in the Gospel reading at the Mass. Peter had denied Jesus three times, but Jesus did not point fingers and make accusations. Rather, he called Peter and challenged him — Do you love me? Feed my sheep.

In biblical times, Bishop Lowe said, the shepherd looked after his sheep in difficult places, not the lush pastures that we have in New Zealand.

“And that is what Pope Francis reminds us is the place of the Church, the place of the peripheries. We are called out of the comfort of our bishops’ palaces, of our presbyteries, our comfortable parishes, and our everyday, normal way of doing things, and we are called to go out to uncomfortable places.”

Bishop Lowe noted how diverse the post-Pentecost church was in the reading from Acts.

“Isn’t that a reflection of this diocese of Auckland? We are called to be, together, the Spirit-filled diocese of Auckland, where each of us, the whole people of God, are actively speaking about the marvels of God, the way his Spirit is working in us.”

■ Abuse

The Spirit animates the Body of Christ, which is called to unity. But this is a body that, at times, is wounded and hurting, Bishop Lowe said.

“St Paul writes that, if one part is hurt, all parts are hurt with it.

“And I want to acknowledge, with deep shame, those who have suffered abuse from members of the Church, particularly from clergy or religious. For those people who experienced that, and live with the ongoing trauma of that abuse. Abuse in any form is not of God. It has no place in the Church, it has no place in our world. If there is to be any hope of healing, the Church must confront its past with guilt and shame, and be committed to work with survivors to facilitate justice, healing and,



Bishop Stephen Lowe sits in the bishop’s cathedra at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Auckland, with Deacon Ben Pomare (left) and Deacon Nimo Ponifasio (Photo: CDA)

please God, peace.

“We must be committed to creating a safe church. And we must be committed hearing into Marylands School (and related institutions in Christchurch) at the Royal Commission into Abuse in Care. There were multiple accounts of terrible abuse committed against vulnerable children at these institutions.

In his homily, Bishop Lowe also reflected on divisions in the Church and in the world.

“But Christ prays that we be one, and that must always be our work. But in this moment of time, this providential moment of time, of challenge and difficulties, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, invites us to become a synodal Church, a church that listens to each other, and that reflects together, as the whole people of God. A Church that, as it listens and reflects, with each other, senses the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who takes us to new places and to new solutions, as we face the challenges of our time.

“As your new bishop, I ask you to be a synodal church.”

“I need and want to listen to you, so that you may assist me, in being the shepherd of the diocese, that I am called to be.”

■ Predecessor

Bishop Lowe also paid tribute to his predecessor as Bishop of Auckland, Bishop Patrick Dunn.

“You have been a tireless worker of the Lord who called you to priesthood and who called you to be the Bishop of Auckland. And he now calls you to new possibilities as a bishop,” Bishop Lowe said.

“The diocese of Auckland has seen how the Lord empowered you. May the seeds that you have sown in your 27 years as Bishop of Auckland, and the new seeds you will undoubtedly sow, bear a rich harvest for the coming of the Kingdom.”

Earlier, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Novatus Rugambwa, read out the letter of appointment from Pope Francis. This was also read in Te Reo Māori by Deacon Ben Pomare from Hamilton diocese, and was shown to the congregation and clergy. Archbishop Rugambwa also read out a message of the Holy See from Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples. Cardinal Tagle warmly praised Bishop Dunn.

“ . . . [M]any thanks from the Holy See for your strenuous episcopal ministry to the people of God in this diocese of Auckland for 27 years. You have proved to be a tireless and vigorous shepherd of this portion of the people of God. Your solicitude for the Church and your zeal for the salvation of souls have not been confined in the territory of this diocese. They have rather extended their effects to the rest of Aotearoa and in the whole region of Oceania, particularly in the numerous dioceses in the Pacific Islands.”

The Holy See thanked all people of Auckland diocese for having collaborated with Bishop Dunn in exercising his duties.

“The Holy See and the Church in this region will

continually ask, not only for your prayers, but also for your advice in many issues.”

At one point during the installation ceremony, the congregation and clergy gave Bishop Dunn a standing ovation. Bishop Dunn had given his pectoral cross to Bishop Lowe and also guided him to his new cathedra. Both the cross and the cathedra came from the first Bishop of Auckland, Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier.

Thanks were also given by several speakers, including Bishop Lowe, to the people of the diocese of Hamilton, for the way they had worked with their bishop and for their generosity in letting him go north.

■ Bishops

At the end of the Mass, Bishop Lowe thanked Archbishop Rugambwa for his presence, saying that, when the nuncio is here, Pope Francis is here. Bishop Lowe also said to Archbishop Rugambwa, “Can I please ask you to work hard to find a great bishop for Hamilton. I think Palmerston North and Christchurch are looking for one too.”

Among the concelebrants at the Mass, which was livestreamed for those unable to be present, were also Cardinal John Dew, Archbishop Paul Martin, SM, Bishop Michael Gielen, and Bishop Denis Browne.

Bishop Lowe also acknowledged the presence of Rev. Anne Mills, Dean of Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral in Auckland, and the Anglican Bishop of Auckland, Bishop Ross Bay.

“I am looking forward to coming to your cathedral, and I am looking forward to you coming back to our cathedral, as we continue to work together on the journey of unity,” Bishop Lowe said.

The installation included a Māori welcome by Manuel Beazley, Auckland diocese vicar for Māori, and the response was given by Deacon Pomare from Hamilton.

■ More photos from the installation are on the back cover.

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Ponsonby pōwhiri for new Auckland bishop

by MICHAEL OTTO

A special sign was given to Bishop Stephen Lowe when he was preparing to leave Hamilton and head north to be the Twelfth Bishop of Auckland.

Bishop Lowe told people at a pōwhiri in the grounds of the Pompallier Diocesan Centre in Ponsonby on February 18 that he was leaving Hamilton with great sadness, but he always tried to do what the Church asked of him.

"As I was packing up my car yesterday, I was packing up my last load of clothes to put in the back of the car — there was just the vestments to go — and I heard this 'cheep, cheep, cheep' in the house. There was a piwakawaka (fantail) in there. For me, the piwakawaka is always significant, they always appear when something important is happening in my life, or when I am really stressed or worried about something.

"I was thinking, how am I going to get it out of the house now? But the piwakawaka had it all under control. It flew straight ahead of me and

out the door — and I thought this is where I am meant to be [going]."

Bishop Lowe said that his motto is "The Lord is My Shepherd", and that he believes Christ goes before him.

During the pōwhiri, speeches were made and songs were sung by tangata whenua and by those who accompanied Bishop Lowe from Hamilton. After this, Bishop Lowe was "handed over" to Auckland.

Bishop Patrick Dunn welcomed his successor to Auckland. He pointed to a Kauri tree growing in the grounds, noting that it had been planted in 1938 to mark 100 years since the arrival of Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier in this country.

"So for the past 30 years or so, I have been watching it growing, and it has been growing. Now Bishop Steve, you can watch it."

Bishop Dunn explained the historic significance of the site, which was purchased by Bishop Pompallier in the 1850s.

"And now Bishop Steve, we welcome you as the eleventh successor of Bishop Pompallier, as our bishop, as my bishop. And so I welcome you



Bishop Stephen Lowe and Hamilton visitors are called onto the Pompallier Diocesan Centre grounds (Photo: CDA)

with great pleasure . . . and I assure you manuhiri (visitors) from that diocese [Hamilton], we will look after him. We will take care of him — so don't come and pinch him!"

Bishop Lowe said it is a great privilege for him to be Bishop Dunn's successor, which is "very humbling, because you are so loved, and you are a great father of this diocese".

Bishop Lowe truly loved being Hamilton's bishop

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Bishop Stephen Lowe has told the laity, religious and priests of Hamilton diocese that they have helped shape and form him as a bishop.

In a February 13 pastoral letter titled "So I leave my boats behind", written to his brothers and sisters in the Lord in Hamilton diocese, Bishop Lowe stated that, during his seven years as bishop there, "there have been so many encounters and moments that have made my heart soar", and he expressed his thanks

for that.

Bishop Lowe, who is now apostolic administrator of Hamilton diocese, as well as Bishop of Auckland, wrote that he had "truly loved being your bishop. I have loved you, the clergy, religious and people of the Diocese of Hamilton. Thank you for the blessing you have been to me, and for all the encouragement, challenge, support and joy you have been".

"Through you, I have learnt so much more of the wonder and wonders of our God of love," he added.

In the letter, Bishop Lowe noted that "there is no such thing as a perfect bishop as there is no such thing as a perfect person".

"I have tried my best within the limits of my gifts, limitations, foibles, faults and personal sinfulness," he said.

Bishop Lowe offered his sincere apology for any hurts or other impacts that happened as a result of his shortcomings. Such hurts and impacts were not intentional, he said.

He reminded people of the dio-

cese that they might still see him occasionally in his role as apostolic administrator until a new bishop is appointed for the diocese.

"Please pray for the process that will lead to the appointment of a new Bishop of Hamilton," he wrote.

At the end of the letter, Bishop Lowe asked people for prayers, and promised his prayers for the people of the diocese. He wrote that, as he moved, he would "hold the Hamilton diocese within my heart, grateful for the blessings I have received with and from you".

Treaty of Waitangi: looking back to look forward

by ROWENA OREJANA

Learning and unlearning some of the things we know about the Treaty of Waitangi will be important in "recovering the truth about our shared history".

This point was made by Auckland diocese Vicar for Māori Manuel Beazley at a korero on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which he and religious education advisor Brendan Bergin presented on February 3. The event was titled "Me titiro whakamuri, kia anga whakamua" (Looking back, Looking forward), and it was facilitated by the Bicultural Committee of Auckland diocese's Justice and Peace Commission.

Mr Beazley clarified five misconceptions about the treaty, the most prevalent of which is probably the concept of the treaty being an agreement between Māori and Pakeha.

"We often fall into this trap of making Te Tiriti about race or ethnicity," he said. "In fact, [it is] an agreement between two sovereign nations, two sovereign peoples, two sovereign entities."

He said the English monarch at the time recognised the confederation of the chiefs who signed the document as sovereigns of this land.

Mr Beazley also debunked the notion that the Māori chiefs had no idea what they were signing. He pointed out that no one would sign anything without having some idea of what it is they are signing.

"What is more likely the case? Māori were misled as to what they were signing. What Māori thought they were signing and what the Crown thought Māori [were] agreeing to were two different things," he said.

"Was Governor Hobson also misled? Possibly. There was a lot of misunderstanding right at the very beginning. Therein lies one of the great

problems of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, [which] is the understanding of what was actually being agreed to and how to reconcile those differences," he said.

Mr Beazley also said that the view that past injustices have nothing to do with the present — and that we can't change history — is not entirely true.

"While we, ourselves, don't have anything to do with the injustices, many of our institutions and many of our systems have [their] basis [in] the past systems that have allowed the injustice to occur. So, to say that the past injustices have nothing to do with us is not completely true. We can't change them, but we can be responsible for how we go into the future," he said.

Mr Bergin talked about the traditions in the Catholic Church and how the Church can deepen its commitment to biculturalism.

In discussing the bicultural path, Mr Bergin drew from the statements of Bishop Takuira Mariu, SM, the first Māori bishop, as well as those of St John Paul II and Pope Francis.

"[Bishop Mariu] . . . made a very important statement in relation to knowledge and love of God, and proclaiming God's kingdom in a way that is deeply Māori and that is unique to Māori," Mr Bergin said. "It's important that we keep that in mind in the context of our Christian and Catholic tradition."

Both St John Paul and Pope Francis also reminded people that there is a rich culture here before the arrival of the Church, and that it is important to restore that on a spiritual level within the Church by entering into a dialogue with an intentional listening to the priorities of indigenous people, the tangata whenua".

Mr Bergin suggested four principles to deepen this bicultural relationship; firstly, by remembering that Te Tiriti is "a charter for two peoples

in one nation based on principles of covenant, partnership and participation".

"That requires us to empathise, to place ourselves in the shoes of another, and that can be a challenge at times," he said.

The second is looking at how we can do things better in our institutions that would better reflect that bicultural partnership.

Thirdly, particularly for educators, is having a culturally responsive pedagogy which means knowing the learners and connecting with whanau and allowing them representation.

The fourth principle is "a by Māori for Māori approach, which really encourages us to listen actively, to walk alongside, supporting those initiatives that we know are important for our Māori partners in Te Tiriti, in education and in the Church," Mr Bergin said.

Mr Beazley said that someone asked him why Te Reo Māori should be included in the liturgy when there are no Māori in that person's parish.

"My response to that is, the Church is bereft without some acknowledgement of our history, in particular, the history of tangata whenua. And so, including elements of Te Reo Māori in our Masses, in our liturgies, would be an acknowledgement of that, regardless of whether there are Māori in the parishes or not," he said.

He encouraged everyone to explore the treaty and our shared history in their own context, and find a way to move forward justly and equitably.

"One of the things about Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as it was espoused in 1840, is that those who came to sign and those who came to agree to it dreamt of endless possibilities. It's my opinion that we can reclaim that sense of endless possibilities in our relationship, in our partnership," he said.



Fr Peter Michael Ryan, MHM (Pā Mikaere)



Fr Emile Frische, MHM, incenses Pā Ryan's casket

End of era as Pā Mikaere Ryan farewelled

by MICHAEL OTTO

After nearly seven decades working in the Māori mission, the earthly journey of Fr Peter Michael Ryan, MHM (Pā Mikaere) is over, and he has been laid to rest in the far north.

Pā Ryan died at his home in Mt Eden, Auckland, on February 9. He was 93 years old. A funeral Mass was celebrated at the Hato Petera College chapel on Auckland's North Shore on February 12, with Bishop Michael Gielen as principal celebrant, before Pā Ryan's body was taken north to Waitāruke in Northland. A requiem Mass was celebrated on February 13 at Sacred Heart Of Jesus/Te Ngākau Tapu o Hehu church, at Waitāruke, with Fr Anthony Trenwith as celebrant. Pā Ryan's body was interred at Te Puna Roimata, Waitāruke.

At the Mass at Hato Petera, Auckland Bishop Emeritus Patrick Dunn said in a homily that Waitāruke was the first placement for Pā Ryan in Aotearoa New Zealand, although he only spent a few weeks there before moving to Panguru and then Rotorua. Pā Ryan's ministry saw him teach for 15 years at Hato Petera College, and he would later work in Hamilton and elsewhere in Auckland.

"As we know, he was an excellent teacher and a scholar," Bishop Dunn said. "He was very down to earth. But he also had that scholarly side to him."

According to the Mill Hill Missionaries' website, Pā Ryan attained a BA in Te Reo Māori and anthropology from the University of Auckland, "qualifications he used to publish the 'Reed Dictionary of Modern Māori', for which he was awarded a Gold Certificate for being a Best Seller in New Zealand".

Bishop Dunn recalled Pā Ryan telling him that being a Pākehā was an advantage in putting together such a dictionary. It meant that no-one could accuse him of bias in favour of his own iwi.

Originally from England, Pā Ryan was one of 30 men ordained in Olympia Hall in London on

July 12, 1953. According to the book "Mill Hill and Māori Mission", by W. Tuerlings, MHM, published in 2003, Pā Ryan learned on the evening of his ordination day that he would "be assigned to the Auckland Māori Mission".

"I was a bit stunned, because I had studied for all the other missions in the charge of Mill Hill — India, Philippines, Uganda, Kenya, Congo and even the Falkland Islands, but somehow I had only a very cursory idea about New Zealand," he wrote in the book.

He arrived in Wellington in January, 1954, aboard the Zuider Kruis Dutch emigrant boat. Bishop Dunn noted that the Mill Hills had two "Father Peters" in New Zealand at the time, and so the order's leadership in this country decided that Pā Ryan would be known by his second name, "Michael". Thus, "Pā Mikaere" was born.

Bishop Dunn said that, all told, Pā Ryan worked for 46 years "on the mission here in Tamaki, in the city. All during those years — he loved making books — he produced all kinds of hymn books, prayer books, prayers for tangihanga, prayers for Mass, every sort of prayer book".

Pā Ryan "became the parish priest of Te Whanau Tapu parish in his 80s. And he was very proud of that. When most parish priests have retired, he was being appointed. I said he was a late developer", Bishop Dunn laughed.

The bishop also recalled Pā Ryan's memorable weekly newsletters, which included, among other things, jokes and the Lotto numbers. Bishop Dunn said he would often use Pā Ryan's jokes in the bishop's own newsletter to priests.

Another significant feature of the newsletters were the Scripture passages.

Bishop Dunn noted that, at age 23, Pā Ryan had taken a perpetual oath, "for the rest of his life, to be a missionary, and then was appointed to Aotearoa New Zealand, and devoted his heart and soul to the proclamation of the Word of God here".

"That is his legacy to us — a missionary. Pā spent all those years sowing the seeds of the Word of God for us, in our hearts."

Bishop Dunn also paid tribute to the other Mill Hill Missionaries who had worked in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In announcing Pā Ryan's death, the Mill Hill website article stated that "Peter, up until almost the end of his life, continued to make translations of sacred Scripture, especially the Sunday Readings for all three cycles.

"As Peter approached his twenty-fifth year of priesthood, the superior general at the time wrote, 'You have every reason to feel deeply grateful to God for all he has enabled you to do for him and the Maori people. You have kept pace with the changing pattern of Māori life. You stand out among the brethren

for the very special contribution you have made.'

"In his 69 years as a missionary amongst the Māori people," the website article continued, "Peter grew to love the people, their language and culture, in the beautiful country of New Zealand."

He received the papal medal Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice in 2019.

The Tuerlings book also mentioned the significant role Pā Ryan played during the visit to New Zealand of St John Paul II in 1986.

"... when the Pope visited Aotearoa, it was my voice that taught him the Māori prayers and greetings. I was against doing it when I was first asked by Father [Patrick] Brady, who was in charge of that side of things. I gave names and phone numbers of real Māori people to contact, but in the end when the deadline drew near, he still had not managed to get a proper Māori speaker, so I did the job for him sounding as Māori as I could. The Pope's Māori was pretty good I thought, better than a lot of New Zealand priests. I still chuckle when I think of the Pope listening to my voice whispering in his ear."

Speaking after a Mass at Te Unga Waka marae in Auckland in 2013, marking his 60th jubilee of ordination as a priest, Pā Ryan joked that, "The older I get, the better I was".



Pā Ryan's casket is taken from the Hato Petera College chapel

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Responding to the abuse crisis

Let's face it, Catholics want to pretend the abuse crisis never happened. When I have heard Catholics talk about this, they say things like, "It was only a small number of priests", "They should never have been admitted to the priesthood in the first place", or "We have paid them enough already", "Well, they don't represent me".

We do everything except acknowledge the pain that so many have been through. When the abuse crisis first broke in 2002, it was believed 1 per cent of priests sexually abused children, now the

Michael Hempseed

number is at least 8 per cent worldwide, and this will only grow as more and more evil from the past is uncovered.

We must acknowledge that deep and long-lasting pain and anguish.

When Christ was alive, his whole ministry was dedicated to healing in some way. If we are to follow Christ, we must take up that role of healing too. To offer true healing, we cannot deny what has happened; we must bravely acknowledge the full extent of it. If ever someone tells you they have experienced abuse at the hands of the Church, the first thing you should say is something like "That is truly dreadful", not "It was a long time ago", not "But not all priests are like that".

Scientists have discovered that, if people have PTSD, they relive the terrible events over and over again, not as a distant memory, but as though it is happening again.

Yes, it may have been a long time ago, but many people live with memories every single day.

When we say things such as "It was only a small number of priests", we make it harder for people to speak up. We are saying that abuse was rare and it hardly ever happened, when we know this was not the case at all.

I would also like to point out that it is not just priests who have caused harm; there have been nuns who have sexually abused people, Church employees who raped others, seminarians that

have been raped, this has all happened in New Zealand and not some far off country.

Acknowledging the pain does not mean forcing people into forgiveness. Too often toxic forgiveness is an excuse for allowing evil to continue, or an excuse for us to not have to deal with the pain.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Samaritan had no responsibility for the wounded man, yet he took it upon himself to help. We may not have been responsible for the abuse crisis, but as Catholics we must take responsibility for those who were hurt. I hear many Catholics complain about the money that is paid to survivors.

The Good Samaritan paid for the man at the inn. Catholics should not begrudge payouts to survivors, but instead we should welcome them as a way to partially heal the evil that occurred in God's name.

It's not just about money, as many survivors

want to be acknowledged and cared for. I ask myself with a few exceptions, where have been the outreaches to survivors? Have you ever heard a priest give a homily where they welcome survivors of abuse to come forward, listen to what they need and respond to that?

I was never abused myself, but as a Catholic I feel I have a deep responsibility to try to heal the pain caused by unspeakable evil that happened within the Church.

The Body of Christ is broken, the shame of the abuse crisis is unimaginable. Denying the horror of the crisis only adds more wounds and more pain. The road to healing will be a long and slow one. It must begin with the full acknowledgement from all Catholics about the horror of what has happened.

Michael Hempseed is a Christchurch-based behavioural expert



Photo: Pixabay

Ronald Rolheiser

When our world is falling apart

The early years of my adulthood and priesthood were spent teaching theology at Newman Theological College in Edmonton, Canada. I was young, full of energy, loved teaching, and was discovering the joys of ministry. For the most part, these were good years.

However, they weren't always easy. Restlessness and inner chaos find us all. The demands of ministry, the tensions inside community, the obsessions I'm forever prone to, the not-infrequent departure of cherished friends from the community, and the constant movement of people through my life, occasionally left me in emotional chaos, gasping for oxygen, struggling to sleep, wondering how I was going to still my soul again.

However, I had a little formula to help handle this. Whenever the chaos got bad, I would get into my car and drive four hours to our family farm just across the border in Saskatchewan. My family still lived in the house I'd grown up in, and I was able to eat at the same table I'd eaten at as a child, sleep in the same bed I'd slept in as a boy, and walk the same ground I'd walked while growing up. Usually, it didn't take long for home to do its work. I'd only need a meal or an overnight stay, and the chaos and heartache would subside; I'd begin to feel steady again.

Coming home didn't cure the heartache, but it gave the heart the care it needed. Somehow home always worked.

Today, the same kind of emotional chaos and heartache can still unsettle me on occasion and leave me unsure of who I am, of the choices I've made in life, and of who and what to trust. However, I cannot drive to my childhood home

anymore, and need to find the steadying that going home once gave me in new ways. It isn't always apparent where to find this, even amidst a good community, a still supportive family, loving friends, and a wonderful job. Home can be elusive on a restless night. What one needs to steady the heart isn't always easy to access. Once you've left home, sometimes it's hard to find your way back there again.

So, what do I do now when I need to go home and retouch my roots to steady myself? Sometimes a trusted friend is the answer; sometimes it's a call to a family member; sometimes it's a family that has become family to me, sometimes it's a place in prayer or in nature, sometimes it's immersing myself in work, and sometimes I can't find it at all and have to live with the chaos until, like a bad storm, it blows over.

Through the years, I've discovered that a special book can take me home in the same way as driving there once did. Different people find home in different places. One of the books that does this for me, almost without fail, is *The Story of a Soul* by St Therese of Lisieux. Not surprising, it's the story of a recessive journey, the story of Therese's own effort at recapturing what her house, home and family once gave her. But the recessive journey in itself is not what gives this book (which I highly recommend for anyone whose heart is aching in a way that unsettles the soul) such a special power. Many autobiographies unsettle more than they settle. This one soothes your soul.

However, remembering alone doesn't necessarily care for the heart, and sometimes our memories of home and childhood carry more pathology and

pain than steadying and healing. Not everyone's home was safe and nurturing. Tragically, one's initial home can also be the place where our trust and steadiness are irrevocably broken, as is the case often in sexual and other forms of abuse. I was fortunate. My first home gave me trust and faith. For those who were not as lucky, the task is to find a home, a place or a person, that caresses a wounded soul.

What makes for a home that caresses the soul?

Home is where you are safe. It's also the place where you experience security and trust, and where that steadiness enables you to believe in the things of faith. I used to drive four hours for a meal or a night's sleep in order to find that. Today, I need to make that recessive journey in other ways.

It's a journey we all need to make in times of chaos and deep restlessness in our lives, namely, to find a place, a space, a friend, a family, a house, a table, a bed, a book, or something that grounds us again in security, trust, stability, and faith.

Of course, there are headaches and heartaches for which there is no cure; but the soul doesn't need to be cured, only properly cared for. Our task is to go home, to find those people, places, prayers and books that caress our souls at those times when our world is falling apart.

(Partial rewrite of a column from 2006)

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com Follow on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser/

Time of waiting is time for prayer

Being in the red Covid Protection Framework setting involves a lot of waiting. We wait for many things, such as the daily case numbers. We have waited for an end to the protest at Parliament over vaccine mandates. We wait to see loved ones return from overseas. We wait to move back to “orange”, or even “green”.

As Catholics, not least among the things waited for is being able to celebrate the Eucharist as full parishes again, with no restrictions on numbers, and with signs that mean what they say — all are welcome in this place.

This time of waiting is a bit like another Advent — which is a season of expectant waiting. But, unlike Advent, when we know how many days there are until Christmas, now we don't know exactly how long it will be until we can have fully functioning parishes again. We hope and pray it will not be too far away.

In such times, when people are dispensed from attending Sunday Mass, and many do not do so, there is a danger of a spiritual malaise creeping in.

Pope Francis reminded those at his Angelus prayer on the first Sunday of Advent in the new liturgical year that the answer lies in vigilance. As Jesus said in Luke 21 — “Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy . . . Be vigilant at all times and pray”.

Francis said that Christ's words “show that vigilance is tied to alertness: be alert, do not get distracted, that is, stay awake!

Editorial

Vigilance means this: not to allow our hearts to become lazy or our spiritual life to soften into mediocrity. Be careful because we can become ‘sleepy Christians’ — and we know there are many Christians who are asleep, who are anaesthetised by spiritual worldliness — Christians without spiritual fervour, without intensity in prayer, without enthusiasm for mission, without passion for the Gospel; Christians who always look inwards, incapable of looking to the horizon. And this leads to ‘dozing off’: to move things along by inertia, to fall into apathy, indifferent to everything except what is comfortable for us. This is a sad life going forward this way since there is no happiness”.

Francis described apathy as “a great enemy of the spiritual life and also of Christian life”.

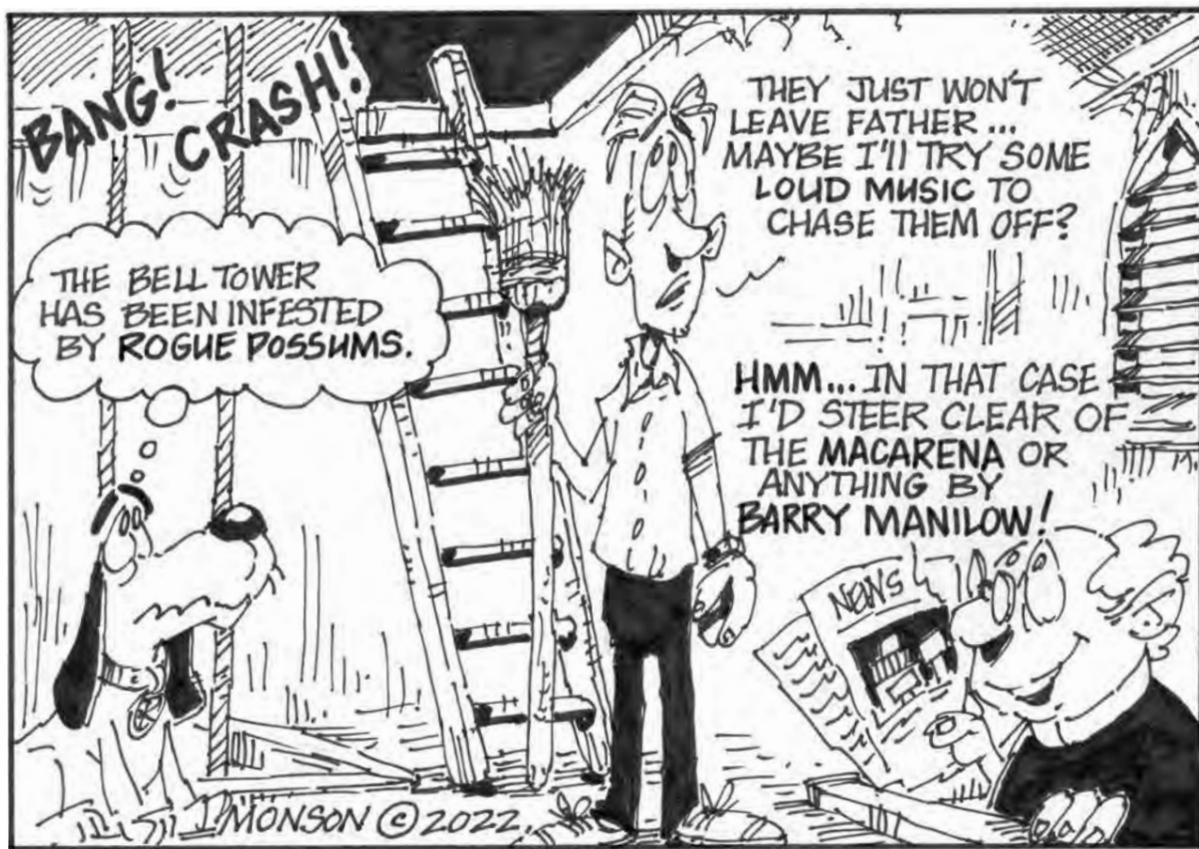
“Apathy is a type of laziness that makes us slide into sadness, it takes away zest for life and the will to do things. It is a negative spirit that traps the soul in apathy, robbing it of its joy. It starts with sadness, sliding downwards so that there is no joy.”

The Pope encouraged people to pray, because “prayer is what keeps the lamp of the heart lit. This is especially true when we feel that our enthusiasm has cooled down. Prayer re-lights it, because it brings us back to God, to the centre of things. Prayer reawakens the soul from sleep and focuses it on what matters, on the purpose of existence”.

In the same talk, Francis mentioned another issue that is prevalent today — fear. Jesus did not promise that everything would be OK, that bleak and distressing times and events would not happen. But Jesus told people not to be afraid. The reason is not that trials and tribulations would vanish — but rather that Jesus will come again, as he promised.

Francis suggested a simple phrase to repeat often during Advent times. It would also be useful in our time of waiting now. It is “Come, Lord Jesus.” Francis suggested repeating it over and over. We could make saying this a habit, over and over, at a time when our gathering as parish communities is limited. We could say it in our cars, we could say it in our homes, we could say it at the shops, we could say it at our beaches, we could say it pretty much anywhere. “Come, Lord Jesus.” “Come, Lord Jesus.” “Come, Lord Jesus.” Or if we want to use one word only “Maranatha”. Francis called it a “prayer of the heart”. Let us lift up our hearts — to the Lord.

The Habit



Letters

Schools

With respect to Dr Kevin Shore, CEO, New Zealand Catholic Education Office, the biggest issue at our schools with Omicron isn't the loss of staff to illness (NZ Catholic, February 13). It is the creeping loss of faith mission, Catholic discernment, and special character of our Catholic schools. Covid has tested all forms of leadership in every sector. My governance roles currently cover 2700 staff and their livelihoods, including 400 here in New Zealand. The Omicron challenge allows Catholic leaders to deliver in accordance with our beatitudes, and with Christ as the foundation of every decision.

Discrimination concerning students attending school due to Covid vaccination is prohibited, however that hasn't stopped discrimination concerning students in other forms. For example, in December, 2021, Catholic colleges in Auckland signed up to the blanket mandate for intra-school sports (non-curriculum sports) by College Sport Auckland, to be open only to teenagers with a My Vaccine Pass. The Covid Traffic Light system (and updated Sports NZ guidance) allows organisations to adapt. I've heard many Catholic education leaders now say it is too hard logistically to allow students without a My Vaccine Pass to participate in intra-school

“gatherings”. We have a situation where some Catholic students are unable to fulfil their Catholic ethos in sports (Can. 803.1) because it's “too hard”. Continuity plans will come and go with Covid variants. Societal healing will take longer.

Peter Fa'afiu, Pukekohe.

Orders

NZ Catholic (January 30) reported the views of the “Malines Conversations Group” regarding the validity of Anglican ordination, which Pope Leo XIII declared to be invalid.

The group says that Pope Leo XIII's statement “does not accord with the realities into which the Spirit has led us now”. They describe these “realities” as “ecumenical collaboration” and “gestures of recognition” between Catholic and Protestant churches.

They want to find the right “theological and canonical language” to gloss over the question of the validity of ordination in separated churches.

But no attempt at equivocation can avoid the fact that Protestant churches (including those in England) explicitly denied a sacrificing priesthood, as well as the real bodily presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

In addition, the very backbone of the teaching authority of the Church, the Apostolic Succession,

subsists in the validity of the sacrament of Holy Orders.

Patrick Cronin, Nelson.

Right to Life

Richard Harwood, (NZ Catholic, February 13), commendably encourages support for Defend NZ, which aims to cope with the legalised euthanasia environment.

I am a member of Right to Life, and believe that the community should also be aware that Right to Life has been actively opposing euthanasia since 1995 through the lobbying of parliamentarians and submissions to select committees.

It was involved in extensive lobbying at Parliament to contribute to the defeat of Michael Laws' Death with Dignity bill in 1995, and in defeating Peter Brown's Death with Dignity bill in 2003.

Right to Life is committed to opposing the implementation of the anti-life End of Life Choice Act, and will continue to challenge and expose this evil legislation which is a threat to the most vulnerable members of our community. We will not rest until this act is repealed.

Right to Life encourages all those who are committed to upholding the sanctity of life to join us in promoting a culture of life and opposing a culture of death.

S.J. Cleaver, Christchurch.

Masculinity

Recently, a friend sent me a clipping of a column from an overseas Catholic newspaper about what it means to be a Catholic man today. It made the remarkable claim that some Catholic male “influencers” today settle on images from the 1950s as part of their branding.

This involves things like wearing a tweed suit, holding a pipe, drinking the right whisky, quoting G.K. Chesterton and more.

The column went on to make some good points about starting the “quest for masculinity” by correctly ordering one's life with the assistance of God's grace.

But that image of affecting to be a latter-day Tolkien brought to mind something I once read about him. The character “Sam”, who proved so pivotal in the quest to destroy the ring in LOTR, was based in part on Tolkien's memory of the English privates and batmen who served with him in World War I. He stated in a letter that he recognised these ordinary men as “so far superior to myself”.

Maybe that is food for thought for those who would affect the “Oxford don” model of Catholic masculinity.

In LOTR, it was Sam who arguably showed the greatest strength of character, when facing grave danger, by voluntarily giving up the ring.

John Cowen, Auckland.

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It's time to make connections

Recent events have reverberated with claims that the climate crisis is “the defining issue of our time”, “the biggest threat the human race has ever faced” etc. It's true, of course, if we're looking only at symptoms. Surely the underlying causes that create such a crisis, prolong it, and make it harder to fix, are a bigger problem! But that comes down to human attitudes and behaviour, and that is a moral/spiritual problem. Twenty years ago, St John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew I put it this way:

“The problem is not simply economic and technological; it is moral and spiritual. A solution at the economic level can be found only if we undergo, in the most radical way, an inner change of

P.J. Cullinane

heart, which can lead to a change of lifestyle and sustainable patterns of consumption and production. A genuine conversion in Christ will enable us to change the way we think and act.” (*Common Declaration*, 2002).

So long as the moral/spiritual dimension is not noticed and named, the solution is sought only at a political level, with the shallowness of political bargaining, trade-offs and compromises — re-arranging the deck chairs.

This shallowness also results in inconsistency; it neglects the fact that environmental damage and social damage go hand-in-hand. Because of the way everything in nature is connected, “We are faced, not with two separate crises, one environmental, and the other social, but with one complex crisis, which is both social and environmental.” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, 138, 139). Ten years ago, Pope Benedict asked: “How can we separate the protection of the environment and the protection of human life . . . since the book of nature is one and indivisible?” (*Caritas in Veritate*, 51). Failure to respect this unity results in “tendentious analyses which neglect parts of reality. At times this attitude exists side-by-side with a ‘green’ rhetoric”. (*LS*, 49).

A further consequence of not recognising the moral/spiritual character of ecological, social and economic distortions is to look for someone else to blame - scapegoating! History shows how we have treated supposed witches and heretics in times of crisis. Today, those not coping well with reality often try to avoid it by recourse to conspiracy theories, and blaming people in authority, some-

times with rage and threats; and, of course, bizarre apocalyptic preaching (often from fundamentalist sources in the USA).

In the way that one thing leads to another, false ideologies don't necessarily start at the sharp end of the spectrum. A recent documentary on “The Making of a Nazi” featured the atrocities and mass murders carried out under Heinrich Himmler, and then it recalled that he started as “the champion of organic farming and herbal medicine, promoter of handicraft and new age mysticism, the radical environmentalist . . . who valued nature more highly than humanity . . .”.

There is no need for predictions of the end-time to explain our crises. The devaluation of human lives is occurring in “ordinary time”, and in all the ways we “normalise” various distortions, and hardly notice we are doing it.

The marketplace has many examples of unethical practices deemed normal and acceptable. Family violence has been called “New Zealand's hidden pandemic”, even before we include its inter-generational consequences. And it is deemed a ‘right’ to be able to take human lives - at their most vulnerable - sometimes for no better reason than someone else's convenience, turning a blind eye to what the sciences clearly teach concerning the newly-conceived human being.

The pandemic has done us a good turn by showing up radical individualism for what it is - not something to be proud of after all. Indifference to the needs and well-being of others flows directly out of a narrow focus on “my rights, my choice, my freedom . . .”. In the USA, this individualism is euphemised by simplistic comparisons with “collectivism” and “socialism”. Catholic social teaching combines the rights of all with the rights of each in its teaching on the “common good” and “subsidiarity”. Do we need to ask why our teaching has not been more credible and more effective?

In our own country, whatever happened to common sense that some people needed the courts to tell them that a government has the duty and the right to safeguard its citizens against false understandings of “freedom” and personal “rights”? We need look no further than the road code to know that “freedom” does not mean the right to do whatever we like, that concern for others is a component of civilised life, and that a government is within its rights to make rules that are mandatory. Try telling the judge that road rules should be optional; or that allowing only those with a licence to drive violates the freedom of those who want to drive without a licence. Or, just try thinking.

Ultimately, we have to own up to and confront the disorders where they start. The Second Vatican Council reminded us that “. . . imbalances under which the world labours are linked with the more basic imbalances rooted in the human heart. For within our hearts many elements wrestle with one another . . .” (GS 10). Nothing less than a “change of heart” is needed to liberate us from social, economic and ecological disorders.

To change from behaviours that are less human and inhuman to ways that are truly human presupposes a complete turn-around in the way we think and act. It means living “no longer for ourselves but for others”. It is the opposite of narrow self-interest and shallow thinking.

If the future is to be better than the past, we need to ask: where was the Church's influence when Western society developed this self-centred individualism? Richard Rohr's comment is telling:

“I suspect that Western individualism has done more than any other single factor to anaesthetise and even euthanise the power of the Gospel. Salvation, heaven, hell, worthiness, grace, and eternal life, all came to be read through the lens of the separate ego, crowding God's transformative power out of history and society . . . thus leaving us with almost no care for the earth, society, the outsider, or the full Body of Christ. This is surely one reason why Christianity found itself incapable of critiquing social calamities like Nazism, slavery and Western consumerism. For five hundred years, Christian teachers defined and redefined salvation almost entirely in individualistic terms, while well-disguised social evils — greed, pride, ambition, deceit, gluttony — moved to the highest levels of power and influence, even in our churches . . .” (*The Universal Christ*, 164).

He is describing individualism within the practice of the faith! Salvation, and the practices of faith, were too much about “God and me”, with exactly the social consequences Rohr identifies. Even lots of “me's” worshipping in the same space, though comforting for each “me”, does not constitute the “we” of Christian identity, Christian worship and Christian mission. That's because Christian identity, worship and mission call us out of that kind of privacy into the relationships and the dynamics of community — a people acting as one body — within the liturgy and within society. The need to overcome individualism (in liturgy and in life) is ultimately what the Second Vatican Council's liturgy reform was about.

Bishop Peter Cullinane is Bishop Emeritus of Palmerston North. This is the first part of a two-part article.

The lie projected onto the US National Shrine

As the annual National Prayer Vigil for Life was taking place on the inside of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington the evening of January 20, a pro-abortion group that for some reason calls itself “Catholic” was desecrating the building on the outside.

Through the darkness, pro-abortion organizers projected the following phrases on the shrine's 329-foot bell tower: “1 in 4 abortion patients is Catholic”, “Pro-choice Catholics you are not alone”, and “Pro-choice Catholics” in a cruciform shape.

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The group responsible, “Catholics for Choice”, succeeded in partially disrupting the events surrounding the January 21 March for Life, not only with its “light show” but with its subsequent “victory lap” on social media.

“I know that my faith teaches Catholics to honour personal conscience. And yet, the Catholic hierarchy seeks to polarise pro-choice Catholics and villainise people who make the moral choice to have abortions,” tweeted Ashley Wilson, the communications director for the organisation on January 20. “I am tired of feeling the shame and stigma for being a pro-choice Catholic. And I'm not here for people to judge my own personal relationship with God.”

Jamie Manson, the president of the organisation, followed up with a morning-after rationalisation, if there can be such a thing. “We went to the Basilica to draw attention to the fact that women in the Church have abortions,” she tweeted. “These

are likely the women who serve as his lectors and Eucharistic ministers; who sew his vestments and wash his dishes. To ignore them is to betray them.”

What a complete and utter lie. Catholic women who have had abortions are not villainised. They are not betrayed by their Church. They are beloved — by the Church and by the God whose love and mercy is infinite for each of his flawed children. Multiple ministries within the Church are available to post-abortive women, filled with empathetic staff and volunteers who offer necessary healing, support and counselling.

And the door to returning to full communion with the Church for our sisters (and our many brothers who also actively participate in abortion) is always open through the sacrament of reconciliation. The absolution received in the confessional leaves no shame or stigma behind. It brings only peace.

Furthermore, how many testimonies have been offered by Catholics who regret their abortions — stories that have been a moving part of the March for Life? These are women who would leap at the chance to be able to make a different decision, and they are not represented by the self-aggrandisement of a group that claims to represent all Catholics who have had abortions. They are not victims; they are strong, brave women of God.

“The true voice of the Church was only to be found within the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception last evening,” Cardinal Wilton Gregory of Washington said in a January 21 statement “There, people prayed and offered the Eucharist, asking God to restore a true reverence for all human life. Those whose antics projected words on the outside of the church building, demonstrat-



Supporters of legal abortion project a message on the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington on January 20, 2022, (CNS photo)

ed by those pranks that they really are external to the Church, and they did so at night — John 13:30.”

The cited Scripture passage — “So he took the morsel and left at once. And it was night” — refers to the very betrayal of Christ himself by Judas Iscariot. Indeed, it is not Catholics who have had abortions who are betrayed by the Church, but groups like “Catholics for Choice” that betray, not only the Church, but the God who commands his children not to kill. Thankfully, the same merciful Son that brings peace to the former can offer the same to the latter, should they but have the humility to ask.

Excerpts from an editorial titled: “The lie projected onto the National Shrine” published online on January 21 by *Our Sunday Visitor*, a national Catholic news weekly based in Huntington, Indiana. It was written by the editorial board. (CNS)

Steps to truly know God's will on vocational path

by MICHAEL OTTO

When you meet someone who is totally given over to God's will, they shine.

With St Teresa of Kolkata — they said that, when you walked into a room, you could see her from miles away, said Auckland auxiliary Bishop Michael Gielen to a gathering of 50 young people who were interesting in learning more about discerning a vocation.

"Brothers and sisters, do you want to shine? . . . Jesus wants you to shine," Bishop Gielen said at the February 3 event, titled "The Upper Room — New Year, New Yes; Finding Freedom in God's Will", held at the Shakespeare Tavern in Auckland city.

"We call it the Upper Room, because that is where the Holy Spirit comes," Bishop Gielen told the gathering, which was limited to 50 people, and a vaccine pass was required for entry. The event, which was organised by Fr Tony King-Archer and Cheryl Surrey, was also accessible online through Zoom.

Bishop Gielen warned his young audience that, if they wanted a "comfortable ride in this discernment of life journey, I have got bad news for you". But he added, "God has an idea, God has a plan and all he needs is your 'Yes', and he will do such beautiful things with it".

After discussing purpose in life, worship of God, and being in relationship with God, Bishop Gielen stressed the importance of living a "sacramental life".

"We are living this relationship [with Jesus] through the sacraments, through reconciliation. Through support of others, through the Eucharist. Through prayer. That is foundational — you cannot know God's will and you cannot have freedom if you do not have these things in your life."

After noting that "God is more interested in your growth than in your comfort", Bishop Gielen said that "God sends along people to make you grow. It is hard when Jesus takes the scissors. That is a vocation — to truly say to the Lord, help me grow. When we grow, we become the best person he has called us to be. When we are comfortable, we are like a fat cat in front of the fire. We get fatter and fatter, and we do less and less. Ultimately we die."

So Bishop Gielen set out several steps for people to take in order to "truly know God's will". He referred to actions in the life of Venerable Suzanne Aubert as examples of some of these steps.

First, be open to God's will. "That is the very first prayer that we have to pray. God, lead me where you will. . . . Guide me, show me what you want of me, and I am truly open. That is one of the courageous prayers you can ever pray. God will lead you anywhere."

Secondly, aspire to inner freedom, which involves acknowledging the obstacles that are in our hearts, such as "disordered attachments".

"Everyone is attached to something — some weakness, some particular disorder in their lives, whether it be substances, whether it be relationships, whether it be technology. We are attached. . . . That becomes our God," Bishop Gielen said.

He added that every plague that God sent to the



A screen shot of Bishop Michael Gielen during his talk

Egyptians represented a god that the Egyptians had in their society. God sent the plagues to show that he was stronger than their gods.

Bishop Gielen recommended prayer for the desire to be free from disordered attachments — "anything in the area that we have allowed to become our God".

"I know that takes time, we have got to pray for it. Especially serious sin. That is the first thing we own up to — we bring it to reconciliation, we bring it to God. If it has really got a hold of you, you give it to God. The more you do that, the more freedom you get."

Thirdly, Bishop Gielen challenged his audience to dare to dream. He shared aspects of his own vocational journey when, at a young age, he felt the desire to become a priest.

"What is your heart drawn to? Not your head, not your wallet, not your other areas. . . . Allow yourself to dream. . . . and be courageous enough to answer that dream."

Next, Bishop Gielen told the young people to be aware of where God might be "nudging them". Where is their "inner compass" heading?

"God cannot lead you if your sail is down. . . . The rudder doesn't work if the boat is stationary. . . . If you are not praying every day and prioritising your relationship with [God], he can't guide you, your sail is down. You have got to keep that sail up, which means being in regular relationship; even when it is not going well, you are talking to him."

When you are "learning how to do God's will", he said, "you will fall many times, and you feel you are going back to confession for the same thing over and over again".

Bishop Gielen referenced a saying by St Teresa of Avila, which he had found helpful personally — "when we are sinning, if we keep going back

to God, God will win. If we give up, evil will". She said it is where you put your effort.

The bishop encouraged his listeners to do research on what vocational options may be open to them. God might lead them to unexpected places, he said, sharing the example of one of his cousins who is now a Poor Clare Sister in Wales.

"Speaking selfishly, as a bishop of New Zealand, I don't want any of you to leave New Zealand and discern orders overseas, OK?" Bishop Gielen added. "That is my will, which doesn't count for much, but it is my will. God's will may be for you."

After people follow all these steps he had outlined, it is important that they feel joy, freedom and peace. While no one ever feels totally at peace when discerning a life-long commitment, the bishop said, it is important to discern the difference between nervousness and anxiety over this step and not feeling free in doing it, which may be a sign that a person does not have a vocation. Bishop Gielen advised discussion with trusted other people at this stage.

The finally, make a decision to follow the steps he had outlined, Bishop Gielen advised. "What is the old saying — no decision is a decision."

"What I found in my life . . . is that one decision leads to another one. God can't lead you to where he wants you to go, until you have taken that step, and then that step and then that step. He is waiting for you to take them, and you need the courage to say, yes Lord, I will do that for you."

New group offers advice, support for priests with role in Catholic schools

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic priests have a "critically important" role in Catholic schools and need a source of advice and support for that role, said Father Peter Stravinskis.

To that end, he has formed a new association called the Priestly Society of Christ Priest and Teacher.

The new organisation, he said, is a fraternal society for priests who currently serve in Catholic secondary schools, as well as for priests who have served in the apostolate, or who wish to do so in the future. Seminarians also are welcome, he added.

The new society he has started is "guided by the educational principles and example of St John Henry Newman", and "seeks to foster fraternity and promote best practices among those priests who serve the Church in this most privileged apostolate", explained Father Stravinskis, who is the founder and superior of the Priestly Society of St John Henry Cardinal Newman.

A priest's foremost responsibility is to be available for the liturgical and sacramental needs of students and school faculty, Father Stravinskis said, but they also are engaging with young people who as

high school students are at a time in their lives when they are most easily influenced by many factors, including peers and society at large.

The idea for the organization came out of the workshops the Catholic Education Foundation has sponsored "for seven summers on the role of the priest in today's Catholic school", said Father Stravinskis, who also is president of the foundation.

"One of the consistent demands has been the establishment of an association to provide mentoring and support for priests serving as chaplains, teachers or administrators in our high schools," he said.

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Called to Be Peacemakers

the
Lent
appeal
2022

THE LENT APPEAL on behalf of the New Zealand's Catholic Bishops Conference enables Caritas to continue working to heal and support those overcome by poverty and injustice around the world. The theme for the 2022 Lent Appeal is "Called to be Peacemakers", inspired by Pope Francis' recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* and referenced in the Beatitudes in Matthew's Gospel.

"Intermediaries seek to give everyone a discount, ultimately in order to gain something for themselves. The mediator, on the other hand, is one who retains nothing for himself, but rather spends himself generously until he is consumed, knowing that the only gain is peace. Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths of dialogue and not by constructing new walls." – Pope Francis, 2013: Address to the International Meeting for Peace organised by the Community of Sant'Egidio (30 September 2013), as quoted in *Fratelli Tutti*, para 283.



Called to be Peacemakers

The Lent 2022 theme, *Called to be Peacemakers*, is based on the Beatitude reference in Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God" and on the writing of Pope Francis, particularly his recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. As we journey towards Easter we also recall from Luke 23 – The Passion of Christ – where Christ becomes the ultimate Peacemaker and Reconciler for all people through the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection. In a time where societies are increasingly dividing into opposing camps where authentic communication and dialogue become difficult or impossible, it is vital that Christians play a positive and healing role as peacemakers who promote genuine and respectful dialogue – even on issues where people have sincere disagreement. Pope Francis says "we are called to be true 'people of dialogue', to cooperate in building peace not as intermediaries but as authentic mediators." We are called to be Peacemakers.



About the Lent Appeal

During Lent, New Zealand's Catholic Bishops invite us to provide for the needs of the poor through the work of Caritas. Money raised through the Bishops' Lent Appeal helps to fund both development and emergency relief work around the world.

The Lent Appeal provides funding which can be used where they are most needed. Funding from the Lent Appeal allows Caritas to respond quickly to emergency situations by having resources immediately available to those in urgent need.

We appreciate that not all those who wish to donate to the Lent Appeal will be able to do so. We invite everyone to join us in prayer for the work of Caritas and for the poor and vulnerable around the world.

"Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God" MATTHEW 5:9

Kua Karangatia Tātou hei Kaihohou i te Rongo



Lent in Schools 2022

The theme of "Called to be Peacemakers" is very timely for Lent 2022 as we reflect on the events of the past two years and the impact of the pandemic. The focus of the school resources for Lent is similar to the Caritas Lenten Reflection Programme used in parishes, arranged to focus on the Gospel readings for each Sunday during Lent and connect to the work of Caritas and the call of justice in our world.

Lessons have been made using PowerPoint and Google Slides and are designed for a range of levels for each week of Lent. The teacher guide provides a good summary of all the resources available and how they can be used. Other key resources like the action plan and the Way of the Cross Notes and Slides are also available.

All education resources are freely available online on the Caritas website and some elements are available in printed form. Every New Zealand Catholic school received a pack of materials at the start of December to help them utilise the Caritas resources for Lent 2022.

Get Involved through Lent Speaking

Are you interested in supporting the work of Caritas in an active way in your community?

We invite you to consider volunteering as a Lent speaker within your parish. As a Lent speaker, you will help to share information about Caritas with your parish and encourage others in your community to get involved.

Caritas will provide support and online training for interested speakers. We would love to hear from you!

If you would like to join our team of Lent speakers for 2022 or if you just want to find out more about Lent speaking, please contact Mareta Lavea Leitupo at maretall@caritas.org.nz or Joanna Viernes at joannav@caritas.org.nz.

Caritas Challenge

Registration is now open for Caritas Challenge 2022, a fun and engaging annual event for schools and youth groups around New Zealand.

Students and young people are challenged to Move It, Live It, Sweat It or Stop It for 24 hours to show solidarity with those living with poverty and injustice and to raise vital funds that will support Caritas programmes.

Participating groups can get involved in the Caritas Challenge at any time from **February to December 2022**.

For more information about the Caritas Challenge or to register your own group for 2022, please visit our website: www.caritas.org.nz/caritas-challenge.

Lent Reflection Programme

Each year, Caritas creates a Lenten Reflection Programme (LRP) to support parishes, communities, families and individuals as they pray and spend time with the Gospels during Lent.

The LRP includes prayers, Gospel readings and reflections, discussion materials and information about Caritas projects with a focus on helping us to live out our faith during the Lenten season. It is available in English, Te Reo Māori, Sāmoan and Tongan language versions.

LRP booklets can be ordered from the Caritas office for a small fee by calling **0800 10 22** or emailing caritas@caritas.org.nz. They can also be downloaded for free from the Caritas website: www.caritas.org.nz/lent.

Your Lent donations will save lives

Thank you to all those who have already generously supported our life-changing work by donating to previous Lent Appeals.

The ongoing support from generous donors enables us to continue our development, emergency relief, advocacy and education work around the world, including Aotearoa New Zealand. All funding received through the Lent Appeal is used where it is most needed.

Donate throughout the weeks of Lent, or make a one-off donation using the Lent Appeal weekly or single donation envelopes distributed by your parish.

Leave donation envelopes in your parish collection basket or post to Caritas: PO Box 12193, Wellington 6144.

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Retired Pope asks forgiveness in response to Munich abuse report

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — At the age of 94, retired Pope Benedict XVI has said that he knows he will soon stand before God's judgement, and he prayed that he would be forgiven for his shortcomings, including in handling allegations of clerical sexual abuse.

"Even though, as I look back on my long life, I can have great reason for fear and trembling, I am nonetheless of good cheer, for I trust firmly that the Lord is not only the just judge, but also the friend and brother who himself has already suffered for my shortcomings, and is thus also my advocate," he said.

In response on February 8 to a recent report on sexual abuse cases in the German Archdiocese of Munich and Freising, Pope Benedict also confirmed that an error in the testimony written on his behalf had been an oversight, and "was not intentionally willed and I hope may be excused".

"To me it proved deeply hurtful that this oversight was used to cast doubt on my truthfulness, and even to label me a liar," he said in a letter released by the Vatican on February 8.

However, the retired Pope, who headed the Munich Archdiocese from 1977 to 1982, emphasised his feelings of great shame and sorrow for the abuse of minors, and made a request for forgiveness to all victims of sexual abuse.

"I have had great responsibilities in the Catholic Church. All the greater is my pain for the abuses and the errors that occurred in those different places during the time of my mandate," Pope Benedict wrote.

"Each individual case of sexual abuse is appalling and irreparable," he said. "The victims of sexual abuse have my deepest sympathy, and I feel great sorrow for each individual case."

The letter comes after a German law firm released a report in late January on how abuse cases were handled in the Archdiocese of Munich and Freising. The report, compiled at the request of the archdiocese, faulted retired Pope Benedict, with lawyers accusing him of misconduct in four cases during his tenure in Munich. Lawyer Martin Pusch of the law firm Westpfahl Spilker Wastl said the retired Pope had denied wrongdoing in all cases.

The Munich investigation followed two years of research and covered the period from 1945 to 2019, centring on who knew what about sexual abuse and when, and what action they took, if any.



Pope Benedict XVI is pictured during his final general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican in 2013 (CNS Photo)

The report — made up of four volumes with almost 1900 pages — identified at least 497 victims and 235 abusers.

Pope Benedict had submitted an 82-page written statement to the panel conducting the investigation, and in it, the former Pope had said he did not take part in a meeting in 1980 on the case of the repeat offender Peter H., who came to Munich from Essen. The retired Pope amended that statement after the report came out, saying he was present at the 1980 meeting, but the meeting focused only on finding housing for Peter H. while he underwent therapy; the priest's abusive history was not discussed, he said. That statement, issued on January 24 on Pope Benedict's behalf by his secretary, Archbishop Georg Ganswein, said the error of incorrectly stating the retired Pope had not been at the meeting "was not done out of bad faith, but was the result of an oversight in the editing of his statement".

In his February 8 response, the retired Pope said that there was a "small group of friends who selflessly compiled on my behalf my 82-page testimony for the Munich law firm, which I would have been unable to write by myself".

"In addition to responding to the questions posed by the law firm, this also demanded reading and analysing almost 8000 pages of documents in digital format. These assistants then helped me to study and analyse the almost 2000 pages of expert opinions," he wrote, adding that those results were published as an appendix to his letter.

He said that, during this "massive" amount of work in establishing his position, "an oversight occurred regarding my participation in the chancery meeting of 15 January 1980. This error, which regrettably was verified, was not intentionally willed, and I hope may be excused".

This error should not "detract from the care and diligence" with which his friends helped formulate his response, he said. And while it was "deeply hurtful" for the oversight to have been used to cast doubt on him, Pope Benedict wrote, "I have been greatly moved by the varied expressions of trust, the heartfelt testimonies and the moving letters of encouragement sent to me by so many persons".

He dedicated the rest of his two-page letter to the importance of "confession", noting that each day at the beginning of Mass "we publicly implore the living God to forgive" the sins committed through "our fault, through our most grievous fault".

"It is clear to me that the words 'most grievous' do not apply each day and to every person in the same way," he wrote. "They tell me with consolation that, however great my fault may be today, the Lord forgives me, if I sincerely allow myself to be examined by him and am really prepared to change."

He said that he has "come to understand that we ourselves are drawn into this grievous fault whenever we neglect it or fail to confront it with the necessary decisiveness and responsibility, as too often happened and continues to happen".

"Once again I can only express to all the victims of sexual abuse my profound shame, my deep sorrow and my heartfelt request for forgiveness," he said.

Together with the Pope's letter, the Vatican published an "analysis" of the Munich report's assessment that then-Cardinal Ratzinger allegedly mishandled abuse allegations on four occasions when he led the German archdiocese. The analysis was compiled by a small team of canon lawyers and other experts who had helped craft the original 82-page response during the initial phase of the investigation.

This team's response focused primarily on the case of "priest X", the serial abuser also known as Peter H. It said the Munich report's assessment did "not correspond to the truth", because the now-retired pontiff "was neither aware that priest X was an abuser, nor that he was included in pastoral activity".

According to the Munich report, then-Cardinal Ratzinger "employed this priest in pastoral activity, even though he was aware of the abuses committed by him, and thus would have covered up his sexual abuses".

However, records of the key 1980 meeting indicated that sexual abuse committed by the priest was not discussed, the team said, and the reason for accommodating priest X in Munich for therapy there "was not mentioned".

Pope Benedict did not knowingly perjure himself, as the Munich report claimed, when he initially denied being present at the 1980 meeting, the team said. It had been a "transcription error" and Pope Benedict "did not notice" it given the time constraints, it said. The minutes of the 1980 meeting were included in statements made by then-Cardinal Ratzinger, so it would make no sense "for him to intentionally deny his presence at the meeting".

There is also no evidence behind the report's "allegation of misconduct or conspiracy in any cover-up," the team said. "As an archbishop, Cardinal Ratzinger was not involved in any cover-up of acts of abuse."

■ Reactions

The latest statement by Benedict triggered a wide array of reactions. In Germany, the response has been largely critical, and most abuse survivors expressed disappointment.

The German Catholic news agency KNA reported Richard Kick, spokesman for the Munich victims' advisory board, described the letter as "truly unspeakable" and lacking in empathy. He said the former Pope only knew his own point of view, and had taken refuge in the belief in God's verdict as the "final judge".

Theologian Doris Reisinger, an abuse survivor, said the letter amounted to "downright mockery of the victims". Above all, she criticised the terms Pope Benedict chose for Jesus as a "friend," "brother" and "advocate". To the ears of the victims, she said, that sounded as if Jesus "is not on their side, but on the side of those who have tormented, ignored and hurt them over all these decades".

The victims' association "Eckiger Tisch" (Non-Round Table) said it saw the letter as further evidence of the "permanent relativisation of the Church in matters of abuse." Instead of taking responsibility themselves, Church leaders saddled the victims with responsibility "if they aren't able to adequately appreciate this kind of expression of concern".

Jesuit Father Hans Zollner, a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors since its creation, said Pope Benedict's statement was personal but too general. Instead of making very special theological references, he should have spoken more specifically about his time as archbishop of Munich and Freising, Father Zollner told KNA.

He also said the retired Pope wrote the letter in the wrong order. If Pope Benedict had started out by seeking forgiveness from the victims and then moved on to thank his friends, his letter would certainly have been better received, he said.

The president of the German bishops' conference, Limburg Bishop Georg Bätzing, welcomed the statement in a tweet, but did not address its substance. He said that Pope Benedict had promised to respond to the report and had now fulfilled that promise. "I am grateful for that, and he deserves respect for it".

Reactions to the letter in the German media were also predominantly critical.

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Pope, cardinal look at what ails the priesthood, offer antidote

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Opening an international conference on priesthood, Pope Francis insisted that those who are not close to God in prayer, close to their bishop and other priests and immersed in the lives of their people, are simply “clerical functionaries” or “professionals of the sacred”.

“A priest needs to have a heart sufficiently ‘enlarged’ to expand and embrace the pain of the people entrusted to his care while, at the same time, like a sentinel, being able to proclaim the dawning of God’s grace revealed in that very pain,” the Pope said on February 17 as he opened the conference in the Vatican audience hall.

The symposium was organised by Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet, prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, and aimed at renewing a

theological understanding of Catholic priesthood.

The cardinal told participants he understood how people could wonder about the purpose of such a conference given “the current historical context dominated by the drama of sexual abuse perpetrated by clerics”.

But looking at the priesthood, including ways that it has been distorted by clericalism, could help the Church truly turn a new page, Cardinal Ouellet said.

In his talk to the conference, Pope Francis did not mention the abuse crisis specifically, but instead focused on what he said he has learned in 50 years of leadership.

He insisted, as he often has told priests, that “closeness” is essential to their ministry and identity: closeness to God in prayer, closeness to their bishop or superior, closeness

to other priests and, especially, closeness to the people of God.

Proximity, he said, allows the priest “to break all temptations of closure, self-justification, and of living like a ‘bachelor’.”

Closeness to God and closeness to the people are intimately and intrinsically linked, he said, “since the prayer of a shepherd is nurtured and becomes incarnate in the heart of God’s people. When he prays, a pastor bears the marks of the sorrows and joys of his people, which he presents in silence to the Lord.”

“Clericalism is a distortion because it is based not on closeness but on distance,” the pope said.

The Church is, and is meant to be, a community of believers who help one another, share each other’s burdens, rejoice with each other and work together to proclaim the

Gospel, he insisted.

Priests need to be “clear” and honest about how much envy exists within their ranks and how destructive it is, he said. “And there are also clerical forms of bullying.”

But “when priestly fraternity thrives and bonds of true friendship exist, it likewise becomes possible to experience with greater serenity the life of celibacy”, Pope Francis said. “Celibacy is a gift that the Latin Church preserves, yet it is a gift that, to be lived as a means of sanctification, calls for healthy relationships, relationships of true esteem and true goodness that are deeply rooted in Christ.”

“Without friends and without prayer,” he said, “celibacy can become an unbearable burden and a counter-witness to the very beauty of the priesthood.”

Myanmar cardinal appeals to Mary to protect his country

YANGON, Myanmar (CNS) — Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon has sought the intercession of Mary for protection, healing and mercy for conflict-torn Myanmar, which has been in turmoil since the February 2021 military coup.

“Our Lady becomes the mother of all people, of all races and all religions. The whole (of) Myanmar came here for healing and celebrating,” Cardinal Bo said in a homily at the National Marian Shrine of Nyaunglebin on February 11, feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. “But this year we have come

here as a wounded nation, a wounded people.”

Ucanews.com reported that, since 1902, thousands of Catholics, Hindus and Buddhists from across the Southeast Asian country have participated yearly in the Lourdes feast at the shrine, but this year the novena and celebrations were held online due to the coronavirus and political instability.

Cardinal Bo highlighted the five wounds inflicted on Myanmar: the Covid-19 pandemic, the military coup, civil wars, the collapse of the

economy and the displacement of people.

“More than ever, we need our Mother of Mercy in Myanmar today. Our pain is her pain,” he said. “As a mother, she was with her son at the most needed time. Not abandoning us, she stands with the people of Myanmar today. She is the mother most faithful and most merciful.”

The cardinal made his appeal amid protests and armed resistance across the country against the military junta, which has unleashed airstrikes, artillery shelling and burning of civilian homes, forcing thousands of people to flee and seek refuge in nearby jungles or churches.

Ucanews.com reported churches and other community institutions

are being targeted by junta forces in predominantly Christian Kayah and Chin states.

Catholic bishops in Myanmar have appealed for humanitarian assistance for the thousands of displaced people, while seeking “the fellowship of the universal Church and donor community to seek support for all our Myanmar people without any discrimination”.

The number of internally displaced persons has crossed the 800,000 mark since the coup, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

More than 1500 people have been killed, while at least 12,000 have been detained by the junta in the 12 months following the coup.

Synodal process showing good progress, some challenges, Vatican says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Catholic Church worldwide is showing good progress and “much joy” after the opening of the synodal process, but there also have been some “uncertainties” and challenges, said the ordinary council of the Synod of Bishops.

“There is growing awareness that the synodal conversion, to which all the baptised are called, is a lengthy process that will prolong itself well beyond 2023,” the council said in a press release on February 7.

“The desire all over the world is (that) this synodal journey, which has begun at the local level”, continues “so that tangible signs of synodality might increasingly be manifest as constitutive of the Church”, it said.

The ordinary council met in person and online on January 26 to discuss the progress being made on the synodal process around the world, and to elaborate the criteria for the “reports” to be prepared by dioceses and bishops’ conferences, and submitted to the general secretariat of the Synod of Bishops, it said in a statement.

“It seems that the novelty of the synodal process has given rise to much joy and dynamism,” it said. Nearly 98 per cent of all bishops’ conferences and synods of Eastern Catholic churches worldwide have appointed a person or an entire team to implement the synodal process, and a large number of initiatives have been set up to promote consultation and discernment.

“Many of the faithful perceive the synodal process as a crucial moment in the Church’s life, as a learning process as well as an opportunity for conversion and renewal of ecclesial life. At the same time, various difficulties have also emerged,” it said.

“Fears and reticence are reported among some groups of the faithful and among the clergy. There is also a certain mistrust among the laity who doubt that their contribution will really be taken into consideration,” it said.

Among the challenges it noted were: a “reluctance” by some clergy; a need for formation, “especially in listening and discernment so that the synod is authentically a spiritual process and not reduced to a parliamentary debate”; a need for mutual listening based on prayer and Scripture; a need to improve the participation of young people; and the need to involve those distanced from the Church.

The pandemic has also limited opportunities to meet in person, which is important for “mutual listening and communal discernment”, it said. “The consultation of the people of God cannot be reduced to a mere questionnaire.”

Last October, Pope Francis formally opened the process leading up to the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 2023, and bishops around the world were to open the process in their dioceses soon after. The diocesan phase, which runs until August, will focus on listening to and consulting the People of God.



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Keystones to building a love that lasts

by ROWENA OREJANA

Friendship, communication and vision are keystones to developing a long and healthy relationship with one's spouse, according to relationship experts Megan and Nahum Kozak.

The couple were the main speakers at a Zoom talk sponsored by the Catholic Network of Marriage Educators on World Marriage Day, February 13. The talk was entitled "Building a Love that Lasts", which was styled as a date night for couples.

Amazingly, some of the couples who tuned in to the talk had been married for more than 50 years. One shared that they will soon be celebrating their seventieth anniversary.

"It's like talking about light to a roomful of Edisons," Mr Kozak said jokingly, adding that they have the utmost respect for couples who have stayed together that long.

Mr and Mrs Kozak run Lighthouse Relationships, which provides individual as well as couples therapy in Brisbane. Mr Kozak is a psychologist, while Mrs Kozak is an accredited relationship counsellor.

Mrs Kozak said the knowledge they impart to couples is based on scientific research by Dr Michael Gurian, an American author and social philosopher, who is also a marriage and family counsellor, and on the results of a 40-year longitudinal study conducted by Drs John and Julie Gottman, renowned researchers and psychologists.

"A strong friendship is the basis of a strong relationship," said Mr Kozak, who described this as the first part of the Lighthouse Relationship model.

He said there are three parts to a friendship: knowing your partner, showing appreciation and being responsive to your partner.

"We develop a map about our partner in our brain. We know their likes, dislikes, pet peeves . . . we do

this really well in [the] early stages of a relationship. But it can be a challenge later on when we feel like we already know everything about our partner," he said.

When one stops trying to know a partner, there is a risk of growing apart, he added.

"We want to have an ongoing expression of warmth and appreciation that goes into building a good friendship," Mr Kozak said.

Apart from that, there is a need to be responsive. "We need to pick up on what our partner puts out there," he said.

They talked about something that happened to them early on in their marriage when Mr Kozak would make tea every morning for Mrs Kozak.

Mrs Kozak said this action was sweet in the beginning, but then it became a "guilt tea", something she would take a couple of sips of and then throw down the drain.

It took a month for her to work up the nerve to tell Mr Kozak that him making her tea did not make her feel loved. He asked her, "what does?"

"I kind of had to stop and think it through. And I went, well, something that makes me feel really loved is when you whisper in my ear. I don't even know why. It's delightful. It's intimate. It's something that only you and I can hear," she said.

So, for the past 12 years, he finds something to whisper in her ear. Even if it's just, "Hey, honey, I'm putting out the garbage."

■ Communication

The second part of the relationship model is communication.

Mrs Kozak said the Song of Solomon 2:15, which speaks of "catch all the foxes, those little foxes before they ruin the vineyard of love", is a really good guide for communicating.

Conflict shouldn't be something from which couples shy away, but it needs to be handled "without



Photo: CNS

criticism, without defensiveness, without being contemptuous, and without putting up a big stone wall".

"When we talk about that challenging thing, we catch the fox. We catch that little thing that gets in the way, the thing that might get buried in the carpet, so that it doesn't spoil this beautiful vineyard of love," she said.

Mr Kozak added, "far from something that has to be avoided, conflict is something that is really useful and helpful to give us ballast, to give us direction, to give us truthfulness and honesty in our dealings with one another".

The third part is vision. They explained that couples come to the marriage as whole individuals who choose "to create this beautiful space together".

The couple will have dreams as individuals and dreams for the two of them.

"We each need to be filled up with

our own dreams, so we can create a vision for what we want," Mrs Kozak said.

She said that, at the start of every year, they go out as a couple with their journals and write their dreams for themselves individually and as a couple.

"We just want to let each other know . . . the dream for us . . . for our girls, our date nights, our business . . . all the things that we dream for our team. Of course, we are listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit," she said.

Towards the end of the talk, Mr Kozak reminded participants to let communication bring out the vision.

"The only reason we have conflict is to give us something we can put together into a vision about you, about me and about us, how we can be together and basically, what God's plan is for us, what is the thing that can make us the best us we can be," he said.

Family Matters

Helen Luxford



Hand-me-downs!

With four children, costs for even the basics of life and school are pretty high, let alone the extracurricular activities and extras such as braces. I am a big believer in hand-me-downs and recycling. Having three boys, we were able to make a lot of clothes last for them all. But there is a limit. Shoes don't seem to last more than one child, and for boys long pants always wear out at the knees. Then there are preferences — one is a lot more sensitive to different types of materials. For example, he will never wear jeans.

We have been able to pass on a lot of baby stuff to my sister, which makes sense. We didn't need it at the time they did. There really is no sense in us storing a whole lot of stuff in good condition and then buying it brand new! There is so much wastage in this day and age and much of what we need in the first year of life is used for quite short periods of time — clothes, toys and so on.

I have been extremely grateful for hand-me-downs for our youngest — we had a girl after three boys, and she has some older girl cousins and I have a couple of friends with slightly older girls, so she has loved all the hand-me-downs thus far. Sometimes it is

not something I would have bought, but in a good way that it means she has had more options with what to wear and to choose. She certainly has strong ideas already about what she likes to wear or not — she takes colour, design and the feel of clothes into account even at her tender age.

I belong to a couple of pass-it-forward groups, which enable people to easily hand on items that are no longer needed to people who are ready for them. At times, things come up which we would benefit from, so it literally does all go round and round. I take great pleasure in knowing that so many items have avoided the rubbish tip, and have had even more value out of the purchase, because they have a new life somewhere else. However, I do find, sometimes, when you are giving items away for free, that people take this for granted, and there seems to be much more mucking around and non-collection of items than items that are for sale.

There are similar buy-and-sell groups for many items — sports items for when the kids decide they don't want to play cricket again after one season, for mums to pick up some second hand clothes, and so on. These sorts of savings mean that, when the kids want

some new sports shoes or a special princess dress, we can manage that, remembering how much we have saved and gained by passing it forward. We can also make sure that the kids still get new things from time to time, clothes they choose rather than those given to them.

Jesus asks us not to hold on to material goods or focus on this. We know we can't take our physical possessions to heaven, but we seem to accumulate so much of it in our lives. In many ways, all of us can be more generous. We have more than enough stuff. Most of us in the Western world do. We are asked to give till it hurts. The lady who gave her last piece of money away gave more than the rich man who gave what he didn't miss. It's hard when the Western world is so materially focussed. When you look for those in need, you will find them and give all that you can.

Matthew 5:40; "And if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well."

Helen Luxford is a physician, working part-time. She is a parishioner of St Michael's, Remuera. Together with her husband Michael, they are raising their children in the Catholic Faith and reflecting on the challenges and joys that brings.

'Troubles' among Oscar hopes

by NEVIL GIBSON

The annual awards season is back on track after the Covid-19 interruption, and cinemas are now surviving with restrictions rather than enduring closures.

But one thing has changed. All nominations for Hollywood's premier event, the Oscars, have been available for some weeks, if not months. Typically, these are held back from local release until the ceremony, due next month.

Three stand out as likely winners of best picture and director. They are Dame Jane Campion's *The Power of the Dog*, obviously Kiwis' hometown favourite; Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi epic *Dune*; and Kenneth Branagh's *Belfast*. The other seven — *Don't Look Up*, *Drive My Car*, *Licorice Pizza*, *King Richard*, *Nightmare Alley* and *West Side Story* — have all had cinema exposure, except *CODA*, an Apple TV exclusive.

Netflix released *The Power of the Dog* and *Don't Look Up*, while three others are also linked to streaming services (Disney+ and HBO). This could be the first year when Netflix or one of its rivals will win best picture.

That doesn't mean cinema-goers should give up. Most movies can still be seen as intended on the big screen, with Netflix providing first-lick examples such as *The Power of the Dog* and *Don't Look Up*.

Belfast (Universal) will help burnish Branagh's somewhat tarnished reputation. He was once considered the new Orson Welles, rocketing to stardom at just 29 with his interpretation of Shakespeare's *Henry V* (1989). Branagh played the title role, and he followed up with two more Shakespearean adaptations, *Much Ado About Nothing* (1993) and *Hamlet* (1996).

Like Welles, whose reputa-



Caitriona Balfe, Jamie Dornan, Judi Dench, Jude Hill and Lewis McAskie star in a scene from the movie *Belfast*. (CNS photo/Rob Youngson, Focus Features)

Movie Review

tion faded as his output became more erratic, Branagh failed to fulfil his early promise as both director and actor. He achieved some commercial success with Agatha Christie adaptations, including the just-released remake of *Death on the Nile*, while *Thor* (2011) and *Sleuth* (2007) cannot be overlooked.

Belfast is a more ambitious and personal achievement, as it is based on Branagh's early childhood, growing up in a part of Belfast where mixed Catholic and Protestant families lived in dense terraced housing.

Young Buddy (Jude Hill), as he is called, is just nine when their street is trashed by a violent demonstration that marked the beginnings of the "Troubles" in 1969. His father (Jamie Dornan, *Wild Mountain Thyme*, *Fifty Shades*) is an expat builder in England and visits only occasionally. That leaves Buddy and his older brother (Lewis McAskie) in the care of the mother (Caitriona Balfe, *Outlander*) and grandparents

(Ciaran Hinds and Judi Dench).

It's a financially tough but loving environment, torn apart by the sectarian and political divide, which Branagh plays down except when staging the violent demonstrations, looting, and the rising influence of armed criminal gangs.

A brief visit to a Protestant church and its hellfire preacher provides a stark contrast to Buddy's tentative friendship with a Catholic girl, while an older girl tempts Buddy with membership of a Protestant gang.

Though Branagh gives few hints Buddy will become a famous stage actor, following the family's eventual move to England, he gets the best out of his cast, and makes full use of a Van Morrison soundtrack. The period setting, filmed in monochrome, is brightened by visits to the cinema, showing *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* in full colour, and a theatrical staging of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*.

Rating: Recommended for mature audiences. 98 minutes.

CLIPS

Drive My Car (Potential Films)

A daunting three-hours, a skimpy plot, and lengthy conversations among a handful of characters are not the usual formula for a rewarding experience, even at a festival. But this Japanese production is an exception, and it fully deserves its praise from overseas critics. A recently widowed actor-producer accepts an assignment to direct a multinational cast in Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* at Hiroshima. He is required to be driven in his own Saab from his seaside hotel to the theatre. The driver is a young female, who disrupts his practice of learning his lines while driving alone. The result is immersive and hypnotic, seducing the viewer into a trance-like acceptance, surely the intent of cult author Haruki Murakami (*Burning*, *Norwegian Wood*), who wrote the story, and director Hamaguchi Ryusuke. Nominated for best foreign language Oscar in 2022. Rating: Mature audiences. 179 minutes.

I Want You Back (Amazon)

Sophisticated adult rom-coms are sorely absent since Nancy Meyers made *It's Complicated* (2009) and *The Intern* (2015). Fortunately, Jason Orley, who appeared in both, has stepped up in his second feature as a director with a plot worthy of Meyers, and a screenplay by Isaac Aptaker and Elizabeth Berger. Two couples break up and the dumped ones perversely plan how to win their partners back. They do this by befriending each other's exes with unpredictable results though, overall, the outcome is in keeping with the expectations from this genre. Admittedly, Orley doesn't have the budget for a Streep or a Baldwin, but leads Charlie Day and Jenny Slate are ones to watch for whether they will fall in love while undermining the happiness of others. Amazon rating: R18. 111 minutes.

My Best Friend Anne Frank (Mijn beste vriendin Anne Frank) (Netflix)

The memoirs of Hannah Goslar are the basis for this Dutch biopic that depicts a brief period in Nazi-occupied Holland before the Frank family went into hiding in 1942, and their later fate in Bergen-Belsen. Goslar reveals a different Frank to the personality carefully cultivated by her father's version of her published diary. Frank's rebellious and precocious nature is almost bullying toward her German-born schoolmate, who is obedient and protected from life's realities. However, this pales to insignificance in the harrowing concentration camp scenes set in 1945 when they are briefly reunited. Directed by Ben Sombogaart (*Bride Flight*, set in New Zealand) with Aiko Beemsterboer and Josephine Arendssen as Anne and Hanna, respectively. Rating: Mature audiences. 103 minutes.

'Reclaiming' or 'reshaping' Vatican II

RECLAIMING VATICAN II: What It (Really) Said, What It Means and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church by Father Blake Britton. Ave Maria Press (Notre Dame, Indiana, 2021). 191 pp. \$17.95. Reviewed by AGOSTINO BONO (CNS)

This book stresses Church traditions upheld and elaborated upon by the 1962-65 ecumenical council, while downplaying the importance of the council's reforms — such as the vernacular in the liturgy — which were approved as part of a major effort to make Catholic teachings and rites more intelligible to modern Catholics and the world at large.

The book is reminiscent of talks and public statements given in the 1980s and 1990s by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who became Pope Benedict XVI, when he was prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

These became known as "Ratzinger's restoration", a reference to the historical movement that restored many monarchies in 19th-century Europe after the political turmoil sparked by the French Revolution.

The aim, then and now, is to slow-roll back the reforms by emphasising the traditional.

Father Blake Britton, author of "Reclaiming Vatican II," dedicates the book to retired Pope Benedict. The author has appeared on EWTN, and is a regular contributor to the Word on Fire Institute's blog and journal.

His restoration affirms that what many Catholics regard as council teachings are really the result of a "paracouncil": false interpretations by a triumvirate of disgruntled theologians, the media, and the catastrophic events of the times as varied as the sexual revolution and the assassination of President Kennedy.

The theory posits: Many theologians interpreted according to their own liberal liking rather than according to the council's texts; then, as now, the media engaged in "fake news"; and the catastrophic events of the 1960s resulted in a lack of respect for authority.

The author's bottom line is: Today's Catholics are inheriting misinterpretations.

Obviously, there were misinterpretations — honest and otherwise — and some erroneous reporting. But this view is painting with a very broad brush.

Almost 60 years after the council,

a lot of the wheat has been separated from the chaff. Also, there are many official Church documents instructing how to apply Vatican II.

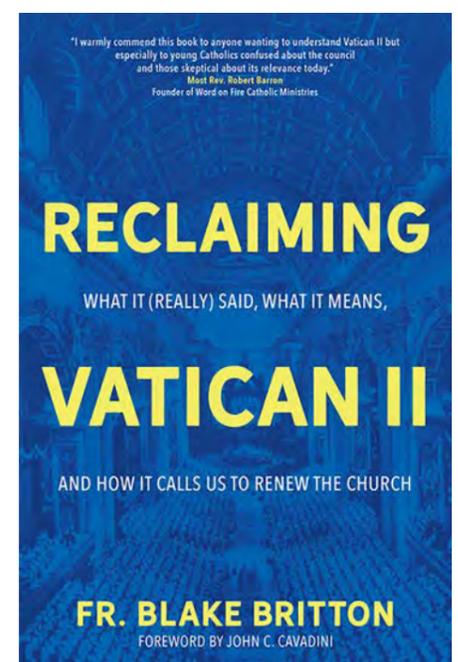
The book focuses on the four main council documents: the constitutions on the liturgy, the Church, divine revelation and the Church in the modern world.

The author knowledgeably discusses the Church traditions maintained, especially Latin in the liturgy as a sign of unity. He suggests that its liturgical use should be expanded. He fails to mention that Latin derived its liturgical importance because it was once the vernacular language.

Not discussed are important and ground-breaking decrees, such as the one on religious liberty, which said this freedom resides in the person, and must be respected for all believers by the Church and civil society.

There is also the decree on relations with non-Christian religions, which states clearly that neither all the Jews at the time of Christ, nor all the Jews of today, are responsible for Christ's death.

Let's not forget the decree on ecumenism, which sees dialogue with other Christian religions as a valid



form of seeking Christian unity.

Rather than reclaiming Vatican II, this book is an effort to reshape its image.

Agostino Bono is a retired CNS staff writer.

We are here: ▼ Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time

THE CHURCH YEAR

Advent

Christmas

Ordinary Time

Lent

Easter Time

Ordinary Time

Relating our inner thoughts to the lives we lead

Scripture

by Fr Kevin Waldie sm

Anyone reading these passages of Scripture might well wonder what their point is. Replete with comparisons of various kinds, all three texts move us to think below the surface of the words.

With Sirach, we immediately enter a world of images from everyday life. The latter part of each verse contains the key to understanding this text's meaning. For there we find a recurring reference to human speech. The human word, and the mind from which that word springs, are intimately linked. The main idea here indicates that what we speak reveals our innermost intentions and outlook.

When we turn to Paul speaking to the Corinthians, we hear him voicing a fundamental truth of Christian faith. That truth relates to belief in life eternal and the Lord Jesus Christ's victory over death. Thus, he draws a comparison between the human body's limited lifespan, and the life that follows a lifetime of being in communion with the Lord. This line of thought calls us to face the future with faith-filled commitment and a sense of anticipation.

As Luke's Sermon on the Plain nears its conclusion, Jesus utters a number of varied sayings. Across several statements, his words say much the same thing. And following this Lukan string

February 27: Eighth Sunday of the Year. **Readings:** 1: Sirach 27:4-7; **Psalm:** 92; **2:** 1 Corinthians 15:54-58; **Gospel:** Luke 6:39-45.

of comparisons is a concluding verse that sums up what the whole is directing us to think. The notion of the heart from which all good flows is of key importance in this last verse. So what comes out of the mouth should reflect the state of a person's heart and mind. Luke's Jesus is then telling us to recognise the strong connection between our interior and exterior worlds.

Listening to today's readings clearly leads us to relate our inner thoughts to the lives we lead. Everything we speak should, therefore, reflect good intentions.

Readings that will stand us in good stead for the weeks of Lent

Remembering to whom and to what we belong plays a major part in the message of these biblical texts. And that is a good way for us to begin this Lent.

The Deuteronomy text sets us up to view the weeks ahead in a particular light. The biblical author draws attention to Israel's past. Of special note is the bondage in Egypt, and the subsequent wilderness wandering and eventual settlement in the land God would give them. Being reminded of this in our own time should prompt us to review our own faith commitment, and how well we hand on the sacred teachings we have inherited.

In today's verses from Romans, Paul reminds

his audience that, as believers, they belong to a communion of men and women who hold to a very clear understanding of what it means to profess belief in Jesus the risen Lord. As is his custom, he always speaks very frankly. And his words are for us too. This means that, when we proclaim the faith, we must be seen to be people who cherish deeply the great riches of that faith.

Jesus' exchange of words with the devil in Luke sharply defines what the Lord's mission is all about. It also calls us to set our sights on treasuring the Word of God, so as to live the way of life revealed through the sacred text. In conversation with the devil, Jesus responds

March 6: First Sunday of Lent. **Readings:** 1: Deuteronomy 26:4-10; **Psalm:** 91; **2:** Romans 10:8-13; **Gospel:** Luke 4:1-13.

by quoting from Holy Scripture and this alone. And that quite simply illustrates the importance and nature of the biblical writings. Jesus' view to the future is, therefore, an example for us. He is utterly consumed with his earthly mission and bringing it to completion.

These readings provide a sharp focus that will stand us in good stead for the coming weeks of Lent.

SAINTED GLASS



Ash Wednesday is next Wednesday, March 2 this year. The Gospel text is selected from Matthew Chapter 6, with Jesus teaching his disciples. But the whole teaching passage starts at Chapter 5, "Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them." This window in Saints Peter and Paul, Pievesestina, Italy, follows the text - Jesus is sitting on the mountain teaching his disciples. His inspiration is shown coming from heaven. During this season of Lent, will you come to Jesus and be taught?

- Glen McCullough

New Māori/English bilingual Bible launched

Bible News

WELLINGTON (Agencies) — On January 21, 2022, Bible Society NZ introduced a brand-new Māori/English bilingual Bible.

"We are proud to present this inspiring edition, which has side-by-side Māori and English text and is available in three beautiful covers to choose from" said Bible Society NZ CEO Neels Janse van Rensburg.

"The 1990s diglot was the 1952 Paipera Tapu text, together with the King James Version, however, the new translation now includes the New Revised Standard Version," he added.

The launch took place at the Holy Trinity Church in Gisborne, and the proceedings will be overseen by Archbishop Don Tamihere, of Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa.

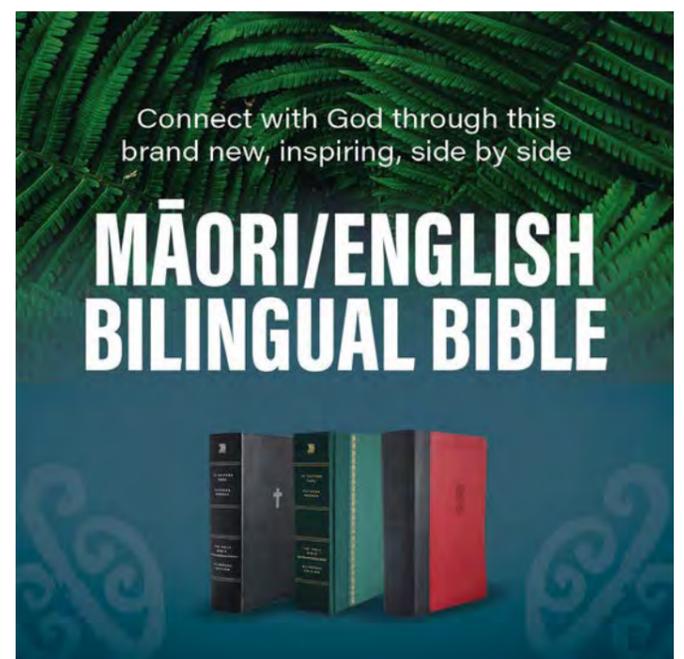
Bible Society NZ believes this long-awaited edition will be popular with both Te Reo speakers and those learning the language. It is presented in a range of stunning cover designs, including a rich leather tukutuku weaved-cross version, to colourful red and green covers with a mirroring

koru, representing the two languages and their relationship with each other.

With an inspiring introduction from Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa, Rev. Don Tamihere, this edition will become a favourite for many Christians across Aotearoa.

For further information visit bilingualbible.nz

The Bible is available at Manna Christian Stores.



Local Diocese News

Hannah throws herself out of a plane for Marisabel

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

A skydiving challenge last month has raised \$1800 for an organisation that helps vulnerable children and families in nine countries across Latin American and the Caribbean.

The event was the first of ten challenges in 2022 to mark ten years



Marisabel, who is being helped to study medicine

in this country of NPH New Zealand (Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos — “Our Little Brothers and Sisters”).

NPH New Zealand board treasurer Jonathan Gabriel and Carmel College student Hannah Macdonald took part in the skydive from 9000 feet on January 29. The event took place with the assistance of Auckland Skydiving.

The funds raised will be used for the university studies of Marisabel at NPH Bolivia who is studying medicine. For her first year of studies, NPH requires \$2800. This will pay for university accommodation, course fees, transport, food, and textbooks and materials.

Hannah said that the skydive was incredible.

“I can’t believe I did it. I’m so pleased I did this to help kids who have had a difficult start in life. I’ve always wanted to do a skydive, and I’m so pleased I could do it in support of NPH.”

Mr Gabriel said that the skydive was one of the most amazing experi-



Above: Hannah Macdonald during her skydive

ences of his life.

“I was definitely nervous about doing this challenge, but I’m so glad I went through it. I’m so grateful for the support of my family and friends

who have already made a big difference in Marisabel’s life.”

Donations can be made at: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/10yearsnp>

Temporary closure during pandemic

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

After careful consideration by representatives from the Sisters of Compassion, Trust Board members, and operational staff, a decision was taken to close Our Lady’s Home of Com-

passion in Island Bay to public access from Monday, January 31, to Sunday, April 3, this year.

According to a post last month on the Sisters of Compassion facebook page, all external bookings were to be cancelled

and public access suspended. This has included school visits, accommodation, conferences, meetings, community groups, Chapel visits, external users, and volunteer support/activities.

“Our decision to cancel bookings for the next two months was not taken lightly. Various facilities at Our Lady’s Home of Compassion are expected to be repurposed to serve those in greatest need during the expected health and wellbeing challenges,” the post stated.

“At the heart of this decision is a response in line with the thoughts and actions of the Sisters of Compassion and their work with the most vulnerable. We look forward to welcoming you back when it is safe to do so. Thank you for your understanding.”



Dawn at Our Lady’s Home of Compassion (Photo: Compassion te pūaroaha)

Burglary at Foxton parish

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Over the weekend of January 29-30, St Mary’s church in Foxton was broken into. According to a note from Fr Joseph Grayland in the Palmerston North cathedral newsletter the following weekend, the parish office and sacristies at Foxton were trashed, and a window was broken.

The police were called. The parish’s computer and data projector were stolen, but other liturgical vessels were not taken.

A blessing of the Church was held on February 6, before the start of Sunday Mass at Foxton. “We pray for those who did this and for a change of heart,” Fr Grayland wrote.

‘Pink shoes into the Vatican’ delayed until September

By NZ CATHOLIC staff

Women’s worn-out shoes are to be the focus of an action in central Auckland and Wellington organised by a group working for gender equality in the leadership of the Catholic Church.

“Pink Shoes into the Vatican” is an ambitious public art work to be displayed on pavements leading to the cathedrals in central Auckland and in Wellington on September 18, the Sunday before Women’s Suffrage Day.

The event, already postponed from September, 2021, the anniversary of the granting of the vote to women in this country, was moved to March 13, 2022, a few days after International Women’s Day. Now the organisers are hoping the event will be able to go ahead in September.

Meanwhile, they are calling on women to donate their old shoes for the installation in September. They suggest writing a couple of sentences on a ticket attached to the shoes describing how you have worked (and walked) for the Church over the years. The organisers intend to have collection boxes placed in the foyers of

most churches in both dioceses.

A media release from organisers, who call themselves “Be the Change, Catholic Church, Aotearoa” states that the suffrage anniversary shows the Church is 129 years behind the country in recognising the leadership skills of women.

On September 18 the women will place the shoes, some painted pink, in an art display from Te H O Hine Place to St Patrick’s Cathedral in Wyndham Street, central Auckland. The Wellington installation will start in the afternoon from the steps of Parliament, and lead up Molesworth and Hill Streets to Sacred Heart Cathedral.

They are hoping Cardinal John Dew will again be able to meet the women outside the Wellington cathedral and receive a “suffrage charter” of requests about participation in decision-making at all levels.

The shoes signify the largely unpaid work women have done for the Church throughout the ages which will be recorded in short vignettes accompanying the shoes.

They say women are often the majority of any Catholic congregation and are usually the ones



(Image: Pixabay)

organising the various tasks that need to be done at every liturgical celebration.

Yet, the Catholic Church continues the injustice of refusing to recognise women’s worth by denying them equality in leadership roles, the organisers stated.

40 YEARS AGO

TASK 'BEYOND ALL PRICE'

If education is one of the most valuable of all human enterprises, education in faith is beyond price. That was the keynote to Bishop John Mackey's homily at the annual Education Mass in St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland, last Sunday. "I cannot consider a task more noble, nor a vocation more worthy, than to hand on with reverence the vision of life which Christ died on the cross to reveal," said Bishop Mackey.

"The implications of that vision will be seen finally only in heaven. But our responsibility to hand on the vision to our children is an urgent one. The sacrifices we need to make should become light in the wonder God has called us to share his life in Christ."

Bishop Mackey said that education was one of the goals to which mankind had devoted a great deal of energy and genius, and that it

was most highly prized when it was in short supply.

"Last century produces many stories of heroic people who sacrificed much, just so they could read and write. Now that we have made education the common lot, it is less esteemed, and teachers are not given the same honour that used to be theirs in times past."

But the loss in esteem had not made education any less valuable, he said. "It is like water - a prime necessity for human life that tends to be less highly esteemed when it is plentiful."

Bishop Mackey said that education in faith was a task "beyond value"; quoting St Augustine, he described the goal of teaching as "the love that flows from a pure heart, a right mind and a genuine faith".

— *Zealandia*, February 21, 1982



Papal Prayer

The Pope's universal prayer intention for February: For religious sisters and consecrated women

We pray for religious sisters and consecrated women; thanking them for their mission and their courage; may they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times.

CAPTION CONTEST



Write the best caption for this photo and win a \$30 Countdown voucher. Send in your ideas by Tuesday, March 8 to Caption Contest 631, NZ Catholic, PO Box 147000, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144. Or email: design@nzcatholic.org.nz Please include your postal address so that your prize, if you win, can be sent to you.

The winner of the Caption Contest from issue 629 (right) was **Kevin McCormack, Wellington.**

Some other suggestions were:

"All waiting for the perfect woman?"

— **Mike Martin, Hastings.**

"Waiting for the perfect meal!"

— **Margaret Cook, Whangarei.**

"There was no general body meeting today because of skeleton staff."

— **Tony D'Costa, Auckland.**

"When will the skeleton crew learn smoking is bad for your health?"

— **Miss D.L. Barritt, Christchurch.**

"A staff meeting to discuss the bones of contention." — **Mrs Ellen Fowles, Palmerston North.**

"We'll have the spare ribs, thanks."

— **S. Maitland, Auckland.**

"OK guys, party's over. Let's head back to the cemetery." — **Linda Jennings, Auckland.**

"Skeleton Crew" — **Angela Kinchella, Whanganui.**

"Catacomb collective wake." — **Patricia**



"No shaking, rattling or rolling at the table, please."

Jackson, Auckland.

"Obesity is a huge problem, but this is ridiculous!" — **Eddie Rodden, Chch.**

"I think this maybe the last supper!"

— **Joan Leonard, Auckland.**

"Members of the séance keeping to the bare facts." — **Mary Scanlon, Christchurch.**

"Appalling table service, make no bones about that!" — **Trevor 'Ofamo 'oni, Auckland.**



Kit's Corner



How does your family get food, clothes and things for the house? How does your family pay the rent, get petrol for the car and pay for your school things? What about entertainment, sport and toys? Of course, the **adults** in your family go to **work** to earn the money to buy these important things. Adults work at all sorts of **jobs**.



The **Bible** tells us that it is very important to keep **busy** at work because everyone is really working for good things for **God's family**, and God does not forget the **help** people give each other.

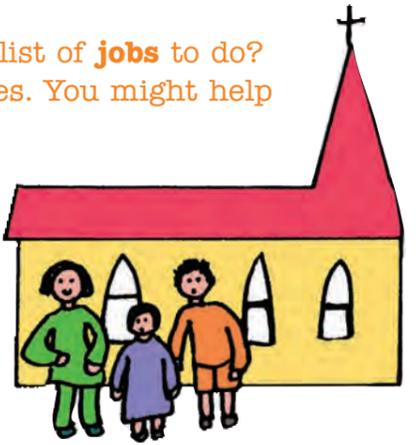
But **children** do not go to work, so what can they do? Well, there are plenty of **jobs** and **work** to be done at **home** and **school**. You might have jobs like: Making your bed and keeping your room tidy, feeding the pets, watering the plants, bringing in the letters, putting out the rubbish, or doing the dishes.

Perhaps you are in charge of something in your **classroom**. Is there a list of **jobs** to do? You have to keep your desk tidy and put things away in the right places. You might help with the PE gear and watch out for others on the playground.



The **Bible** says that we should not work all the time. On **Sunday** we go to **Church** and have a day to **relax** and do the things we like to do.

Can you learn this verse off by heart? 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, verse 58: "**Keep busy always in your work for the Lord.**"



TEXT: SUZIE MCCARTHY ART: PATSY NEALON



Participants at Sonshine Ranch

Summer youth camp 'transformative'

by ROWENA OREJANA

When Auckland diocese's big Life Teen Summer Camp was postponed, the youth group of the St Joseph's parish in Takapuna decided to push through with their own "smaller" camp.

The Core Team of St Joseph's youth team originally intended to host a summer camp, but decided to give way to the "bigger" camp. The core team includes Susan Fraser, Joselle Vicente and Romwell Ramos.

"We had some plans in play already which we just stopped. But when the announcement (to cancel) was made for lots of various reasons, Covid being the biggest thing, we were able to revert back (to having a parish camp)," said Mrs Fraser.

The 20-year-old Ms Vicente had to do a lot of the preparation and coordination for the parish camp while on holiday in Queenstown. She only had two weeks to do this.

"I gave up quite a bit of my holiday to run the camp. I was very willing to because it was for our team, for our youth and for us as well," she said.

Mr Ramos said they felt they had to do this because a lot of young people had already committed to becoming summer missionaries for the big camp. The youth of the parish were also looking forward to the event.

"There was already a fire that we wanted to build on," he said.

Around 70 summer missionaries and teens participated at the event, held at Sonshine Ranch in Clevedon on January 14-16. Mr Ramos said it was a "transformative" experience.

"All the teens can attest to this because all of them want to go back right now. I think a lot of us are experiencing camp withdrawal," he said, with a laugh.

Ms Vicente said that, while most of the participants were from St Joseph's, some young people who were going to the cancelled camp decided to join them.

Mrs Fraser said that serving as the camp cook was her way of ministering to the young people.

"The kitchen is the heart of most homes, so is the kitchen the heart of the camp," she said. "It's

where ministry happens constantly. Kids come in. They want something to eat, drink or cuddle, just to chat. For me, the highlight had been always being available and they always knew where we were."

Ms Vicente and Mr Ramos both said that working with the teens was a blessing.

"I think this connecting to Christ with each other and through the Holy Spirit was really touching," Ms Vicente said.

"The highlight for me was definitely walking alongside these teens. Getting to meet them where they were. Just being their friend, to me, was the most fulfilling," Mr Ramos added.

Mrs Fraser said that, if the Auckland diocese decides to hold a Life Teen camp next year, they would love to join. She said the Life Teen resource which they used made the work manageable, and she highly recommended it to other parishes.

"You're following a programme and it means, for our core team, that a lot of the hard work has been done," she said. "You don't have to reinvent the wheel."

WORDS TO PONDER

“On like manner this applies to those also who are in great fear, for they are so intent on their own passion, that they pay no attention to the suffering of others.”

— *Summa Theologica*,
St Thomas Aquinas

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Rector goes to new heights

Before starting his term as rector of Holy Cross Seminary in Auckland, Fr Mathew Vadakkevettuvazhiyil went on a mountain-climbing adventure in the North Island. *NZ Catholic* asked him about this and about his new role.

NZC: What led you to decide to climb Mt Taranaki and Mt Ruapehu recently?

Fr Mathew: I love mountains. They stand for majesty, vitality, strength, graciousness and closeness to God. I tried twice in the past to climb Taranaki, but I could not reach the summit thanks to poor weather conditions. Friday, January 14, 2022, gifted me with excellent weather which, above all, is an important aspect for climbing mountains. Crossing Tongariro in 2019, and doing the Tongariro Northern Circuit this year, made me come closer to Mt Ruapehu. Walking around Mt Ngauruhoe, I was drawn by her "charm" and beauty.

NZC: Can you describe the experience of climbing the mountains — was it easy or hard?

Fr Mathew: Mt Ruapehu was easy to climb, though I could not reach the crater. Since the temperature was getting high, we were warned not to go to the crater. Mt Taranaki is a unique mountain, and needs climbing experience. When I went to check the weather conditions, the information centre in Whanganui told me that they would not like to see my name in the newspaper! Just to say how hard it is to climb Taranaki. The scoria, its conical shape, the loose, round pebbles that make it harder to get a good grip on solid ground, and the unpredictable weather, are challenges that you face. I found it easy to climb up. While climbing down, I fell down a few times due to lack of grip. However, my back bag, which had empty water bottles, helped me land softly!

NZC: Did you have to do any training to get fit for these climbs? Have you climbed mountains this high before?

Fr Mathew: I climbed Rangitoto, which was taken as my benchmark in preparation for Taranaki. I realised much training is needed. Covering the Hunua and Waitakere Ranges, climbing the Pinnacles in Thames, crossing Tongariro, climbing smaller peaks such as Mt Albert, Māngere Mountain, Mt Wellington, Mt Roskill, Mt Hobson and Mt St John, and the Big King, gave me courage to attempt Taranaki. Walking backward from the gates of One Tree Hill to the top and back was an important part of the training, and lockdown gave me long hours to walk daily.



Fr Mathew Vadakkevettuvazhiyil on Mt Ruapehu

NZC: Having climbed these two famous North Island mountains — what is your next goal in terms of outdoor adventures when you have the opportunity?

Fr Mathew: Tracks around Mt Taranaki, Round the Mountain Track, Mt Hikurangi in Raukumara Conservation Park, Pirongia Mountain, visiting Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre in Mt Cook Village and, if possible, the Milford Track is my dream.

NZC: Since the announcement that you were to be seminary rector, what ministries have you been doing? Have you had to do study or training for the role of rector?

Fr Mathew: Before my responsibility at the seminary was announced, I was appointed parish priest of Papatōetoe, where I continued to serve until I joined the seminary staff. Fr Brendan Ward, whom I succeeded as rector, was my main source in training. He spent numerous hours talking, sharing and reflecting with me about his experience. He introduced me to such important documents as "The Gift of the Priestly Vocation" (Ratio), *Pastores Dabo Vobis* — on the formation of priests in the circumstances of the present day, "Receiving the Gift of the Priestly Vocation in Aotearoa New Zealand" (Ratio NZ), seminary reports to NZCBC, and volumes of

documents and correspondence that were important. I also had opportunities to meet with Br Mark McKeown, FSC, the then-formator, and the seminary formators and staff, and I joined the seminary community for coffee and meals; and there were occasional informal meetings with the seminarians, which gave me valuable insights. Meeting the bishops during their conference in Hamilton last April was a unique experience, as I listened to the expectations of the conference. Bishop Patrick Dunn has been extremely kind in sharing his vision and passion for the formation of the future priests of New Zealand. Though the pandemic meant that I could not attend any course designed for seminary formators, I feel that the shared experience and wisdom of many people, such as Bishop Michael Gielen, and the ongoing learning while in service, has been helpful. Attending various meetings like the Project Group Meetings, finance committee meeting, vocations directors meeting, were also unique learning experiences. Can we forget prayer and the Word of God?

NZC: Can you confirm when the students are arriving at the seminary this year?

Fr Mathew: The three year one students reported on Sunday, February 13, and are enjoying their orientation programme. The ten returning students arrived on Thursday, February 17. Two students from Dunedin diocese are advised to remain in Dunedin awaiting approval of their residence visa.

NZC: What adjustments will seminary staff and students have to make because of the leaky building remediation work going on at the seminary at present? When will this all be finished?

Fr Mathew: I admire the capacity of the staff and students to adapt to the situation arising from the remediation work. We are grateful to Ponsonby parish for giving us access to the church for prayers and the celebration of the Eucharist. Much of the basic facilities like the kitchen,

WIT'S END

Answering machine answers recorded and verified by the International Institute of Answering Machine Responses.

(From a machine at a college dorm) A is for academics. B is for beer. One of those reasons is why we're not here. Leave a message.

Hi. This is John. If you are the phone company, I already sent the money. If you are my parents, please send money. If you are my financial aid institution, you didn't lend enough money. If you are my friends, you owe me money. If you are a female, I have plenty of money.

Hi, I'm not home now, but my answering machine is, so you can talk to it instead. Wait for the beep. "Beep." "Hello, I am David's answering machine. What are you?"

Hi. John's answering machine is broken. This is the refrigerator. Please speak slowly and I'll stick your message to myself with a magnet.

dining room, chapel, meeting rooms, gym, music rooms are operating from our garages; bedrooms have been converted for offices and other needs. Meals have been contracted out for collection. The meals have to be warmed up. We know that the students are very accommodating, and I thank them and the staff for their large hearts in bearing up with the inconveniences arising from the remediation work. Our appreciation goes to Fr Brendan who identified the issues of leaky buildings, and the bishops' conference that supported him to set out to address them.

NZC: How will the Covid-19 Protection Framework setting (currently red) impact the programme at the seminary (for example, parish visits, pastoral work etc.)?

Fr Mathew: The Covid Protection Framework currently under "red" has made it hard for the students, especially, to get to their pastoral placements like rest homes, schools, hospitals, prisons etc. However, a new opening with the Salvation Army and New Dawn, along with the City Mission and Vinnies, help the students in their pastoral formation.

NZC: How are you feeling about the year ahead?

Fr Mathew: Students are returning to the seminary after a long break since August 17, 2021. Though the intellectual formation, as far as the lectures were concerned, were given importance, the other aspects of their formation were probably not easily imparted. Having a new formator and a new rector, and a spiritual director and a pastoral formator who could serve only half of their year of appointment means that we are all rather new. Thus, there is a double task of building the team of the staff and imparting the formation as required by the Ratio and its New Zealand adaptation. Since the Holy Spirit is the real formator, we trust the Spirit of God will renew all things, including our current situation, and the Spirit will help the students in their growth and formation.

Fr Mathew Vadakkevettuvazhiyil on the summit of Mt Taranaki





Some scenes after the Mass of Installation for Bishop Stephen Lowe at St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland, on February 19. (Photos: CDA)



Bishop Lowe gives a blessing

The eleventh and twelfth Bishops of Auckland, Bishop Patrick Dunn and Bishop Stephen Lowe



Bishop Stephen Lowe with student leaders from Catholic schools in Auckland diocese