

# NZ Catholic

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## VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS

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On the front cover: A scene from Pentecost is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Mary of the Isle Church in Long Beach, N.Y. (CNS photo)

**NZCatholic**

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# Pro-Cathedral used as testing site

by Fr RON BENNETT

They say every cloud has a silver lining. When St Teresa's Pro-Cathedral Church in Karori, Wellington, closed its doors for Masses at the beginning of the lockdown, parishioners expected it would not be used again for quite a while.

However, the Karori Medical Centre were looking for a suitable venue to conduct a Covid-19 community-based assessment centre, primarily to screen and assess people for testing, and test those who meet the criteria. Dr Jeff Lowe, from the medical centre, said that one Saturday morning they were doing swabs at the centre carpark. It was wet and windy and they realised they couldn't carry on like that. They looked around for a suitable venue and found St Teresa's Church to be ideal.

St Teresa's proved to be a perfect match — with a driveway up one side of the church, a covered drive-through next to the church foyer, which allowed people to be tested in their cars, then to either park and rest, or continue to exit down the other side of the church. A sort of McDonald's drive-through, as one wit commented.

It was important for the medical centre as they wanted to do their testing where there was more space, and easy movement, and to keep potentially well people away from potentially unwell people. The foyer also had two doors, which meant it was possible to have a "clean" area and a "dirty" area for staff to work in. As well as the foyer, another room was available if needed.

Dr Lowe mentioned that the battle to beat Covid-19 was being fought out in the community and out in general practice, in people getting swabs and identifying Covid early, and places such as St Teresa's were perfect for this. He said



Fr Ron Bennett in the foyer of St Teresa's pro-cathedral with medical centre staff nurse Jacqui and Dr Nick.

using St Teresa's was a godsend. Since tests began on April 6, more than 629 people have been tested, between 30 and 40 a day, some coming from outside the area because of the convenience. For the parishioners of St Teresa's, there was a real feeling that their church was being used for a good purpose. Testing began on April 6 and concluded on May 22.

# Cathedral parishes open doors for limited access during level 2

by MICHAEL OTTO

Cathedral parishes in New Zealand's dioceses opened their doors to varying degrees during the first days of Covid-19 alert level 2.

People entering cathedrals — and other Catholic church buildings that opened for private prayer — were made aware of requirements for hand washing and sanitising, recording attendance for tracking and tracing purposes and of the need for physical distancing. Typically, no more than 10 people at a time were allowed into a building for private prayer.

Information was also given about cathedrals and other churches being thoroughly sanitised each day.

The Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Hamilton opened its doors from 9am to 5pm from May 14, the first day of alert level 2. As well as following the requirements outlined above, people were required to use pews within a cordoned-off area. Reconciliation was available for two hours on Saturday mornings.

In Palmerston North, the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit opened for two hours each day from Sunday, May 17. People were able to visit the cathedral, under the restrictions outlined above, between 12pm and 1pm and between 4.30pm and 5.30pm each day.

St Mary's Pro-Cathedral in Christchurch was open for prayer and Reconciliation each day from Monday, May 18 between 11am and 12.30pm and between 4pm and 5pm, with the restrictions outlined above.

In a message posted on facebook on May 14, it was announced that St Joseph's Cathedral in Dunedin would be open every day from 9am to 5pm, under similar restrictions to those above. Reconciliation was available on Saturdays between 4.30pm and 5.30pm, with this taking place in the sanctuary to meet social distancing requirements.

In Auckland, St Patrick's Cathedral was open for Reconciliation only on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 5pm and 6pm. Similar restrictions to those above applied. People were asked to enter at the main cathedral doors.

The parish leadership of the Metropolitan Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Wellington decided that, under the circumstances, the cathedral complex could not reopen in the initial conditions for alert level 2. It was hoped that future conditions in alert level 1 might see an absence of restrictions. The cathedral itself was closed in 2018 because of seismic risk.

Many other parish churches throughout New Zealand also opened their doors for various time periods.

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## Hard times in Hazaribag

The lockdown in India is bringing hard times to out-of-work labourers who have returned from the cities to their rural homes in Jarkhand State. This is happening all over India. In the Hazaribag Province in which the Jesuits serve, the Mission is heading the call to divert from their usual focus of providing schooling for the underprivileged Dalits and Tribal people, to feeding the hungry. For the last 6 weeks all schools have been closed and the Jesuits have been working with school staff, Red Cross and local government to feed hungry families. With no social security back-stop and no breadwinner the families' plight is very serious. If Covid 19 becomes rampant in the area a bad situation will be even worse. So far, the Mission has diverted over NZ \$30,000 from school funds to help feed the people and prevent the spread of the virus. If you are able to help support this urgent Mission appeal you can by donating to New Zealand Jesuits in India Trust, Westpac Bank, 03 0259 0068602 00.

**If you want more information, contact Kerry Moore, 16 Isleworth Road, Bishopdale, Christchurch 8053 or email: nzjiit@gmail.com**  
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# Public Masses resume with restrictions

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Public Masses have been allowed to resume as of May 29 in New Zealand, with a limit of 100 people present, but each parish's leadership will decide if its own Masses are held on Sundays and/or weekdays or not at all under the current conditions.

On May 25, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced that limits on numbers present at public gatherings — such as religious services — could rise from 10 to 100 under Covid-19 alert level 2. This would start from noon on May 29.

In a May 25 statement, New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference secretary Bishop Stephen Lowe said that "each parish will decide what is manageable and safe for their community, including whether any particular weekday or Sunday Mass resumes".

Bishop Lowe acknowledged that "not all parishioners will be able to attend Mass because of the restrictions of numbers".

"Others will not attend due to health reasons, concerns or fears. For these reasons, the dispensation [from] attendance at Sunday Mass continues."

He added that live-streamed Masses will continue to be offered for these people.

The bishop noted that the guidelines for the reception of Holy Communion and health practices during the pandemic will remain in place. These include distributing Holy Communion only in the hand, not on the tongue, and not from the chalice.

On May 26, the New Zealand bishops issued a pastoral letter "on leaving the closed room", referring to the closed room in which the apostles and others, including Our Lady, prayed between the Ascension and Pentecost. (The text of the letter is to the right).

The bishops wrote of rejoicing in taking steps returning towards some semblance of normality, and of joy at being able to celebrate the Eucharist together again.

But the various restrictions for the good of the vulnerable and elderly were acknowledged, as was the likelihood that some churches will not open immediately.

"We ask you to be patient and understanding while your parish leadership determine what will happen in your parish," the bishops wrote.

Government advice for such gatherings is to maintain hygiene standards and meet existing record-keeping requirements for contact tracing.

## ■ Comment

The May 26 letter came after two weeks of communicating with authorities and public comment by the bishops after the Government backtracked on an initial alert level 2 limit of 100 for gatherings — indicated by the Prime Minister on May 7 — to a maximum of 10 announced five days later. This was on the grounds that close fellowship among churchgoers would be a greater risk of spreading the virus than the same number of people in a cinema or restaurant assembling in groups of 10, but without intermingling.

The 338 Catholic churches in New Zealand were permitted to open their doors for private prayer under certain conditions from May 14.

With the Anglican bishops, the New Zealand Catholic bishops wrote to the Prime Minister and this resulted in a Zoom conference between her,

## Pastoral Letter on Leaving the Closed Room - from the New Zealand Catholic Bishops - May 26

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou – Peace be with you.

In these days between the risen Lord's Ascension into heaven and Pentecost the apostles returned to the closed room. There they joined in continuous prayer, together with several women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers (cf. Acts 1:12-14). It was from the closed room that the Church was brought to birth as the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles and impelled them to go out and proclaim the Good News.

This year Christians around the world entered a "closed room" due to the pandemic. For some of you this has enabled a graced time of prayer and reflection. For others it has been a time to refocus and put lives in order. For some the "closed room" has led to family tensions or concerns about future employment. For others still this has been a time when they have allowed their faith to drift. Now the "closed room" of our churches is coming to an end.

With you we rejoice that we are able to take these first steps towards returning to some semblance of normality. The sacrifices we have made as a nation have averted what we have seen overseas. As we emerge from our "closed room" and return to our churches and community engagement we take this opportunity to thank those who protected and supported our sick, vulnerable and, indeed, all of us throughout the lockdown. We thank all those in our faith communities who have worked tirelessly to connect with parishioners offering spiritual support. Again, we have been delighted by the creative initiatives that have arisen and the way the risen Lord has used these to bestow his graces.

We share your joy at being able to celebrate Eucharist together. However, we still have to live under the restrictions that are there for the good of our vulnerable and elderly. Each parish is going to

have to determine how it will offer Masses while ensuring health guidelines are kept. This may mean some churches will not open immediately. It may mean that there are more people wanting to attend Mass than can be accommodated. We ask you to be patient and understanding while your parish leadership determine what will happen in your parish. With the Government, we ask those who are vulnerable to the virus, those who are afraid and anyone who is not well to stay at home. All people continue to be dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass during this time.

As we emerge from our "closed room" we hope and pray that the Lord will pour out his Spirit upon us, guiding us to work for a better, more caring society. We hope and pray that the Spirit will inspire our faith communities, our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, to re-vision themselves towards a revitalised spiritual life, a renewed effort towards welcome and evangelisation and to a deeper awareness of and response to the needs of the wider community.

As we look towards Pentecost may we be inspired by the early Church that emerged from the "closed room" so long ago. Like those Spirit-filled disciples, may we too take the risen Christ to the world.

Yours in Christ,

- ✠ Patrick Dunn, Bishop of Auckland and NZCBC President
- ✠ Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Hamilton and NZCBC Secretary
- ✠ John Dew, Cardinal Archbishop of Wellington, NZCBC Vice President
- ✠ Paul Martin SM, Bishop of Christchurch
- ✠ Michael Dooley, Bishop of Dunedin
- ✠ Michael Gielen, Auxiliary Bishop of Auckland

Cardinal John Dew, Bishop Patrick Dunn, the director-general of health Dr Ashley Bloomfield, and leaders of other faiths on May 13. The Prime Minister stressed the need to wait a little longer as the country was still at a very vulnerable stage.

Within a few days it emerged that the New Zealand Police had issued guidelines to officers indicating religious services could proceed with larger numbers, provided people sit in groups of 10, with each group two metres apart from others and a register being kept of those attending. The Police guidance stated that such an

event was not technically a "gathering". But the Ministry of Health reiterated that no more than 10 people could attend public gatherings, including church services.

The Catholic bishops wrote a strongly worded letter to the Prime Minister on May 22, urging that the Cabinet raise the limit of numbers allowed at religious services to at least 100.

It had been signalled that an announcement would come on May 25, after Cabinet met. But there had been some hints that the limit would be raised to 50 only.

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# Opt-in RE in Catholic schools opposed

by MICHAEL OTTO

Concerns from New Zealand's Catholic education sector over the wording of a bill concerning religious instruction in state schools and how this might affect integrated schools were heard by a parliamentary select committee earlier this year.

In a submission to the Education and Workforce Committee about the Education and Training Bill, New Zealand Catholic Education Office chief executive Paul Ferris stated that the way the bill was drafted was ambiguous, to the extent that the provisions that would apply to state schools and religious instruction would also apply to integrated schools.

Among other things, the bill changes the current "opt-out" provision for religious instruction in state schools that offer this outside of school hours to an "opt-in" one, whereby children can participate only if their parents request this in writing.

The NZCEO submission did not offer an opinion on reversing this onus for state schools.

But it stated that "under the current drafting, it appears that state-integrated schools would be subject to the opt-in provision . . .". This appeared to be an oversight in the drafting.

It added that parents sending their children to state-integrated schools is, in fact, a form of "opting in".

"Making state integrated schools subject to the opt-in provision creates unusual consequences, is inconsistent with other parts of the bill and is not supported by Ministry of Education guidelines around religious instruction," the submission added.

"Where religious instruction is the foundation of a school's special character, it is counter-intuitive that parents of students in those schools should have to expressly opt in," it noted.

The submission also requested that the bill be reworded so that it was clearer in this area.

Mr Ferris told *NZ Catholic* that when the NZCEO appeared before the select committee, some committee members noted the points that were made and no-one argued with them.

A submission on the same bill by the Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools, of which Mr Ferris is also chief executive, made similar points, but expressed concerns around provisions that school boards of trustees be required to ensure that "students are given a Māori world view including spiritual custom and practice".

"APIS records that a focus on the spiritual and cultural practices of Māori may at times conflict with the faith-based programmes of state-integrated schools . . ."

The APIS submission noted that, in state-integrated schools, "the proprietor has the statutory right to determine what is necessary to preserve and safeguard the special character of the school".

It also pointed to an inconsistency in the bill as it stands requiring that religious instruction be permitted only where parents opt in, as against a requirement that the curriculum must reflect as-



Paul Ferris

pects of local Māori culture, knowledge and world view, which include Māori spiritual custom and practice.

APIS supported "recognition of the partnership of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the emphasis in the bill on engaging student learners and raising the engagement of all learners to be more successful, without diminishing the obligation to provide equal outcomes for Māori students".

Mr Ferris told *NZ Catholic* that "we supported much of the Māori world view, but noted that the wider integrated sector might struggle with such an expectation when aspects of Māori spirituality might

challenge their special character".

While the majority of integrated schools have Catholic affiliations, a significant number have their own special character, including Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Adventist, Jewish, Muslim, Steiner, Montessori and non-denominational Christian.

Mr Ferris said he thinks that the committee members saw that this area of the bill — and that around opt-in for religious instruction in integrated schools — needed to be tightened up and clarified, so the issues named do not present themselves.

But he said the Covid-19 lockdown could well have distracted the committee from this work. "We have no updates to report, nor have we seen the final draft."

# Many challenges for emergency housing provider

by ROWENA OREJANA

The need for emergency housing is expected to rise after the Government's temporary housing schemes during the pandemic finish.

De Paul House manager Jan Rutledge said there are roughly 200 households on the North Shore (Auckland) that have been housed in motel rooms when the country went into level 4 lockdown.

De Paul House is a Catholic emergency housing and family support organisation.

"Government departments acted with speed, but they (homeless families) are in motels or in temporary placements. So, they'll come back to our wait-list once those placements get cancelled or deferred," she said.

During the lockdown, Ms Rutledge said De Paul House still received 37 calls for assistance with

housing.

"Because of lockdown level 4, we couldn't take people in. Our last client was the day before lockdown level 4. They came to one of our offsite properties," she said.

"Under level 3, we did take a family that was living in a garage into one of our smaller bedsit units." She said this family was living in a garage that got flooded when Auckland had one day of heavy rain.

In level 2, De Paul House has been able to acquire a new house in Glenfield, into which a family which had been living in a car moved on May 15.

One family moved out of DPH under level 2. This brought to the fore a new cost that the emergency housing provider hadn't had before: commercial grade cleaning.

## ■ Pandemic impact

Ms Rutledge said, when the Government declared level 4 lockdown, the DPH staff and clients had to make decisions on the spot.

"At the beginning of lockdown level 4, we had just over 90 children and 40 adults. Those people had to make really rapid decisions about who they wanted in their bubble," she said.

"Some of the young mums, in particular, decided they would create a bubble of two smaller families just to give each other the support, which was a sensible and really good solution. They became really good friends throughout this whole lockdown."

Ms Rutledge said other clients were in the middle of relationship breakdowns, which made their situations complicated because of custody arrangements. But the clients managed to sort out these arrangements promptly.

"I had been really impressed with the families living with us," Ms Rutledge said.

The staff had to make rapid decisions as well. The number of staff dropped from 21 to 3, which included herself.

"We had some staff members with health issues and so we asked them to move straight to home," Ms Rutledge said.

Their social workers were able to stay in touch with their clients throughout levels 4 and 3. The staff had to become familiar with new technology and applications.

## ■ Less support

The pandemic hit the emergency housing provider in unforeseen ways.

Ms Rutledge said hiring commercial cleaners is

added, but necessary, cost. Previously, cleaning a unit was done by volunteers.

Now, however, they are not sure when the volunteers can come back to help.

"We've also not got any volunteers back as yet, because we need to take care of them. A lot of them are retired," she said.

"And they work in teams. Volunteering should be sociable as well as delivering services for us. They are actually friends that would work in teams to sort linen and sort food. It isn't safe for them to come back at the moment."

The suspension of Masses and closure of schools also cut them off from their usual food supply.

"With the Masses closing, that avenue of food donation completely stopped. Usually, Carmel and Rosmini (Colleges) do an end-of-term food bank drive for us. We missed out on that because the lockdown came in so quickly for them as well as for us. So, our food bank was under-resourced right from the beginning," Ms Rutledge added.

She said, because they still do not have volunteers, they are not going to take in donations of clothing simply because there is no one to sort them out.

## ■ Essential workers

Ms Rutledge said what she finds ironic and sad is that most of their clients who have no housing are essential workers.

"These people are essential workers now living in transitional housing because they cannot find or afford permanent housing. But they are out there supporting communities. They are working in supermarkets, working as cleaners or in elder care homes. So they are essential to what's being provided during Covid-19, but they are living with us. I find that sad to be honest," she said.

What the health crisis did, Ms Rutledge observed, was make people more compassionate.

"People that previously had never had to apply for [a] benefit, had never had housing risk, are feeling what our people have felt all the time. So, it increased the compassion," she said.

Ms Rutledge said they still have amazing support from their parish communities, particularly St Joseph's, Takapuna, and St Mary's, Northcote. She added they received fresh vegetables from Kiwi Harvest.

What they need at the moment, she said, is practical support in terms of canned food, single duvets and financial help.

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# Principal appointed for NZ's newest Catholic school

by MICHAEL OTTO

An establishment principal has been appointed for New Zealand's newest Catholic primary school.

The Establishment Board of Trustees announced the appointment of Anthony Mills as establishment principal of Suzanne Aubert Catholic School in Papamoa in the Bay of Plenty.

Mr Mills will begin his role on June 8.

According to a report in Hamilton diocese magazine Kete Korero, Suzanne Aubert Catholic School is a new, years 1-6, Catholic primary school that will open in February, 2021. The initial intake will be 100 pupils.

The maximum roll will be 250 pupils by the end of 2024, according to *The Education Gazette*. The school is situated in Papamoa East and serves a large, emerging suburban population. It is part of All Saints by the Sea Catholic parish, Papamoa Coast, which was created in 2018 from the amalgamation of Mt Maunganui and Te Puke parishes. The parish already has one primary school — St Thomas More School in Mt Maunganui.

According to the Kete Korero article, "Suzanne Aubert School and St Thomas More School . . . will be key parts of the ministry of the parish".

"We see both schools developing a very close relationship and building on the existing family relationships within the parish."



Anthony Mills

The facebook page for Suzanne Aubert Catholic School posted on May 13 that Mr Mills is currently assistant principal at St Mary's Catholic School in Tauranga, and was previously director of religious studies at St Thomas More Catholic School in Mt Maunganui.

He has also held the position of Across School's Coordinator, where he has worked with local Catholic schools in the Bay of Plenty faith-based Kahui Ako (Community of Learning), the facebook post added.

It was also noted that Mr Mills is a graduate of the Science Teaching Leadership Programme facilitated



Looking east along Papamoa Beach. (Wikimedia Commons)

by the Royal Society of New Zealand, where he specialised in marine science.

"He has held a variety of other teaching and leadership positions during his 16 years in education."

The post also stated that Mr Mills "is an active parishioner in the All Saints by the Sea Parish, where he leads music ministry. He is a keen musician, artist, sportsperson and enjoys surfing at his local Papamoa beach".

He is married to Amie-Lee, who is also a teacher and together they have five children.

As establishment principal of Suzanne Aubert Catholic School, "he is

very excited about the opportunity to lead the vision and development of our new Catholic school in beautiful Papamoa, and is looking forward to connecting with our community".

According to a report on The New Zealand Herald website earlier this year, Graeme Roil, the Schools Property and Finance manager at Hamilton diocese, first began scouting locations for the school 10 years ago, eventually buying the land for the school at Papamoa five years ago. Government approval for the school was given earlier this year.

Building the new school is reportedly a "multi-million dollar project".

## First time school named after Suzanne Aubert

by MICHAEL OTTO

The Sisters of Compassion consider that having a school named after their foundress is an honour. Although other schools have named classrooms and class houses after the Venerable Suzanne Aubert, this is the first time a whole school has been so named.

Sr Josephine Gorman, DOLC, told NZ Catholic the sisters "are happy knowing Suzanne Aubert's spirit and legacy will live on in the minds and hearts of the teachers, pupils and parents at Papamoa and beyond".

"Our hope is that the school will imbibe Suzanne's spirit of faith and love for God to reach out to people with compassion, kindness and

goodness," Sr Josephine said.

The sisters were approached by Hamilton Bishop Stephen Lowe last March "asking for our opinion regarding having the new school in his diocese named after our tipuna".

"Since then, the trustees of the school have done research on Suzanne Aubert, to enable them to focus and assist them in forming the charism of the school."

Sr Josephine said she did not know if Suzanne visited Papamoa, but "between 1863-1865 she visited outlying Māori tribes".

"It is certain that she visited the Waikato often enough to be thoroughly familiar with its flora and with the dialect of its tribes. Most of these journeys had to be made on foot, and extended throughout

the Waikato and towards the Bay of Plenty."

Sr Josephine added that she thought Suzanne Aubert "would be happy to have a school named after her because she had a special love for children, as shown by her actions and her care of them".

"Besides nursing, Suzanne taught children, and reminded the sisters to love them and to give them a home, a place where they will be safe. Suzanne would hope that the children will be inspired by her to live the rest of their lives showing a good way of living, with a special love and care for people who are disadvantaged."

The Catholic Parish of Wellington South will name the parish after Suzanne Aubert when she is beatified, Sr Josephine said.



Suzanne Aubert



**"I see the Church as a field hospital after battle."**

POPE FRANCIS

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# A time of spiritual reckoning

As part of his extraordinary “Urbi et Orbi” blessing on the steps of St Peter’s Basilica in March, Pope Francis delivered a powerful meditation on the coronavirus crisis that is confronting the world. Reflecting on the Gospel of Mark (4:35-41), the disciples’ fear and Jesus’ calming of a storm, the Pontiff characterised this moment of history as a time of spiritual reckoning.

He proclaimed of God, “You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a time of choosing. Now is not the time of God’s judgement, but of our judgement: a time of choosing what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not”.

Seated in solitude within St Peter’s Square, the Pope claimed this unfolding crisis as a decisive event for humanity. Life has lost its outline and the affairs of this world no longer seem safe or certain. Our pre-packaged ideas, personal projects, habits and priorities have been overturned with no promise of an end in sight.

Amidst the vulnerability of this new world that we have been forced to inhabit, Pope Francis urged an inner awakening on the part of human society – a rediscovery of our faith and hope in Christ, the one who suffers upon the cross and is risen at Easter, and of our common belonging as sons and daughters of God.

## ■ Mirror

The current turmoil has exposed a fundamental forgetfulness of these dual realities, for we have long been “anesthetised” with ways of thinking and acting that cannot nourish the soul or produce a truly human society. Shaken neither by wars nor injustices across the world, we have lived as if we were invincible and set apart from these suffering “others”, only to now find ourselves vulnerable, isolated and without always the inner resources to confront adversity.

This spiritual diagnosis by Pope Francis calls to mind the words of Thomas Merton who warned in another century, “We can be ourselves or not, as we please . . . We may wear now one mask and now another, and never, if we so desire, appear with our own true face. But we cannot make these choices with impunity. Causes have effects

and, if we lie to ourselves and to others, then we cannot expect to find truth and reality whenever we happen to want them” (Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* 25).

In the long shadow cast by this global crisis, the culture of self-sufficiency has been unmasked as incapable of reflecting the divine image in which we are made. Nevertheless, in his patience and mercy, the call of God continues to echo in our day.

In this moment there are many in spiritual motion, searching for a safe harbour and a lasting future, as they confront what has been all too

## Daniel Ang

provisional or else taken for granted. As Yeats owns up, “Now that my ladder’s gone/I must lie down where all the ladders start/In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart” (*The Circus Animals’ Desertion*).

As people search the heavens for answers, it is a moment that calls from the Church a prophetic witness of solidarity and hope. Pope Francis encourages us as Christians to a faith marked by fortitude, “capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when everything seems to be floundering”.

## ■ Threshold

We can gainfully engage this moment by recognising that, while our post-Christian culture may define itself against tradition and dismiss faith as a timeworn cliché, it cannot shrug off the existential ache that persists and asserts itself in this threshold moment. To echo the observation of the English writer Julian Barnes, as a culture “we may not believe in God, but we sure miss him”. In a sense, like the tearful crowds of France before the ashes of Notre Dame Cathedral, we may be resistant to religion, but we are still haunted by Christian memory.

Seeking progress without presence of God or neighbour, this world crisis has now recalled us to both. The pretence of individualism has been



Pope Francis arrives for a prayer service in an empty St Peter’s Square at the Vatican on March 27, 2020. (CNS photo)

shattered by a pandemic that respects no border or claim to exceptionalism. The façade of contemporary “community” has been tested and found wanting, as evident as grocery aisle scraps.

As an Easter people we recognise that Christ is living by our side. Whatever may come, this personal hope and belonging to Christ as one body transforms an aching absence into the consolation of presence, the grip of isolation and fear into the courage to abide with one another in love and, like those first imperilled disciples, to entrust ourselves to the Lord who provides every blessing and strength we will need.

Daniel Ang is the director of Parish 2020 in the Archdiocese of Sydney. This article was first published in *The Catholic Weekly*. It is republished here with permission.

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## Ronald Rolheiser

# Fever

John Updike, after recovering from a serious illness, wrote a poem he called, *Fever*. It ends this way: “But it is a truth long known that some secrets are hidden from health.”

Deep down we already know this, but as a personal truth this is not something we appropriate in a classroom, from parents or mentors, or even from religious teaching. These just tell us that this is true, but knowing it does not itself impart wisdom. Wisdom is acquired, as Updike says, through a personal experience of serious illness, serious loss or serious humiliation.

The late James Hillman, writing as an agnostic, came to the same conclusion. I remember hearing him at a large conference where, at one point in his talk, he challenged his audience with words to this effect: Think back, honestly and with courage, and ask yourself: What are the experiences in your life that have made you deep, that have given you character? In almost every case, you will have to admit that it was some humiliation or abuse you had to endure, some experience of powerlessness, helplessness, frustration, illness, or exclusion. It is not the things that brought glory or adulation into your life that gave you depth and character, the time you were the valedictorian for your class or the time you were the star athlete. These did not bring you depth. Rather the experience of powerlessness, inferiority, is what made you wise.

I recall too as a graduate student sitting in on a series of lectures by the renowned Polish psychiatrist, Kasmir Dabrowski, who had written a number of books around a concept he termed “positive disintegration”. His essential thesis was that it is only by falling apart that we ever grow

to higher levels of maturity and wisdom. Once, during a lecture, he was asked: “Why do we grow through the disintegrating experiences such as falling ill, falling apart, or being humiliated? Would it not be more logical to grow through the positive experiences of being loved, being affirmed, being successful, being healthy and being admired? Shouldn’t that fire gratitude inside us and, acting out of that gratitude, we should become more generous and wise?”

He gave this response: Ideally, maturity and wisdom should grow out of experiences of strength and success; and maybe in some instances they do. However, as a psychiatrist, all I can say is that, in 40 years of clinical practice, I have never seen it. I have only seen people transformed to higher levels of maturity through the experience of breaking down.

Jesus, it would seem, agrees. Take, for example, the incident in the Gospels where James and John come and ask whether they might be given the seats at his right hand and left hand when he comes into his glory. It is significant that he takes their question seriously. He does not (in this instance) chide them for seeking their own glory; what he does instead is redefine glory and the route to it. He asks them: “Can you drink the cup?” They, naïve as to what is being asked of them, responded: “Yes, we can!” Jesus then tells them something to which they are even more naïve. He assures them that they will drink the cup, since eventually everyone will, but tells them that they still might not receive the glory because being seated in glory is still contingent upon something else.

What? What is “the cup”? How is drinking it

the route to glory? And why might we not receive the glory even if we do drink the cup?

The cup, as is revealed later, is the cup of suffering and humiliation, the one Jesus has to drink during his passion and dying, the cup he asks his Father to spare him from when in Gethsemane he prays in agony: “Let this cup pass from me!”

In essence, what Jesus is telling James and John is this: There is no route to Easter Sunday except through Good Friday. There is no route to depth and wisdom except through suffering and humiliation. The connection is intrinsic, like the pain and groans of a woman which are necessary to her when giving birth to a child. Further still, Jesus is also saying that deep suffering will not automatically bring wisdom. Why not? Because, while there is an intrinsic connection between deep suffering and greater depth in our lives, the catch is that bitter suffering can make us deep in bitterness, anger, envy, and hatred, just as easily as it can make us deep in compassion, forgiveness, empathy and wisdom. We can have the pain, and not get the wisdom.

Fever! The primary symptom of being infected with the coronavirus, and having Covid-19, is a high fever. Fever has now beset our world. The hope is that, after it so dangerously raises both our bodily and psychic temperatures, it will also reveal to us some of the secrets that are hidden from health. What are they? We don’t know yet. They will only be revealed inside the fever.

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# Problem of suffering points to Jesus

As New Zealand loosens restrictions that applied during the lockdown initiated by the coronavirus pandemic, many questions are being asked.

What does the future hold? Will the economy recover? What does it mean for my family and my community? Was our response the right one?

There are many questions and many answers — but often those answers are not immediately available.

Even people of faith are among those asking questions. Underneath all of these is a fundamental question. Where is God in all of this?

It goes back to one of the great mysteries — the mystery of evil and suffering. Many answers have been proposed down the centuries — for instance, suffering is a test or a trial; suffering is punishment for sins. It is not a new problem.

As writer Mark Dowd pointed out in the Jesuit publication *Thinking Faith* earlier this month, many an ingenious solution has been proposed under the heading of “theodicy”.

While these questions certainly have their place, Dowd wrote, the answers to them are “condemned to fall short”.

Instead, one arrives back at the Book of Job, where “the haplessly virtuous but tormented figure asks God to make sense of all his trials and misfortunes”. God does not give Job an answer but points to the divine instigation of the great breadth and depth of creation, which is beyond human comprehension.

However, a key aspect that can be taken from the Book of Job is not that God explains suffering to Job, but rather God is with him in his suffering. This points to an even greater “being with” humanity by God that is yet to come.

Jesuit Father James Martin, writing in *The New York Times* earlier this year, explored similar problems and questions. Like

Dowd, he found that the mystery of suffering is “unanswerable”, but if this is the case, where can the believer go in times like this?

“For the Christian, and perhaps even for others, the answer is Jesus,” Fr Martin wrote.

This is apt in many ways, even in the times of this pandemic. We look upon the image of a crucified and suffering God on the cross, who breathes his last and gives up his Spirit.

This is in a time when stories have been in media throughout the world about patients fighting for breath, oxygen levels, ventilators and the like. Fr Martin wrote that Jesus is divine, so knows all things, but he is human so has experienced human things — even being starved of oxygen.

And this reflection is most apt at Pentecost, where, as Benedict XVI preached in 2011, the Holy Spirit is portrayed in John 20:22 as the breath of the risen Jesus. At the same time, the Spirit is the one who makes us recognise the Lord God in Jesus.

The Spirit prompts us to speak the profession of the Church’s faith: “Jesus is Lord.”

“Lord”, Benedict preached, “is the title attributed to God in the Old Testament, a title that, in the interpretation of the Bible, replaced his unpronounceable name. The Creed of the Church is nothing other than the development of what we say with this simple affirmation: “Jesus is Lord”.

The words “Jesus is Lord” can be interpreted in two ways, Benedict continued.

“They mean: Jesus is God, and, at the same time: God is Jesus. The Holy Spirit illuminates this reciprocity: Jesus has divine dignity and God has the human face of Jesus. God shows himself in Jesus and, by doing so, gives us the truth about ourselves. Letting ourselves be enlightened by this Word in the depths of our inmost being is the event of Pentecost.”

As Dowd wrote: “How very apt that, in these Covid-19 anxious times, we vouch faith in a God who does not ridicule us or abandon us in our suffering, but in a God who sends his son to die through asphyxiation on a cross.”

“A God who says — this is not the end of the tale. Put your hand in mine. Walk through the darkness of the tomb and prepare for the unexpected — the new life of resurrection.

“We look through a glass darkly. I believe, Lord. Help my unbelief.”

## The Habit



## Letters

### Ordination

Regarding the episcopal ordination of Bishop Michael Gielen at Vodafone Events Centre on March 7 (*NZ Catholic*, March 22). It was truly a splendid and memorable celebration embracing all cultures and ages.

My congratulations . . . to the organisers for selection and setting up of the venue, for the efficiency of the traffic wardens and ushers, the welcome and accommodation of everyone, enhanced by the use of the big screen and technology of sound.

Looking about me at the tiers of people in cultural attire, our clergy, the many choirs in different colours, the school uniforms, the faces of so many nations, I realised that was the true picture of our diocese — alive, involved, joyful and participating in the life of our faith.

Surrounded by Filipinos, Indians, Iranians, Dutch and others all speaking in their own language, plus the Deaf with sign language, my thoughts went to Pentecost and the speaking in many tongues by Jesus’ followers.

At my age, this is the fifth such ceremony I have attended. The camera work and close-up shots allowed us to share in those intimate moments and actions unseen before — the placing of the ring on Bishop Michael’s hand, the presentation of the Book of the Gospels and

other symbols.

**Frances Mazur,**  
Manurewa, Auckland.  
■ *Abridged* — Editor.

### Rebellion

After some weeks in lockdown, we started to rebel, and fuelled by a desire to break out of our “bubbles”, we began finding fault with . . . the very system so valiantly trying to do everything in its power to protect us.

We were frustrated and angry, our nerves frazzled, fearful for our future, our jobs and our economy, to the extent that the threat of impending demise diminished.

We needed to find a scapegoat . . . and we railed against hasty laws set in place to help control the spread of the disease. We resorted to counter-productive behaviours bearing the marks of irrationality, fuelling our latest obsession; to hold someone — anyone — to account. Self-righteousness, thinly veiled as righteous anger, standing up for our “rights”, preposterous projections of imagined probabilities, way into the future.

Tired of restrictions, we demanded relief and began to believe that we were being deceived into thinking that we had ever been in danger! Or that the risk was minimal, the measures taken excessive or draconian.

“Experts” emerged with explanations ranging from outrageous conspiracy theories — including

the emergence of a “New World Order” — to doomsday predictions.

What will we think once this is all over? Will we have learned? Will we admit we have a gullible propensity for predicting the worst?

I suspect that we will move on, forget about it except when we encounter adverse effects ahead.

Then will we be inclined to assign blame and fail to remember that we just may owe our lives to the benevolence of others?

**Barbara Hines,**  
Auckland.

### Brothels

Why has the Government approved the opening of brothels but closed churches? Is it that prostitution is considered an essential service but not churches?

It would be helpful if the Government could explain to the community why gatherings of more than 10 persons are prohibited at a church to worship God and pray, but gatherings of 100 are permitted at restaurants and bars.

Is it that the Government trusts those who attend the local bar or restaurant to be responsible but not those who attend church to worship God and to pray?

Religious freedom is a right that is not subject to the state. We have a duty to God to come together as a community to give honour and glory to God and to pray for the nation.

In view of the Government’s desire to protect the community from Covid-19, with the emphasis on social distancing

and hand washing, why is the Government putting the health of vulnerable women in great jeopardy by permitting prostitution and the opening of brothels?

How does the Government expect prostitutes to maintain social distancing with their clients? Every life matters and the health of prostitutes and their clients should be of concern to the Government.

**Ken Orr,**  
Christchurch

### Debate

I have been following with interest the various debates and comments on social media about the fact that religious services in the first part of alert level 2 can only have 10 people attending, whereas the limit for certain other commercial activities is 100 — with appropriate social distancing.

While debate is healthy and Catholic laity have a right to make their views known to their pastors, care should be taken that comments are made respectfully. Most have been, but a few have been sailing a bit close to the wind.

Our leaders did make their case to Government. Some people think they should go on making that case over and over again in public protest. That could well work against the Church in the long run. The court of public opinion is not likely to be kindly disposed — and that will play against the voice of people of faith being well heard on future issues.

**S. Maitland,**  
Auckland.

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# Budget an encouraging start but some omissions

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Auckland diocese's Justice and Peace Commission believes that, with its 2020 Budget, the Government has made an encouraging effort to meet the needs of the poor and vulnerable in the Covid-19 crisis, but there were some omissions.

The commission prefaced its reaction to the Budget by noting Government responsibilities to foster the common good and support the poorest and most vulnerable, while facing the challenges of such an unprecedented time.

Moves in the Budget to address the housing crisis were applauded by the JPC, specifically the provision of 8000 more public and transitional housing units - but this is over an unspecified time period. The commission noted that there were 14,000 families on the public housing waiting list before the Covid-19 crisis, and the pressure in this area is likely to increase.

"We believe a much more substantial programme of decent affordable house construction, state and private, is still urgently needed, and would be a great provider of jobs and assistance to business through the substantial flow-on effects through the economy," the commission stated.

The affordability of private rentals needs to be addressed urgently, it added.

The commission also welcomed the \$137million increase in Whanau Ora funding which will help many vulnerable families facing the health and socio-economic effects of the Covid-19 crisis.



The numbers of people seeking Jobseeker Support benefits has risen sharply.

Also welcomed was the \$37million fund to support community groups, with a particular focus on helping Maori, Pacific, refugee and migrant communities in coping with the crisis.

Extension of the School Lunch programme and an allocation of \$32million to reimburse foodbanks was praised.

"We identify a need in Auckland and Northland to put in place a collective strategy to address immediate food needs of so many families," the commission added.

Also praised were the Wage Subsidy Scheme and the \$25-a-week increase in social welfare assistance for foster care allowance, orphans benefit

and unsupported child's benefit.

"We are, however, disappointed by the choice not to increase the base rate for social welfare assistance, or to extend payment of the living wage to state contractors. The divide gets bigger as these people on the margins continue to be neglected."

A Government move to fund a community clearing house to enable access to justice for the vulnerable was described as "a very helpful initiative". The commission added that more assistance was needed in other areas of prisoner rehabilitation and working with offenders with drug and alcohol issues, as well as more support for programmes to improve prisoner health and literacy.

The JPC welcomed a continued emphasis in the Budget on sustainability and nurturing the environment "while assisting people to continue in employment and build a more sustainable and fairer society, particularly through the \$1.4billion trades and apprenticeship training and the \$1.1billion environmental jobs schemes.

Also applauded were a boost to Department of Conservation funding and the introduction of the \$200million jobs-for-nature programme.

But "it would have been useful if the Budget had provided more support for incentives for sustainable land use, robust assistance to transition to electric vehicles, improve water quality for rural and urban communities, and work on a system to adequately rate and label goods in terms of country of origin and environmental standard".

## Significant welfare system shortcomings at critical time

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Wellington Archdiocese ecology, justice and peace advisor Lisa Beech welcomes Budget 2020, which significantly increases Government spending to protect and create jobs, deliver healthcare, build houses, support community organisations, and create environmental projects during the Covid-19 health and economic crises.

"After four decades in which ideas that the market will deliver social and economic wellbeing have predominated, we strongly welcome the recognition in Budget 2020 that a core role of the State is promoting the common good of all," she said.

However, despite the greatest increase in Government spending that many will see in our lifetimes, the Budget still does not address sig-

nificant shortcomings in our welfare system at a time when unprecedented numbers of people are entering the system for the first time, she noted.

The Wellington Ecology, Justice and Peace Commission submitted to the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee in February that the Government implement the Welfare Expert Advisory Group's Recommendation 19, that main benefits be raised to cover a higher proportion of people's living costs, reducing reliance on other forms of assistance.

Ms Beech said that, instead of addressing the inadequacy of benefit levels, Budget 2020 instead supports the charitable sector delivering emergency food support through schools and foodbanks.

"The best way to overcome food insecurity is to raise benefit levels so families can buy food themselves. Our inadequate social safety net will inevitably see more people in poverty. We will continue to advocate that fundamental issues in our welfare system must be addressed through the Covid-19 response."

## Social services need further boost

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services praised additional funding for a wide range of support services in the Budget, saying that it would be of great help to those who suffer Covid-19-related hardship.

NZCCSS executive officer Trevor McGlinchey said the funding would help social services "step up to provide the support families, whānau and communities need".

But the Budget did not introduce some moves that the NZCCSS had hoped for.

Prior to the Budget, the NZCCSS called for structural

change to the benefit system so that those who need welfare receive enough income to meet their basic needs. This would reduce the overall demand for crisis support and social services, it said.

"NZCCSS is disappointed that the structural change that is needed in the welfare system has not been implemented. The Budget has maintained the benefit status quo, with only small increases in income. As a result of this lack of change, many more New Zealanders will be impacted by poverty and hardship", McGlinchey said.

The council added that an ongoing process is needed for

increasing funding for the social service sector and for building up the sector's capability to ensure community and social service organisations are well positioned to meet the increasing needs going forward, notably when increased unemployment and hardship are forecast.

"While this Budget delivered significant additional funding into areas such as family violence services, food rescue, foodbanks, rural communities and public housing, only a small amount of funding was provided to support organisations to address current and historic cost pressures," Mr McGlinchey said.

## Innovative investment needed for fairness

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand welcomed the Budget's overall direction as being a foundation of hope, but called for innovative investment to help everyone create a fairer society.

A "reset" following on from the Covid-19 crisis is an opportunity to heal the afflictions of poverty, intergenerational unemployment, homelessness and environmental degradation.

Budget moves to create jobs were praised by Caritas, as were environmental initiatives.

Strengthening the Māori econ-

omy, putting resources back into the hands of iwi to encourage employment for their people, and ensuring that existing inequalities are overcome must be a high priority, Caritas noted.

It also called for a low-carbon economy and added that investment decisions to generate jobs should reflect that. For those carbon-intensive industries which need to make substantial changes, there should be a fair transition involving education, upskilling and retraining of staff, as well as support for new flexible ways of working which may involve working more often

from home.

Caritas also welcomed New Zealand's continuing commitment to overseas aid, especially to Pacific nations. It called for ongoing transparency in the allocation of those commitments.

"Now is the time for bold and decisive investment to build our future," a Caritas statement noted. "In the Budget we find a foundation of hope; now we must ensure that all New Zealanders are able to contribute to, and benefit from, the opportunities that will arise from the more cohesive, resilient society that we rebuild together."

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# Women in seminaries debate prompts questions

by ROWENA OREJANA

The presence of women in seminaries and seminary formation is vital for future priests and prevention of sexual abuse, but the Church must go beyond that and act now, a top New Zealand Catholic theologian said.

Earlier, Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, was interviewed by Vatican News about the role of women in priestly formation programmes.

"We must radically change" how priests interact with women, the cardinal was quoted by Vatican News as saying, adding that "during formation it is important that there is contact, discussion, exchanges" with women.

The Vatican News also report Cardinal Ouellet as saying that having women on seminary formation teams "would help a candidate interact with women in a natural way, including in facing the challenge represented by the presence of women, attraction to a woman."

Dr Figueroa said New Zealand is doing "pretty well" in terms of having women in priestly formation, as against its counterparts around the world.

"I agree with Cardinal Ouellet that the presence of women in sem-

inaries and seminary formation is vital. In New Zealand, at the Catholic Theological College (previously known as Good Shepherd College), we have a very good balance of male and female lecturers," she told *NZ Catholic*.

"Currently we have five female lecturers and seven males. Apart from the good gender balance, the college also has a variety of ages and cultures within the staff, which gives the students the possibility of being enriched by many different perspectives."

Dr Figueroa said the problem she sees is that the seminary is too "male-centred" and future priests don't have a lot of contact with women.

"It is like a bubble in which they don't learn how to have healthy relationships with the opposite sex, and this can damage their process of sexual maturity. Perhaps we can rethink ways in which seminarians can have more contact with families and lay people," she said.

Cardinal Ouellet said in the interview that he agreed that, if women were involved in the formation of priests, the sex abuse scandal might have been prevented.

"There certainly is some truth in that because man is an affective being. If interaction between the



Dr Rocio Figueroa

sexes is missing, there is a risk of developing compensations . . . [which can] express themselves [in] the exercise of power or in closed relationships, a closure that becomes manipulation and control . . . and which can give rise to the abuse of conscience and sexual abuse."

"I think that, for a priest, learning to relate to women in the environment of formation is a humanising factor that promotes equilibrium in the man's personality and affectivity," the cardinal was quoted as saying.

Dr Figueroa said, while she agreed with the cardinal on this issue, the

problem is not "just about the presence of women in seminaries".

"We need more women in decisional positions within the Catholic Church. Pope Francis continues reminding us of the importance of battling against clericalism," she said.

Dr Figueroa said Western societies have "largely overcome" a patriarchal style of leaderships, but the Church has not.

"The power in the Church is profoundly linked to those who administer the sacraments. For me, this is a huge problem that doesn't reflect the spirit of the Gospel," she said.

Dr Figueroa cited women apostles, prophets and teachers who were leaders in the early Church: Priscilla, Phoebe and Junia.

"We need to show the value of dignity and equality between male and female, not just in our words, but in our own structures," she said.

"I think that the Church lacks half of humanity in its decision-making process and is not receiving the knowledge and particularities that women can bring. Women are able to offer their talents in the charismatic dimension of the Church, but not in the institutional," she further explained.

Dr Figueroa said the lack of female participation in the formation of future priests is only one factor.

"The Church has effectively been breathing with one lung," she observed. "For me, it is not time for reflection because all these things are pretty clear. It is time for action."

## Aust. bishops welcome governance reform report

CANBERRA — The Australian Catholic bishops have welcomed a report into Catholic Church governance practices and possible reforms, which was presented to them shortly before their plenary meeting in mid-May.

The report, entitled *The Light from the Southern Cross: Promoting Co-responsible Governance in the Catholic Church in Australia*, was commissioned by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference following a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The report is 200 pages long and includes 86 recommendations.

"The members of the Governance Review Project Team are to be congratulated on producing such a substantial piece of work, with far-reaching implications for

the Church's life and mission," said Archbishop Mark Coleridge, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

"To do it justice, the bishops will now take advice, consider the report in depth, conduct discussions at a provincial level, and otherwise prepare for a full discussion at their November plenary. This will allow them to then publish the report and respond to it."

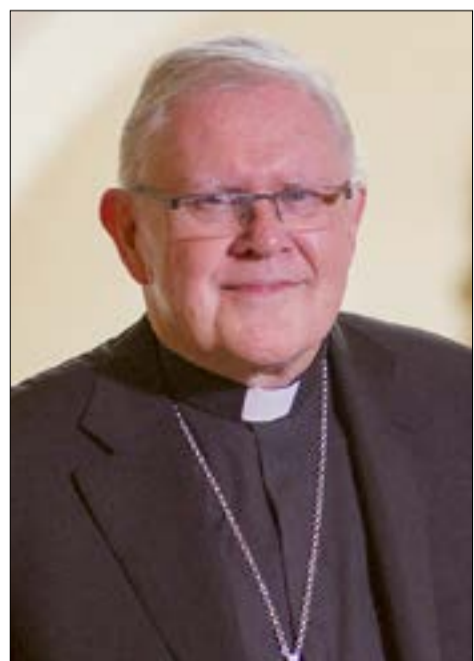
Archbishop Coleridge noted that the report, dealing as it does with so many aspects of Church governance, will necessarily become a significant contribution to the ongoing work of prayerful reflection and discussion leading up to the formal assemblies of an upcoming Plenary Council in Australia.

"The whole Church in Australia is presently engaged in a process of deep reflection and discernment on the life and mission of the Church in the immediate and longer-term future," said Archbishop Coleridge.

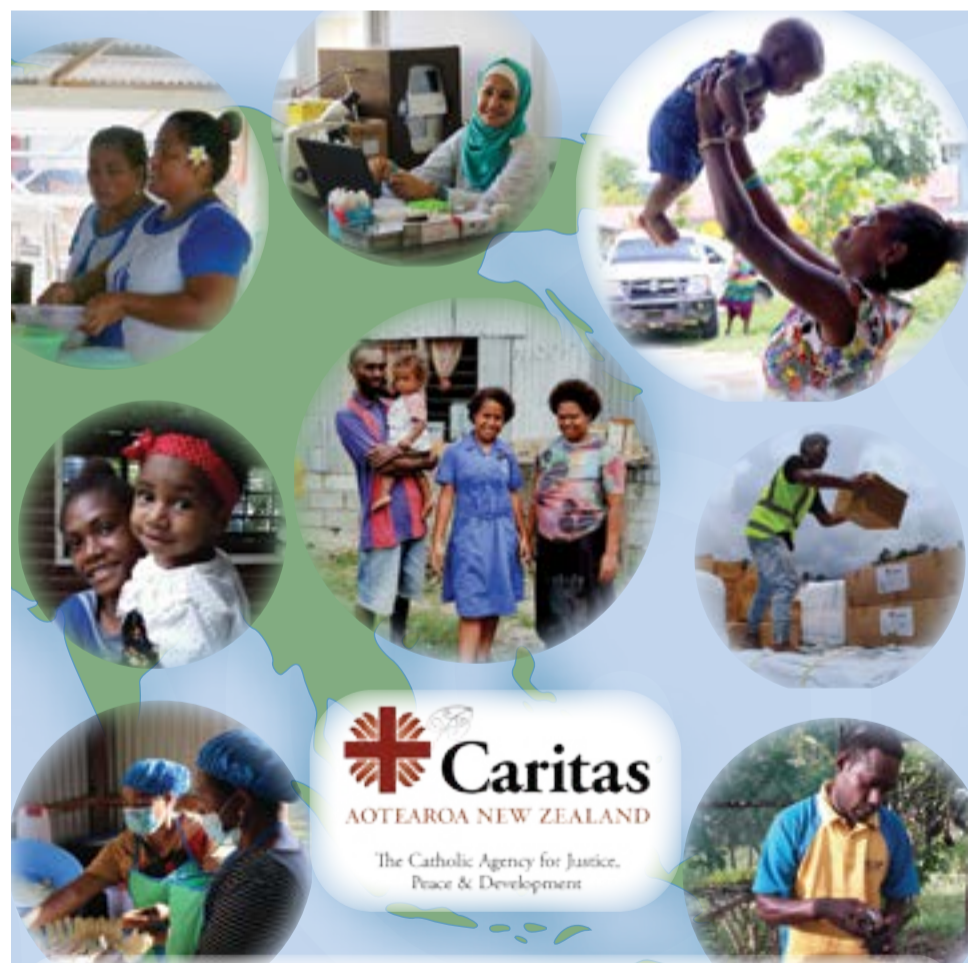
"We owe a debt of gratitude to the Governance Review Project Team for their important and comprehensive contribution to this ongoing process of discernment. The report will undoubtedly contribute to the eventual formation of proposals to be considered during the Plenary Council."

The report identifies key principles of good ecclesial governance, such as subsidiarity, stewardship, synodality, dialogue, discernment and leadership. It offers important ideas on how the Church might enhance the leadership role of lay people and ensure appropriate co-responsibility at parish and diocesan levels.

"The bishops look forward to considering the report in depth and to its eventual public release," Archbishop Coleridge said.



Archbishop Mark Coleridge



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# St Peter's Basilica reopens to the public

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Almost 10 weeks after St Peter's Basilica was closed to the public in cooperation with Italy's Covid-19 lockdown measures, the faithful and tourists were allowed back in on May 18.

Pope Francis celebrated Mass at 7am at the tomb of St John Paul II to mark the 100th anniversary of the Polish pope's birth. Then, at 8am, the general public was admitted.

The basilica was sanitised on May 15 in preparation for the reopening. It had been closed to the public since March 10.

On the edge of St Peter's Square, a sign advises visitors they must wear a mask and stay 2 metres away from others in order to enter the basilica.

The Vatican sanitation service placed hand-sanitiser dispensers at the end of the colonnade surrounding St Peter's Square. From there, the public finds "keep your distance" labels and tape on the cobblestone path leading to the health and security checks before entering the basilica.

At the end of the path, two members of the Knights of Malta, dressed in white lightweight hazmat suits, point a small thermoscanner at the visitor's forehead. If the person does not have a fever, he or she can proceed to the line for the metal detectors.

After the security check and before entering the church, visitors find another hand-sanitiser dispenser.



A woman has her temperature checked before entering St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on May 18 (CNS Photo)

While many of the people attending the Mass celebrated by Pope Francis were not wearing masks, once the celebration was over, Vatican security began enforcing the face-mask requirement and breaking up any situation where it looked like people were standing close to each other to talk, including journalists trying to interview some of the first people inside.

Vatican Media did not show peo-

ple receiving Communion at the Pope's Mass. For the Masses celebrated later that morning, Communion was distributed only in the hand.

Vatican workers with large spray bottles resanitised the altars and pews where Masses were celebrated with the public.

Except for the expanded space needed for the line for security checks, St Peter's Square remained closed.

## St John Paul remembered on saint's birthday

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — St John Paul II was a man of deep prayer, who loved being close to people and loved God's justice and mercy, Pope Francis said at a Mass at the saint's tomb on May 18.

"Let us pray to him today that he may give all of us — especially shepherds of the Church — but all of us, the grace of prayer, the grace of closeness and the grace of justice-mercy, mercy-justice," the Pope said.

Before releasing a written decree later that day, Pope Francis also announced during the Mass that the October 5 liturgical memorial of St Faustina Kowalska would no longer be optional but would be an obligatory feast day for the whole Church. St John Paul canonised St Faustina and promoted her devotion to Divine Mercy.

Pope Francis said that, just as the Lord visited his people because he loved them, "today we can say that 100 years ago the Lord visited his people — he sent a man, he prepared him to be a bishop and to guide the Church" as a shepherd. There were three things that made St John Paul such a good shepherd: his intense dedication to prayer; his closeness to the people; and his love for God's merciful justice, Pope Francis said.

The Mass at St John Paul's tomb was scheduled to be the last of Pope Francis' early morning Masses to be livestreamed online; with churches opening in Italy and elsewhere, the Pope encouraged people to attend Mass in their local parish communities while respecting health norms.

## Vatican announces Laudato Si' anniversary year

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican announced that it will commemorate the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment with a year-long series of initiatives dedicated to the safeguarding and care for the Earth.

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development announced a "Special Laudato Si' Anniversary

Year" from May 24, 2020, to May 24, 2021, which will emphasise "ecological conversion in action".

Among the events set to take place throughout the year are prayer services and webinars dedicated to environmental care, education and the economy. The dicastery also detailed the rollout of a "seven-year journey toward integral ecology" for

families, dioceses, schools, universities, hospitals, businesses, farms and religious orders.

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development said that, amid the current pandemic, "Laudato Si'" can "indeed provide the moral and spiritual compass for the journey to create a more caring, fraternal, peaceful and sustainable world".

## In new biography, Pope Benedict says world threatened by humanism

MUNICH (CNS) — In a newly-published biography, retired Pope Benedict XVI said the Catholic Church is threatened by a "worldwide dictatorship of seemingly humanist ideologies".

He cited same-sex marriage, abortion and the "creation of humans in the laboratory" as examples.

The retired Pope, 93, said: "Modern society is in the process of formulating an anti-Christian creed, and resisting this creed is punished by social excommunication."

Commenting on the state of the Church in the 21st century, he said, "Events have shown by now that the crisis of faith has above all led to a crisis of Christian existence."

The German Catholic news agency, KNA, reported the remarks were published in the final chapter of a biography of the retired pope by bestselling author Peter Seewald. The book was published in German on May 4; the author said Pope Benedict made the comments in autumn, 2018, more than five years after he resigned.

In the interview, which had not

been published before, the former Pope said he had written a spiritual testament. This will presumably not be revealed until after his death, KNA reported. Benedict did not comment on its contents.

He also explained the reasons for his resignation as pope in 2013. He denied that it was because of corruption in the Vatican or the "Vatileaks" scandal. Instead, he said it had become increasingly clear to him that, in addition to possible dementia, "other forms of insufficient ability to hold office properly are also possible".

In this context, Pope Benedict revealed that he, like St Paul VI and St John Paul II, had signed a conditional declaration of resignation "in the event of illness that rendered the proper performance of duties impossible". He did this "relatively early" in his pontificate, he told Seewald.

He commented at length on criticism of his resignation. The office of a "pope emeritus" that he had created should be compared to that of a bishop who had retired for age reasons, he said. This legal status

could also be applied to the bishop of Rome. It prevented "any notion of a coexistence of two popes: a diocese can have only one incumbent. At the same time, it expresses a spiritual bond that can never be taken away."

The former Pope also likened his situation to that of an old farmer in Bavaria who has passed his farm to his son, lives in a small house next to it and has ceded his fatherly and commanding rights.

Pope Benedict vehemently rejected accusations that he had interfered in Church debates since then. This, he said, was a "malicious distortion of the truth". KNA reported that he hinted there were "reasons why people just want to switch off my voice".

Referring to his relationship with his successor, he said he thanked God that the "warm-hearted devotion of Pope Francis" enabled him to implement the idea of a pope emeritus. Since their meeting in Castel Gandolfo in 2013, he said, there has been a personal friendship that has "not only remained, but grown".

## English bishop dies from COVID-19

MANCHESTER, England (CNS) — A retired English bishop has died from Covid-19 a week after he tested positive for the virus at his nursing home.

Retired Auxiliary Bishop Vincent Malone of Liverpool died May 18 in Royal Liverpool Hospital, said a May 18 statement by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Bishop Malone was 88.

The statement noted Bishop Malone's warm hospitality, kindness and the respect he showed those whom he served in ministry.



Retired Bishop Vincent Malone in an undated photo (CNS Photo)



# Pope joins interfaith prayer for end to pandemic

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — At a time of global “tragedy and suffering” because of the coronavirus, and in view of the long-term impact it will have, believers of every religion should beg mercy from the one God and father of all, Pope Francis said.

During his early morning Mass, Pope Francis joined leaders of every religion marking May 14 as a day of prayer, fasting and acts of charity to ask God to stop the coronavirus pandemic.

Some people might think, “It hasn’t affected me; thank God I’m safe.’ But think about others! Think about the tragedy and also about the economic consequences, the consequences on education,” the Pope said in his homily.

“That is why today everyone, brothers and sisters from every religious tradition, are praying to God,” he said.

The day of prayer was called for by the Higher Committee of Human Fraternity, an international group of religious leaders formed after Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of al-Azhar, signed a document in 2019 on promoting dialogue and “human fraternity”.

During the Pope’s Mass, livestreamed from the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, he said he could imagine some people would say that gathering believers of all religions to pray for a common cause “is religious relativism, and you can’t do it”.

“But how can you not pray to the Father of all?” he asked.

“We are all united as human beings, as brothers and sisters, praying to God, each according to our own culture, traditions and beliefs, but brothers and sisters praying to God,” the Pope said. “This is important: brothers and sisters fasting, asking God to pardon our sins so that the Lord would have mercy on us, that the Lord would forgive us, that the Lord would stop this pandemic.”

But Pope Francis also asked people to look beyond the coronavirus pandemic and recognise that there are other serious situations bringing death to millions of people.

“In the first four months of this year, 3.7 million people died of hunger. There is a pandemic of hunger,” he said, so when asking God to stop the Covid-19 pandemic, believers should not forget the “pandemic of



Pope Francis begins Mass on May 14 explaining that he is joining members of all religions in a day of prayer, fasting and charity, asking God to free the world from the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS Photo)

war, of hunger” and so many other evils spreading death.

“May God stop this tragedy, stop this pandemic,” he prayed. “May God have mercy on us and also stop other

awful pandemics: those of hunger, war, children without education. And we ask this as brothers and sisters, all together. May God bless us and have mercy on us.”

## Few mentions of ‘abortion’ in sermons, study finds

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The percentage of sermons about abortion is in the single digits, according to a Pew Research Center study, the results of which were released April 29.

Even a mention of abortion in a sermon is rare, according to the study.

Pew analysed nearly 50,000 sermons, shared online or livestreamed by more than 6000 US churches and delivered between April 7 and June 1, 2019, a time-frame that included Easter.

Five per cent of Catholic homilies analysed during the study period mentioned abortion, which topped the national average of 4 per cent. Other Christians were grouped into “mainline Protestant”, “evangelical Protestant” and “historically black Protestant”.

Nineteen per cent of Catholic congregations heard abortion mentioned in at least one sermon during the study period, which matched the na-

tional average. Evangelicals led the way with 22 per cent, with mainline Protestants trailing at 10 per cent.

The percentage of Catholics hearing about abortion may be surprising, according to Dennis Quinn, the lead researcher for the study. The median length of Catholic homilies was 14 minutes - but 37 minutes for all sermons, with black Protestants topping out at 54 minutes.

“If you talk about 17 things in the same sermon, you have a greater chance” of mentioning abortion, Quinn told the Catholic News Service in an April 28 phone interview.

Moreover, the study found abortion is more likely to be mentioned in sermons to smaller congregations. Catholic Masses tend to draw sizable congregations. Pew found 23 per cent of smaller Catholic congregations - 200 or less - hearing an abortion reference in a sermon, compared to 18

per cent of a larger assembly.

Quinn told CNS the study did not take into account the physical location of the churches, and whether abortion might have been the subject of a policy battle during the study period.

Given that nearly all sermons are being delivered online during the coronavirus pandemic, Quinn said he did not know whether any subsequent study would account for this new reality.

Pew used computational tools such as Google Places to find church websites, and Amazon’s Mechanical Turk, a crowdsourcing website, to help find abortion references in 250-word sermon segments, because, as the study said, “whole sermons are generally too long for an individual worker to read in one sitting”.

## Holy See concern over Israel’s West Bank plan

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Holy See is concerned about an Israeli plan to unilaterally annex a large portion of land in the West Bank, said a Vatican statement.

“The Holy See is following the situation closely, and expresses concern about any future actions that could further compromise dialogue,” said the statement released on May 20.

The Vatican press office said the statement came after Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the Vatican foreign minister, was contacted by telephone by Saeb Erekat, chief negotiator and secretary-general of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

Erekat, it said, wanted “to in-

form the Holy See about recent developments in the Palestinian territories, and of the possibility of Israel applying its sovereignty unilaterally to part of those territories, further jeopardising the peace process”.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and opposition leader Benny Gantz reached an agreement to form a coalition government, and Netanyahu was sworn in again as Prime Minister on May 17. He had promised to bring a proposal to the full government as early as July 1 to annex the land on which some 130 Jewish settlements are built in the West Bank, settlements the United Nations Security Council has

declared a “flagrant violation” of international law.

The Vatican statement said, “The Holy See reiterates that respect for international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions is an indispensable element for the two peoples to live side-by-side in two states, within the borders internationally recognised before 1967.”

The Vatican also expressed “its hope that Israelis and Palestinians will be soon able to find once again the possibility for directly negotiating an agreement, with the help of the international community, so that peace may finally reign in the Holy Land, so beloved by Jews and Christians and Muslims”.

## Disappointment as public shut out in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM — People were disappointed to be denied entry to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem on May 24, reported *The Times of Israel*.

The denominations that share custody of the church had announced that it would reopen on May 24 “to the faithful, for

visits and prayers”, with entry restricted to a maximum of 50 people at a time, with other restrictions applying.

On May 24, it was announced that the reopening was postponed, however a new date was not given.

Among the reasons cited

for not opening were problems maintaining social distancing, waiting for a further easing of government restrictions so that 100 people could enter, and a claim that 50 clerics from various churches came to pray on May 24, leaving no room for the public.

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# Finding a different path to fruitfulness

by JENNY BRINKWORTH

When Catholic convert and respected journalist Debra Vermeer was grappling with the reality that she and her husband Tony could not conceive a child, she found the shelves of bookshops devoid of helpful literature.

There was a plethora of material on parenting and different fertility methods and technologies, but very little to support couples living with infertility.

A former Canberra political reporter and media adviser to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Debra “heard God whisper” that maybe she could write a book about infertility in a faith context.

As well as putting into words her personal experience and deepest thoughts, she interviewed six other couples who have “walked their own path through infertility” and she has shared these stories in her recently published book *Life to the Full*.

As the title suggests, it is a book of hope. But that doesn’t diminish the pain and anguish experienced by couples whose faith is based on the divine command of “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28) and the Catholic teaching that children are “the supreme gift of marriage” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 161).

In the introduction, Debra unpacks biblical references to infertility, and the fact that they almost always go hand-in-hand with God intervening.

“I found little solace in these stories of God blessing infertile (and often downright elderly) couples with a baby as a reward for their faithfulness,” she writes.

“If God could do that for women like Sarah, Rachel and Hannah in the Old Testament, and Mary’s cousin Elizabeth in the New Testament, then why wouldn’t he do it for us?”

But through her discussions with bishop friends and her spiritual adviser, she came to the understanding that these Scripture stories are part of a bigger narrative of God’s “unfailing, liberating love” and it is “in our barrenness and in our suffering that God’s blessing will come”.

Revealing her devastation at not falling pregnant after marrying fellow journalist Tony Vermeer, a widower with two teenage children at the time, Debra writes of crying at shopping centres because she’d seen a random baby, and sometimes breaking down for no apparent reason at all.

“I now recognise it as profound grief. The future that I had dreamed of and yearned for was swept away and it was like I was incapable of reimagining a future,” she writes.

But her faith, which has led her to becoming a Benedictine oblate (a vowed associate of the order) and frequent visitor to the sisters’ Jamberoo Abbey in New South Wales, was a constant source of solace.

After 15 years of marriage she says she has



Debra and Tony Vermeer

come to understand that, “despite the cross of infertility we have been called to bear, or perhaps through it, we are infinitely blessed”.

“God has given us a strong, deep and true love as a married couple.”

One of the most moving parts of Debra’s story is her relationship with her stepchildren, whom she describes as “two of the finest human beings you’ll ever meet”.

“What continues to amaze me and to humble me is the way Cass and Zac received me into their lives,” she writes.

“Right from the beginning, long before we were married, they welcomed me with open arms. They received my love warmly and they loved me wholeheartedly in return. They invited me into the fabric of their individual lives, trusting in me and confiding in me. We loved spending time together, both one-on-one and as a family. I learnt a lot about how to love in that first year, and my teachers were the two young souls whom God had sent into my life.”

Like Debra and Tony, each couple in the book has a unique story to tell, of how they fell in love, their hopes and dreams, their faith and how it influenced the way they responded to their infertility.

Debra acknowledges that most infertile couples, including many Catholic couples, choose to try IVF and, although the statistics show that many are unsuccessful, the beautiful children born through IVF are loved by all.

However, the couples in her book have, as a result of their faith, chosen another road.

Because of the prevalence of IVF in the modern understanding of infertility, choosing not to use this type of technology can land you in a lonely place, according to Debra.

“Many people don’t understand your decision, or are even hostile to it,” she writes.

One of the women featured in the book, Trudy, says that, despite being told that IVF was their only lifeline, they never felt tempted to pursue it.

“We were always comfortable with our decision not to pursue IVF, and our decision on that became even stronger once we were faced with the situation,” Trudy says.

“It wasn’t just blindly following the teaching of the Church, but it was something we were really convinced about, that we can’t destroy other

embryos just for the sake of one. That was just not something we wanted to do.

“It was strange how angry that decision made a lot of people though, especially doctors. We had one doctor who was recommending IVF and, when we told him our decision, he got really angry and started shouting at us.”

The six women spoke to Debra of the pain of seeing their friends get pregnant, the guilt of not giving their parents grandchildren, the overwhelming grief at times such as Mother’s Day and baptisms.

Several couples have navigated the long and complex road to adoption — both local and overseas — with joyous results, one is considering foster parenting and another is still trying to conceive using natural fertility methods.

All have been sustained greatly by their faith and, while there may have been times when they’ve questioned God’s plan for them, they have never doubted that he has a plan.

Laura and Joe use much of their free time mentoring young married couples and babysitting for friends.

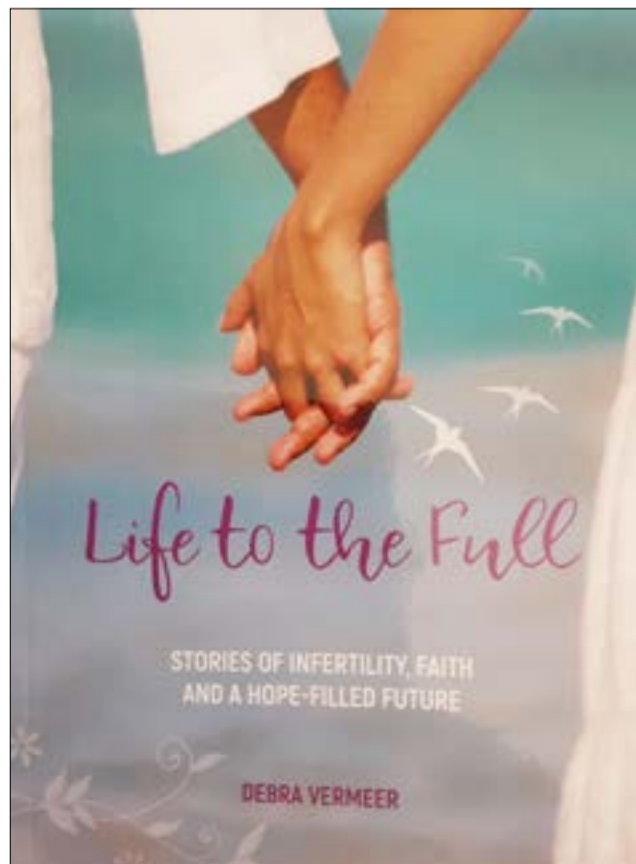
“So we definitely see our marriage as being fruitful, whether we end up having babies, or adopting or fostering, or not. Having a fruitful marriage is about sharing and multiplying your love as a couple, and we’re sure God will lead us in the right paths there. Our job is to stay open to his will and to keep saying, ‘OK God. What next?’”

*Life to the Full* is a much-needed message of hope for couples unable to have their own children, but it has important learnings for the Church as well.

As Debra points out, the statistics of one-in-six Australian couples experiencing infertility means that, on any given Sunday in a Catholic church, there are at least a few couples in the pews who are living with infertility. There was a feeling amongst the couples she interviewed that their pain was not being “seen or heard in a pastoral sense” and that they didn’t quite “fit” anywhere in parish life.

*Life to the Full*, published by St Pauls Publications, retails for AUD\$24.95 and is available from [stpauls.com.au/product/10090](http://stpauls.com.au/product/10090).

Jenny Brinkworth is editor of *The Southern Cross*, newspaper of the Adelaide archdiocese in Australia. The article is republished with permission.





# Readings for Pentecost and Trinity Sundays

The following Scripture passages correspond to those used as the readings on Pentecost Sunday and Trinity Sunday. As a service to *NZ Catholic's* readers during this time when Sunday Masses with congregation cannot be celebrated or have to have limited numbers because of Covid-19-related restrictions, these texts, which have been taken from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' website (New American Bible, Revised Version), are provided for devotional use and spiritual reflection.

## PENTECOST SUNDAY

### First reading: Acts 2:1-11.

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his own native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travellers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."



Detail of the *The Pentecost*, by El Greco.

### Second reading:

#### 1 Corinthians 12:3-7,12-13.

Therefore, I tell you that nobody speaking by the spirit of God says, "Jesus be accursed". And no one can say, "Jesus is Lord", except by the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service, but the same Lord; there are different workings, but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

### Gospel: John 20:19-23.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. [Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

## TRINITY SUNDAY

### First reading: Exodus 34:4-6,8-9.

Moses then cut two stone tablets like the former, and early the next morning he went up Mount Sinai as the Lord had commanded him, taking in his hand the two stone tablets. The Lord came down in a cloud and stood with him there and proclaimed the name, "LORD". So the LORD passed before him and proclaimed: The LORD, the LORD, a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity."

Moses at once knelt and bowed down to the



The Trinity, by Leandro da Bassano

ground. Then he said, "If I find favour with you, Lord, please, Lord, come along in our company. This is indeed a stiff-necked people; yet pardon our wickedness and sins, and claim us as your own."

### Second reading:

#### 2 Corinthians 13:11-13.

When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

### Gospel: John 3:16-18.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

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# Vatican not at risk of default though facing 'hard times'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Although the Vatican is facing difficult years ahead due to the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic, its budget is not facing a massive default, said the prefect of the Vatican Secretariat for the Economy.

In an interview with Vatican News published on May 13, Jesuit Father Juan Antonio Guerrero, the prefect, denied reports claiming that an internal analysis given to Pope Francis places the Vatican's annual deficit at risk of growing 175 per cent.

"The Vatican is not in danger of default," Father Guerrero said. "That doesn't mean that we are not naming the crisis for what it is. We're certainly facing difficult years" ahead.

The Italian newspaper *Il Messaggero* published on May 10 what it claimed was an internal analysis given to the Pope during a recent meeting with the heads of the Roman Curia. The documents highlighted scenarios from best to worst case should revenues continue to decline drastically.

The article also stated that the Pope advised curial heads to be frugal, freeze the hiring of new employees, eliminate superfluous costs and to not make new trips or organise new conferences.

When asked about the Pope's meeting, Father Guerrero said the Vatican is determined "to find a way to ensure our mission" and determine "what is and what is not essential". However, "our economy cannot be completely measured merely in terms of deficit or cost".

"We are not a business, we are not a company," he explained. "Our objective is not to make a profit. Every dicastery, every entity performs a service. Every service has associated costs. Our approach must be the maximum sobriety and the maximum clarity. Our bottom line is in view of mission."

Since the Church carries out its mission thanks to the offerings of the faithful, he said, the Vatican must "manage our finances with the passion and diligence of a good family man".

Nevertheless, "there are three things that are not in question, not even in this moment of crisis: employee salaries, aid for people in difficulty and support for the churches in need. No cut will affect those who are most vulnerable", he said.



Fr Juan Antonio Guerrero, SJ, prefect of the Vatican Secretariat for the Economy (CNS Photo)

The Church, Father Guerrero added, does not "live to balance budgets" and trusts "in the generosity of the faithful". However, the Church must also do its part to "show those who donate part of their savings to us that their money is well spent".

"There are many Catholics in the world who are willing to donate to help the Holy Father and the Holy See fulfil their mission," he said. "It is to them that we must make an accounting."

The head of the Secretariat for the Economy also noted that the Vatican's finances are comparably less than other countries and even "less than the average American university, for example. This, too, is a reality that is often ignored".

"Between 2016 and 2020," he said, "both income and expenses have been constant: revenue, in the region of 270 million (euros), expenses averaged around 320 million, depending on the year."

Regarding the best — and worst — case sce-

narios for the Vatican's finances, Father Guerrero said that "the most optimistic scenario calculates a 25 per cent decrease in revenue" while "the most pessimistic (averages to) around 45 per cent."

A major source of revenue, he said, comes from the Vatican Museums, which "is closed now and will most likely remain in difficulty due to a slow recovery". It was scheduled to open on June 1.

"We had already decided, when approving this year's budget, that expenses should be reduced in order to reduce the deficit," he said.

"Both the optimistic or pessimistic scenario depend partly on us — on how much we will be able to reduce costs — and partly on external factors, on how much the revenue will actually decrease; revenue does not depend on us," Father Guerrero said. "In any case, unless there is some extraordinary income, it is clear that the deficit will increase."



## Family Matters

Helen Luxford

## Disappointment

We've all been disappointed in life — by people or when circumstances didn't go our way. We've all disappointed people — in either big or small ways. It seemed to be unavoidable and is perhaps even more prevalent now with a mantra of "looking after yourself first — no one else will" being espoused. We've certainly had what feels like more than our fair share of disappointment — people promising one thing and doing another, people complaining when you did your best.

How do we pick ourselves up all the time? There are secular concepts of the growth mindset, thinking positively, the list goes on. As Christians, we turn to prayer and live in hope and faith and love. We are called to forgive. This includes forgiving ourselves. Forgiveness, as we all know, is far easier said than done. It seems much easier to hold onto transgressions by others. Often though, we hold on to them long after they occurred and potentially long after the offender has forgotten about them.

I have just recently had the experience, during lockdown, of remembering how very disappointed I was over a couple of things that hadn't happened. Only to then find, with the coronavirus and lockdown, that it was an absolute blessing that these issues had worked out the way they had. I know many people have been caught out financially, or with trips that have been cancelled, or with medical/surgi-

cal/treatment delays. The disruption is immense. Not all of it is positive. Some of it is very frustrating. For us, we have seen both sides of this coin. I am trying to focus on the couple of positive wins for us this lockdown.

Fear and anxiety have wrapped around us with the coronavirus pandemic. It's being used to excuse all sorts of transgressions. I am very disappointed in the overreach by our Government granting powers to the police to enter private property without warrants. At a time when we have fewer than 80 active cases in the country, this seems unwarranted to me. I am strongly disappointed in the continued discrimination by our Prime Minister and Government singling out religious worship as not being able to gather more than 10 worshippers. Restaurants are having up to 10 groups of 10 to a maximum of 100. We too can keep safe social distancing and practise hygiene to do the same. The reasons behind this decision are soft and inconsistent. Schools, for example, are places of social activity, so denying religious groups the right to worship safely is entirely inconsistent. It is a breach of our freedom of religion.

Balancing the needs of everyone is hard. We in New Zealand have gone along with a lockdown to help protect the vulnerable in our community. This is quite different to the egocentric attitude of some people, in the US, for example. Their individual civil liberties and freedom seem paramount and

outweigh their desire to work together to protect others. There is a balance to be had. The cost of keeping us all healthy and away from each other and therefore stopping the spread of coronavirus comes at an economic cost; other health costs, particularly with increased mental health issues — from my anecdotal experience — fewer outpatient clinics and delayed elective surgeries. We need to pray for our leaders that they can make balanced and fair and equitable decisions in this time.

We need to support each other to not be overcome with fear, anxiety, disappointment. Hold on to our faith with prayer. Write to your MP and the Prime Minister to encourage a return to Mass. As I write this column, we can have Masses of nine plus a priest. We were so blessed to have a home Mass on a recent weekend. Support your priests and empower them. We need our faith more than ever at this time to get us all through.

John 10:10; "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

(This column was written before the announcement by the Prime Minister on May 25).

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.



# 'Hollywood' reinvents its past



This photo illustration shows highlights from the seven-episode miniseries *Hollywood*, streaming now on Netflix. (CNS photo/Netflix)

by NEVIL GIBSON

## Movie Review

Viewing habits are adapting to post-Covid-19 conditions. One is the acceptance of "limited series" formats on streaming platforms that resemble standard-length features made for the big screen.

These are not the padded-out crime stories using formulaic characters. At their best, series of four-to-eight episodes allow greater plot nuance and character development.

Recent examples are HBO's *The Plot Against America*, based on Philip Roth's novel about the plight of Jews under Nazi-sympathising United States President Charles Lindbergh, and Netflix's dramatisation of Deborah Feldman's autobiographical *Unorthodox* about her flight from New York's Hasidic Jewish community (noted here in the April 19 issue).

The former was based on a counterfactual notion that Lindbergh, the famous aviator, defeated Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1940 election.

Ryan Murphy and Ian Brennan's *Hollywood* is a Netflix mini-series set in the late 1940s that also mixes real-life historical figures and events with fictional material.

While *The Plot Against America* fits the more traditional TV convention of a literary adaptation that tries to maintain as much of its source material as it can, *Hollywood* goes further into fantasy than Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, set four decades later.

Both have counterfactual "Hollywood" endings. *Hollywood* ends with hopes of racial and sexual diversity several decades ahead of reality. A major (fictional) studio makes a movie called *Meg* that boasts an African-American female star and is based on a screenplay by a gay African-American male. Both win Oscars in the 20th Academy Awards in 1948, a reconstructed event.

Some of this is true. *Hollywood* features Hattie McDaniel (played by Queen Latifah), who won an Oscar for best supporting actress for *Gone With the Wind* in 1940. A fictional Oscar is awarded to Anna May Wong, who was passed over for the lead role in the 1937 film of Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*, despite her Chinese ethnicity (the role went to Luise Rainer,

a German).

McDaniel was largely excluded from her award ceremony, and this is recalled in the 1948 reconstruction. Hollywood's Hays Code forbade inter-racial screen intimacy until 1956, and open practice of sexual diversity was not fully accepted until decades later.

In fact, no African-American actress had ever won an Oscar for best actress until Halle Berry did for *Monster's Ball* in 2002. The first screenplay award to an African-American was not until Jordan Peele in 2018 for *Get Out*.

But much of *Hollywood* is grounded in reality. The gas station that employed would-be actors was used for pickups. Eleanor Roosevelt did urge Hollywood bosses to adopt progressive views. Rock Hudson was a struggling actor until he became famous in the mid-1950s, while his manipulative agent, Henry Willson, had mafia connections.

In summary, this is Hollywood's way of back-projecting today's values to absolve sins of the past. Netflix rating (*Hollywood*): 16+. 347 minutes (7 episodes)

## CLIPS

### Les Misérables (Rialto)

Paris is known for its riots, but few filmmakers enter the suburbs dominated by migrants, known as banlieues. One of them is Montfermeil, characterised by high-rise apartment blocks and populated by Africans. Mali-born writer-director Ladj Ly is familiar with these concrete jungles, where street kids mainly play soccer. France is still celebrating its World Cup win when one snatches a lion cub from a travelling circus. A crime squad trio (Damien Bonnard, Alexis Manenti and Djibril Zonga) are sent to investigate, triggering events that include an accidental shooting, which is filmed by a drone. Anxious to control an outbreak of violence, the cops dig a bigger hole when they pursue the drone operator. The bird's-eye camera recalls a classic of the French cinema, *La Haine* (Hate), made 25 years ago on the same topic of disaffected youth. But this not just about an act of police brutality and the resistance that follows. It is also about a community that, from the outside, looks hopelessly estranged, but internally is governed with benign effect by an ex-thug and kebab shop owner who is also the local Muslim leader. Rating: Restricted to audiences over 13. 104 minutes.

### Bait (Rialto)

If you thought *The Lighthouse* pushed the limits of extreme cinema with its early 19th century techniques, then try Mark Jenkin's homemade version. He filmed his story of fear and loathing in a Cornish fishing village in black-and-white on a hand-cranked 16mm Bolex. Furthermore, he hand-processed the film stock and edited it as well. The result is intended as authentic localism with a post-synchronised soundtrack that pits the heavy dialects of villagers against those of middle-class holiday-making Londoners and binge-drinking students. (The title is a play on the term "fishing bait" having an alternative meaning of shady activities, of which there are many.) Edward Rowe, in his feature debut, plays the central character – an embittered fisherman who is solely interested in getting money to buy his own boat, his brother having converted their father's into taking trips for tourists. Rating: TBA. 89 minutes.

### Color Out of Space (StudioCanal)

Nicolas Cage gave up an A-list acting career sometime around the turn of the century in favour of appearing in as many B-grade movies as he could. That has meant making up to four a year, most of them missing a cinema release. Occasionally, he breaks the mould of his stereotypical man-of-action who turns bad or mad. He did a cameo as a government intelligence agent in Oliver Stone's *Snowden* after appearing in *World Trade Centre* (2006). Cage's latest big screen role is also esoteric and based on an H.P. Lovecraft horror story published in 1927. These have a cult following – much like Cage's movies – and this will appeal to both audiences. A meteorite crashes to earth with unforeseen consequences on all the characters and an alpaca farm to boot. Rating: Restricted to audiences over 16. 110 minutes.

# A worthwhile investment for daily spiritual nourishment

**WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? – Daily Reflections on the Bible, the Saints and the Answer That Is Christ**, by Cardinal Timothy Dolan. (Image, New York, 2019). 369 pp, US\$26. Reviewed by BRIAN OLSZEWSKI (CNS).

Anyone who has ever heard Cardinal Timothy Dolan – in personal conversation, interviewed on TV, giving a homily or addressing a conference – knows the Archbishop of New York is not at a loss for words.

Nor is he at a loss for words in his new book, *Who Do You Say I Am?*

He provides a reflection for each day of the year on a variety of topics and about a diverse group of people. One will not know what to expect from page to page, which is why this will not become a "thought for the day" book that collects dust on a shelf. Readers will be curious about the topic of his latest reflection.

At times, it is a retreat-like examination of conscience, for example, on January 25, the feast of the Conversion of St Paul, he asks: "Am I living up to what I profess? Where do I fall short, and what about my

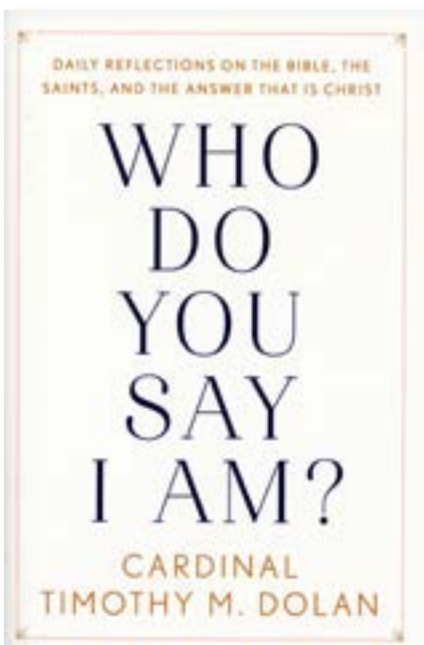
life needs changing?"

He employs the same approach on October 11, when he writes about the threefold mission of the Church – to sanctify, serve and teach. It's instructive, not preachy.

Some pages have an advice columnist tone. On June 9, he offers three steps for someone wishing to return to the Church: Prayer, celebrating Sunday Mass and making a good confession. He does so in a voice that is not demanding, but reassuring and welcoming.

Reading page after page, one realises there isn't a topic about which Cardinal Dolan can't write. Among his reflection subjects are gratitude, freedom, Archbishop Fulton Sheen, patience, friendship, baseball player Stan Musial and pasta (He begins one reflection with, "I love to eat").

He provides catechesis on Advent, Lent and Easter, as well as about numerous saints, for example, St John the Evangelist, St Irenaeus, St Damien of Molokai, St Katharine Drexel. He also makes references to the lives of Blessed Paul VI, St John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI



## Book Review

and Pope Francis.

Lest a lesson get by the reader, the cardinal writes about some of them multiple times, including on children and family. Each page includes a quotation from Scripture to set the tone for what he writes.

All of the writing is good, but some parts are better than others. The strongest material is when he writes about personal experiences. One reflection involves his 8-year-old niece being diagnosed with bone cancer. Another is about his mother living in an assisted living facility, and her concern that she's a burden on her children.

One of the most poignant is his story about visiting a prison, and being presented with a sketch of Jesus on the cross that was done by an inmate who had sketched himself on the cross next to Jesus. The onlookers in the artwork were several of his fellow inmates. The artist told the cardinal, "We're all right there with Christ on the cross".

*Who Do You Say I Am?* is a worthwhile investment for those who want daily spiritual nourishment. Cardinal Dolan provides much about which to think and pray – and smile – and he delivers it in a manner that readers will enjoy.

Brian Olszewski is the editor of *The Catholic Virginian*, biweekly publication of the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia.



THE CHURCH YEAR

We are here: ▼ Pentecost Sunday

Advent

Christmas

Ordinary Time

Lent

Eastertime

Ordinary Time

# The Holy Spirit is the Church's life force

## Scripture

by Fr Kevin Waldie sm

**May 31:** Pentecost Sunday. **Readings:** 1. Acts 2:1-11; **Psalm:** 104; 2. 1 Corinthians 12:3-7,12-13; **Gospel:** John 20:19-23.

Each of these readings plays a special role in this Pentecost day celebration. For it is in each author's words that we hear the extraordinary testimony members of the early Church give to a power of presence in their midst. And that presence, of course, is the Holy Spirit who breathes life into everyone in the wake of the Resurrection and ascension.

In Acts, Luke's depiction of the disciples assembled inside a house reveals the great outreach that the Spirit enables. The phenomenon that suddenly envelops those present makes it possible for them to preach everywhere in every language. The Spirit is therefore capable

of receiving an instant welcome in order to let the world hear of God's great power working through a few for the good of all.

Paul, a talented speaker and charismatic member of that early Church, shows us in 1 Corinthians that the Holy Spirit is a singularly powerful gift of divine presence. And at work for the common good, the Spirit is in complete union with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul thus bears witness to the universal benefits of being spiritually empowered by our God.

Like Luke's account, John's house scene also recounts a memorable post-Resurrection

moment for the disciples. The risen Christ's appearance explains why Jesus' return to the Father is necessary. It takes place to announce that the Holy Spirit is the Church's life force for future mission and ministry. And Jesus' peace greeting signals the Spirit's imminent arrival, that is the offer of well-being for all people.

Because of these readings, our Pentecost celebration becomes a jubilant and profound expression of confidence in our God. For they invite great trust in the Holy Spirit to support us wherever we are in the world.

## A classic Christian expression of faith

The biblical texts for this Trinity Sunday reveal the essence of how we as Catholic believers are to understand our God.

And we begin with a classic text from Exodus. At its core is a refrain regularly heard throughout the Old Testament. Its description of the God of the Hebrews, as revealed on Mount Sinai, is to be noted. It wants us to know our God as compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, ever-loving and always faithful. The power of these words is thus meant to summon up within us a sure sense of God's love for us and so inspire how we deal with one another.

When Paul wrote his final words in the Sec-

ond Letter to the Corinthians, he ended with a greeting that has become a classic Christian expression of faith. It is a saying that neatly defines what we believe to be the ever-present work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the midst of the Church. Here today, in those concluding words, Paul draws our attention to the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit. Interestingly, each named attribute closely echoes God's nature professed in the Exodus text.

John's Gospel passage is also a neat summary of how we are to regard the God of the Scriptures. In particular, the evangelist points to God's very

**June 7:** Trinity Sunday. **Readings:** Exodus 34:4-6,8-9; **Response:** (Daniel 2: 52-57); 2. 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; **Gospel:** John 3:16-18.

special relationship with our world and all who know their proper place in it. And then John links that thought to the divine love that is given extraordinary form in the one who is named Son of God and the Word made flesh.

As we take in the content of these readings, we cannot fail to be greatly edified by what each one leads us to understand about our triune God.

## SAINTED GLASS



There are three significant days in the Church calendar this issue – Pentecost, Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, and Trinity Sunday. To my mind, this window from St Pantaleon, Chavagnac, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France covers all three. It is obviously set at Pentecost, with the Holy Spirit as a dove and tongues of fire on the eleven apostles' heads as described in Acts 2:1-4. Mary, being the central figure, shows her place as the Mother of The Church. I think of the Holy Spirit as being the embodiment of the love between the Father and the Son, who communicates that love to us in a very real way today. Thank you, God, for your Holy Spirit! – Glen McCullough

# Very small group Bible study

## Bible News

SEATTLE (Agencies) — The governor of Washington state in the US, Jay Inslee, has revised the stay-at-home order that forbids religious gatherings of any size in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, after one man sued the state last month.

According to a report on the Christianity Today website on May 12, on March 23, Governor Inslee issued a stay-at-home order that required every Washingtonian to stay at home except for essential business. Bible-related gathering wasn't recognised as essential, and a regulation prohibited spiritual gatherings of any size due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

First Liberty Institute and the North Creek Law Firm represented Joshua Freed at a hearing to challenge the Washington governor's ban. During that hearing, before a district court in Washington, attorneys for Governor Inslee notified Mr Freed that he may have a home Bible study on a one-on-one basis.

For the previous two times, Governor Inslee refused to respond to requests seeking a one-on-one Bible study exemption, and finally, his lawyers yielded in court.

"The governor conceded that Mr Freed can have a one-on-one Bible study, and that he will not enforce the rules against home Bible studies on a one-on-one basis," said Hiram Sasser, executive general counsel at First Liberty. "The governor's attorneys, during the proceeding, made various statements that indicate the governor may not take any steps to enforce any shut down orders that affect religious activities, even beyond the Bible study at issue."

"Religious community, even one-on-one Bible study, is essential to many people of faith. We are grateful that, in this challenging time for our country, Governor Inslee was willing to concede that the ban does not apply to Joshua Freed's home Bible

study," said Mark Lamb, owner and founder of The North Creek Law Firm.

Mr Freed and his wife have hosted Bible studies in their home weekly for the past two and a half years. And they made an effort to host virtual Bible studies online, but privacy issues and technical glitches held them back. With this amendment, they are now able to hold one-on-one Bible studies.

Mr Freed will have only one Bible study per day, and will follow guidelines from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with additional safety. This includes wearing protective equipment, including a mask and gloves, and prohibiting hand-shaking or physical contact.



CNS photo



# Local Diocese News

## Help for an anxious boat to China

by JOHN McLISTER

It is the night before our Prime Minister will announce a nation-wide lockdown; and the Lyttelton Seafarers' Centre is full. It is only a small place, but every seat is taken and seafarers have spilled outside.

They have come ashore to connect to the centre's free wi-fi to talk to wives and kids. They know this will be their last chance to chat to their families for months, as ports world-wide ban shore leave, as part of the Covid-19 response. As many ships do not have wi-fi, contact with home is about to be cut off.

Usually what you hear when seafarers are calling home are happy sounds: a child's cheery "hello" to a dad they haven't seen for months; a wife laughing about a funny family anecdote; a father far from home telling his little girl before she goes to bed, "Goodnight darling, I love you." But tonight, even though they are speaking in Tagalog, Romanian and Russian, one word punctuates all their conversations: "Corona."

They have a lot to be worried about. One of the crews in the Seafarers' Centre is from a bulk carrier loading our logs for China. "We don't want to go," says Remi from Manila, "but if we break our contract early, we risk not getting recruited in the future". His friend Jimmy was supposed to sign off (return home) at the next port. "I have been told I can't," he says. "The shipping company can't get a replacement to the ship because of the Covid restrictions. I just want to be with my family."

Each year, 100,000 seafarers are eligible to sign off and be replaced by new crew members. Now, like Jimmy, many are trapped on their ships. After weeks at sea, they can no longer get the necessary shore leave to buy essential personal items; to contact their families; and to get a break from the isolation that is the norm of a seafarer's life. While we are locked down with our loved ones, our pets, with Netflix, and the chance to get to the supermarket, their lockdown is total isolation.

We don't normally allow alcohol to be consumed in the Seafarers' Centre, but I have made an exception tonight. Quite a bit is being drunk, but the anxiousness on the guys' faces is easing a little.

Before they leave, I suggest a photo, jokingly saying, "If you are off to China, better get a picture in case you don't come back." They laugh and bravely smile for the camera.

■ In an April 29 statement, it was announced that The Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) and Vodafone NZ have supplied the Lyttelton Seafarers' Centre with six mobile wifi units for seafarers to use while in lockdown on their ships.



Above: Rev. John McLister with seafarers at the Lyttelton Seafarers Centre before the nation went into lockdown. Below: Deacon Dileep Athaide, right, a chaplain from the Archdiocese of Vancouver, British Columbia, chats with crew members aboard a Japanese coal ship in 2019. (CNS photo)

"Normally, seafarers come to our Seafarers' Centre to connect to our free wifi," said Rev. John McLister, the Mission to Seafarers' chaplain (Anglican) in Lyttelton.

"But under the current Covid-19 restrictions they can't take shore leave."

Because most ships do not have wifi capability, many seafarers have been cut off from contacting home.

"It's hard to imagine not being able to talk to your wife and kids, not being able to watch Netflix, go for a walk, or go to the supermarket during lockdown," said Rev. McLister.

"With these mobile wifi units, seafarers can connect again to the outside world. There will be a lot of worried families very happy to hear the phone ring."

These items and others such as sim cards and phone top-ups were made available as chaplains started visiting ships, stopping at the top of gangways to hand such items over.

Rev. John McLister is Seafarers' Chaplain (Anglican), Lyttelton



## 2020 Kaitiaki2Share winners announced

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand has announced the winners and finalists of the 2020 Kaitiaki2Share creative competition.

Kaitiaki2Share encourages New Zealand students of all ages to consider how we can care for all creation, both people and the environment. Students were asked to send in a creative idea in the medium of their choice, such as a video, poem, drawing, project plan or story.

This is the inaugural Kaitiaki2Share competition, and Caritas is encouraged by the high level of participation, especially as many schools promoted the activity for students at home during lockdown. According to the Caritas website, more than 100 students sent in entries, showing off their creative

minds, design skills and desire to care for God's creation

"We were hopeful that students would be keen to get involved in Kaitiaki2Share and showcase their creative talents. They exceeded our expectations, and we came away with a real feeling that the youth of our country deeply value God's creation and are passionate about caring for and preserving it for those who will come after us," said Michael Stewart, Caritas education coordinator.

The announcement of the winners and finalists falls during *Laudato Si'* Week, a worldwide celebration of the five-year anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical encouraging people to care for our common home. Caritas is also marking *Laudato Si'* Week through a blog series and a global online webinar on social action.

"It has been so encouraging to see our young people share their ideas about being stewards of God's creation. It has left me feeling reassured that young people in Aotearoa are hearing the call of the Holy Father and *Laudato Si'*," said Teresa Shanks, Caritas education advisor.

The five winners of Kaitiaki2Share each received a share of the prize money. In addition, all winners and finalists had a native tree planted in their name, and their competition submission featured on the Caritas website at [caritas.org.nz/kaitiaki2share](http://caritas.org.nz/kaitiaki2share).

**The winners of the 2020 Kaitiaki2Share competition:** Aminette Miranda (Y8, St Benedict's School Khandallah); Franka Eilering (Y3, Monte Cecilia Catholic School, Auckland); Holly Bowhill (Y7, St Mary's School, Blenheim); Olivia Bain (Y7, St Mary's

School, Blenheim); and Ryo Kinikinilau (Y5, St Benedict's School, Khandallah).

**Finalists:** Finn Mulqueen (Y5, St Mary's School, Gore); Indiana Hart (Y3, St Paul's Primary, Auckland); Louisa Zacaroli (Y5, St Joseph's School, Nelson); Milla Harrington (Y5, St Joseph's School, Nelson); and Quinn Roper (Y8, St Joseph's Primary School, Stratford).

**Other notable efforts:** Caitlin Montaperto-Wells (Y8, St Patrick's School, Napier); Charlotte Boyle (Y4, St Benedict's School, Khandallah); Devon-tae Auvale-Polo (Y6, St Bernadette's School, Hornby); Jude Jepson (Y6, St Joseph's School, Nelson); Lucy Homan (Y6, Reignier Catholic School, Napier); Matthaeus Kwan (Y6, St Joseph's School, Nelson); Molly Jones (Y8, St Patrick's School, Napier); Olive Hapuku (Y8, St Joseph's School, Fairfield); Poppy Smith (Y2, St Benedict's School, Khandallah); and Valerie Malaesala (Y8, Sacred Heart School, Christchurch).





### Papal Prayer

**The Pope's universal prayer intention for May: For deacons.**

We pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

## 40 YEARS AGO

### RE NOT REACHING HALF OUR YOUTH

Over half New Zealand's Catholic secondary school students are getting no formal religious education.

This blunt fact comes from a survey on the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) for secondary school pupils, made by the National Centre for Religious Studies.

The survey, made by the centre's director, Father Ezio Blasoni, and colleague Mr John McCann, comes up for discussion at the Auckland Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting next Sunday.

Figures taken last year show that there were 57,139 Catholic boys and girls of secondary age. But only 21,853 of them were going to Catholic colleges.

A far greater number — 35,285 — were not at Catholic secondary schools, and of this total, a mere 2609 were attending CCD classes.

These figures mean that in 1979, 32,676 teenage Catholic boys and girls were neither attending Catholic secondary schools nor taking CCD classes.

The disturbing facts found in the

survey are not confined to pupils. A copy of the parish questionnaire was sent to each parish priest and to the chairman of the parish council, or equivalent body, in each New Zealand parish. Of 281 parishes approached, 74 replied, a return of 26.3 per cent.

Information given by the 74 parishes showed that CCD teaching resource materials were non-existent in most cases.

Commenting on the results of the survey, the National Centre for Religious Studies says it is clear the present situation does not meet the religious needs of thousands of Catholic youth.

It adds: "The heroic efforts of a few dedicated people are offset by the lack of coordinated practical help from church structures and local Catholic communities."

The survey notes that the priests' deaneries describe the secondary CCD situation as "missionary territory" and says this is a major challenge to Christian responsibility and service.

— *Zealandia*, June 1, 1980.

## CAPTION CONTEST



Write the best caption for this photo and win \$30. Send in your ideas by Tuesday, June 9 to Caption Contest 590, 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 pre-lockdown, issue 585, (right) was Paul McKee, Christchurch.

Some other suggestions were:

"Oh come on, inhale; it's not going to kill you." — John Lewis, Hamilton.

"We don't quite have the full habeus corpus." — Michael Jarka, Dunedin.

"Don't light that second-hand smoke. It's bad for you — look what happened to him!" — Joan Leonard, Auckland.

"You now know where the yellow went, when he brushed his teeth with Pepsodent!" — Liz Davis, Auckland.



**Smoking kills. Make no bones about it!**

"You have got nothing to grin about." — Russell Watt, Auckland.

"Yep, tried to tell my wife years back to stop smoking cigars, but would she listen?" — Carmel Anne Malone, Christchurch.

"We're in a smoke free zone, you numbskull!" — June Jarka, Dunedin.



# Kit's Corner



**Angels** are God's **special messengers** — his **wise** and **powerful** helpers. They have been around since God made the world, but we cannot see them because they are invisible **spirits** (but we usually draw them with wings). They must be pretty important, because they are in the **Bible** nearly 80 times!

You might like to look in the **Bible** and **read** about some of the times that **Angels** came with special **messages** and **help** from God:



The angel Gabriel came to ask Mary to be the mother of Jesus. (Luke 1:26-32)

An angel told the shepherds about Jesus' birth. Angels sang wonderful Christmas songs. (Luke 2:8-14)

An angel told Joseph to escape to Egypt to get away from wicked King Herod, and told him when it was safe to go home again. (Matthew 2:13-14, 19-21)

Angels looked after Jesus in the desert (Matthew 4:11) and in the garden before he died. (Luke 22:39-43)

Angels told the women that Jesus was alive again on Easter Sunday morning. (Luke 24:1-8)

Angels were there when Jesus went back to heaven. (Acts 10:11)



Did you know that **God** has given you your very **own** special angel, called your **guardian angel**? Psalm 91:11 says that God has put his angels in charge of you, to protect you wherever you go. Your guardian angel watches over you, keeps you safe and prays for you. Your guardian angel **sees God** all the time (Matthew 18:10). That is **awesome!**

You can always talk to your guardian angel. You could learn this very

old, favourite prayer: **Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here. Ever this day (or night) be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.**





# 'Modest resurgence' seen in the use of chant at Mass

by MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) - When Catholics return to their churches in the US as coronavirus-induced lockdowns ease up, they're not likely to be confronted with a bunch of unfamiliar words in Latin printed in some medieval-era typeface with notes in the shape of squares rather than ovals.

That said, those who monitor these kinds of things say there's a "modest resurgence" over the past decade in the use of chant at Mass, while devotees of the idiom can't get enough of it.

"It's fair to say that there is that small - a relatively small - group of congregations who embrace chant because of its musical appeal to them," said Michel Silhavy, a senior project manager for GIA Music in Chicago.

Silhavy finds three audiences for chant. For one audience, he told the Catholic News Service, it's "a code, it's a flag, a marker, that 'we're this type of parish.' For those who want to show their particular theology, they rally around chant".

Another group, he added, is "people who are truly concerned about liturgical music because of its (chant's) ability to be flexible, to accompany the ritual action" of the Mass. The third group, Silhavy said, is made up of Church musicians who "really try to manifest a diverse musical library repertoire, saying that's part of our tradition".

## ■ Missal

The renewed interest in chant, according to Silhavy, "started to appear with the release of the (new Roman) Missal in 2010. All that stuff was there originally - antiphons and introits. It was as if people were reading the owner's manual for the first time".

He added, "It's funny that the release of the English training roused this modest resurgence in chant. Yet those same directives and guidelines were there in the 1970" Roman Missal.

GIA originally stood for "Gregorian Institute of America," but that changed not long after the company's sale in 1967, according to Bob Batastini, who was a senior editor at GIA at the time of the sale, working there until 2007, and serving as a consultant to the company since then.

Sales of chant by GIA "at the time of the sale - very little," Batastini told CNS. "We were already four years into the revised rites . . . the vernacular liturgy, and at that point everybody was manoeuvring to figure out how to deal with the revised liturgies. There were attempts to redo a lot of Gregorian chant in English - and frankly, that didn't fly."



Elizabeth Black, assistant director of music at St John the Beloved Church in McLean, Virginia, directs choir members as they sing Gregorian chant during a 2017 Mass. (CNS Photo)

Batastini added, "What has happened since Vatican II is that the definition of Church music has greatly expanded. Before Vatican II, it all fell into what we would call 'classical music': chant, polyphony, in a formal music style. After Vatican II, the Church began to experiment in a lot of directions. Forty, 50 years later, there is a wide variety of styles of music that has found its way into the repertoire of the Church. And chant is certainly part of that."

## ■ Intones

When the priest intones, "The Lor-ord be with youuuu"? That's chant. When the people arise after the Eucharistic Prayer and start singing, "Our Fa-therrr, who art in hea-vennn"? That's chant, too.

With the exception of one year, Batastini, 78, has been playing organ or conducting choirs at Catholic churches since age 13.

He remembers when "if you couldn't sing a High Mass, you weren't going to be ordained" - and in the pre-Second Vatican Council church, he had to play four High Masses every day.

The same is largely true for the Eastern churches, whose divine liturgies can take on the character of a sung dialogue between the priest and the assembly.

At his current parish in Holland, Michigan, "the people are accustomed to the priest singing the entire liturgy, and the people in the pews, they sing like a bunch of Methodists", Batastini said, quickly adding he's complimenting Methodists. "It's exhilarating."

## ■ Identity

"The big deal with Gregorian chant is not only as a style of music the texts, the propers," said Richard Clark, director of music for the Archdiocese of Boston. "This is our Catholic identity."

Upon getting the job in 2018, Clark told CNS, "we immediately began singing the introit chants every week, followed by a hymn. It's a great way to start the Mass." He added, "It becomes normative. It becomes part of the normal part of living, the rhythm of the liturgy".

Clark likes to load up on chant for archdiocesan events at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, where he is also music director, including ordinations, the Rite of Election, and the Holy Thursday chism Mass. "It's a big, big deal in any cathedral," he said.

But that's not the experience in most parishes in the archdiocese, Clark acknowledged. At the typical parish, "it's also a lot of time, you have a boss - or multiple bosses - and you have to deal to an extent [with] what their preferences are. You're dealing with a congregation. Every parish is going to have a certain history to it, like it or not, where people come from," he said. "The reality is, maybe you can introduce one or two things."

He added, "You have to have support from your pastor. You have to be sensitive to the people that you serve."

Clark said, "I've always joked that it's going to take 100 years to fully implement Vatican II. And that's not a criticism. It takes a long time for our understandings to evolve. And to find what the best practices are."

Alfred Calabrese has had the support of pastors - three of them - in his 13 years as music director at St Rita Parish in Dallas.

A cradle Catholic, Calabrese said he was introduced to chant in a secular setting: his graduate studies in conducting at Indiana University. He didn't apply it to his music ministry until taking the St Rita music job.

At the parish, it's "one of those slowly germinating kinds of experiences. Bit by bit, bit by bit, slowly over the years, and still in the process of introducing it today, 13 years later. We don't use it at every Mass, but we do it more. Some of our Masses are more chant-heavy than others," Calabrese said.

"Even in our one Mass, to be more contemporary, in various parts of the year they even do some chanting in English and in Latin, especially in Lent and Advent in the acclamations, so that's a good thing."

But Calabrese still gets resistance from parishioners, he said. "To this day, there still [are] some . . . And it's just a matter of educating people and having the backing of the pastor. We don't do the 'extraordinary form' Latin Mass (long known as the Tridentine Rite). We're not doing everything Latin, but at the appropriate time."

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# Need for interpreters increased during lockdown in capital

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The need for the services of interpreters increased by about 40 per cent during level 4 lockdown for the Wellington Catholic Social Services.

Wellington CSS director Karen Holland said the organisation does a lot of work with former refugees, both quota and reunification ones, as well as migrants.

Not being able to speak English deepened the isolation for their clients.

"It was a time of real isolation for former refugees and, even though their resilience is high, not fully understanding what was happening, and being shut in their homes, was very frightening for many," she said.

Ms Holland said, even in levels 3 and 2, their social workers still needed interpreters to help the refugees and migrants with their appointments with agencies such as health clinics, Work and Income and even schools for their children.

Senior social worker Jess Harward said it would seem that the anxiety levels for the families and individuals she is working with is slowly settling down.

"There is a sense of normality or going back to normal. For most people, [the anxiety is] . . . still there, but they've taken precautions. Going down levels, there is anxiety whether it would be safe to do so. I would advise them that the Government would not bring down levels unless it was safe to do so," she said.

Ms Harward said the children were looking forward to going back to school and seeing their friends. One of the problems the children had was having no device to use for online learning at levels 4 and 3. She had to liaise with schools to let the schools know about the problem.

"Not everybody has devices or internet. So, it did take them just a little while for them to get fax or desktops at home. And some of them had to buy, within the last week of



Refugees listen to a translator as they arrive at a transit camp in Idomeni, Greece, on the border of Macedonia, in 2015 (CNS Photo)

the lockdown. I was told they were all able to do learning from home," she said.

Some of her clients had health needs, and she helped them navigate through the processes of the hospitals or health centres.

"I think it just highlighted during this pandemic that there is still a high level of support that they (refugees) needed, mainly with supporting them in understanding what is happening," she said.

She said the support she offered was being the key contact or link to

the service they needed.

Ms Harward said half of their client base are refugees, and interpreters are crucial to meeting their clients' needs.

"The response from the families is that they found that it was very beneficial for them to know that someone's contacting them, and that there is someone they are able to talk to and ask for advice and support. They were very isolated (at level 4). It feels isolating for lots of people, but not being able to speak English furthers the isolation," she said.

# Call for Catholics to work hard for Christian unity

by ROWENA OREJANA

On the 25th anniversary of *Ut Unum Sint*, Saint John Paul II's encyclical on ecumenism, Hamilton Bishop Stephen Lowe called on New Zealand Catholics to work hard towards achieving Christian unity, saying this "is what Christ asks of us".

In his homily on May 25, Bishop Lowe said we need to put a real effort into achieving unity as it is "a scandal that the body of Christ, the Church, is broken".

"The fact is the body of Christ is broken and that should be a scandal for every believer," he said.

He said, as early as the fourth and fifth centuries, there were already debates over what Christians believed in.

These debates resulted in the

different councils: Ephesus, Nicaea and Chalcedon.

Around the year 1000, the Church split into East and West, or the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. Around the 1500s, the Reformation resulted in the further breaking up of the Church, when Martin Luther's followers went off in one direction and the Catholic Church in another.

"For a long time, we've been hopping along on one foot," Bishop Lowe said. "But more and more, as the ecumenical movement has started up, we've learned to speak together."

He cited, as an example, how the followers of Martin Luther are well-versed in the Scriptures, while the Catholics gave more importance to the saints and the sacraments.

Bishop Lowe said, years ago, he

spoke before a women's interdenominational group Women's Aglow when he was a priest in Timaru.

"I talked about how we each took different things from the tradition with us, but how we are hopping along on one foot because we haven't taken the whole of the tradition with us," he said. "And now as we get together, we have to share each other's faith and learn to walk together on two feet. That's always the challenge for us. We need to walk together on two feet."

He said this will result in losing something of ourselves but also advancing in our faith.

At that meeting, he said, he spoke to the women about the Blessed Virgin Mary, a woman open to the Holy Spirit.

"Mary is at the heart of the ec-

umenical movement because she wants and prays for what her Son wants. And his prayer is that we be one, completely one, that the world will know it was the Father who sent him," Bishop Lowe added.

In the week of Christian Unity, celebrated in New Zealand from May 25-31 this year, Bishop Lowe called on Christians to make a real effort at uniting the Church.

"The energy for working together towards Christian unity is waning. And I know for myself, this can be really hard," he said.

"There are so many people who think I don't actually need to do this. Actually, we can't call ourselves Catholic . . . if we don't work for Christian unity. This is what Pope John Paul II said 25 years ago," he said.

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