

NZ Catholic

The national Catholic newspaper

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Everything Blessed

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On the front cover: One of the works by artist Elaina Milnes showcased on the new "Everything Blessed" website

NZCatholic

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St Dominic's Catholic College
 Founded by the Dominican Sisters
 Catholic School For Girls Years 7-13

- Optima Awards: **Greshka Lao**, Yr 13; **Raina Mohammed**, Yr 12 and **Sasha Thakkar**, Yr 11.
- Dux: **Beatrice Ang**.
- Proxime Accessit: **Molly Hayward**.
- Dux Ludorum, Sports Dux: **Sulama-Rose Vaea-Mulitalo**.
- Brodeur Shield: **Greshka Lao**.

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Royal Commission sets date for inquiry

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (CNS) — The Catholic Church in New Zealand has welcomed a November 3 announcement by the Royal Commission into Abuse in Care, that it had scheduled six days in February for hearings on evidence of abuse at the Marylands School and Hebron Trust in Christchurch.

Catherine Fyfe, chair of Te Ropu Tautoko — the group coordinating Catholic engagement with the Royal Commission — welcomed the announcement, and said that the Hospitaller Brothers of St John of God and Tautoko have been working diligently since last year to cooperate with the inquiry.

The hearings concern Marylands School, a residential school for children with learning difficulties, run between the mid-1950s and 1984 by the St John of God Brothers, and Hebron Trust, an organisation for troubled youths run by one of the brothers. Both were in

Christchurch. "We have been working with the royal commission to ensure that our response has been as timely and comprehensive as possible, to honour those harmed at Marylands," Fyfe said. "We see this inquiry, and the wider work of the royal commission, as a way for the Catholic bishops and religious congregations to positively engage in this important process of listening, acknowledging, learning, and reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding the vulnerable in society."

Fyfe reinforced the Church's ongoing encouragement to survivors of abuse in the care of the Catholic Church to share their experiences with the royal commission.

The New Zealand Catholic bishops and congregational leaders sought to have the Church included in the work of the royal commission, which was originally established to

investigate abuse of children in state care. The Royal Commission said it would investigate — among other issues — the immediate, long-term and intergenerational impacts on victims and survivors of abuse at Marylands, as well as how it affected their families and communities. It said it would take into account Pacific and Māori cultural norms and values when considering the impact of abuse.

The commission will look at the nature and extent of abuse of children and young people in the care of individuals associated with the St John of God Brothers, including, but not limited to, religious brothers, visiting clergy or religious. It also will consider the extent to which structural, systemic, or other factors relevant to the Catholic Church, caused or contributed to the abuse, or affected responses to complaints of abuse at Marylands.

2021 March for Life moves online

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The National March for Life is going online this year, because of Covid restrictions. It was initially planned that the march would take place through the streets of Wellington to Parliament on December 4. But people who would have supported the march in person are being asked to "be a voice for

the voiceless at your home" and "join us online for an exciting, motivating event". Publicity for the event (www.marchforlife.nz) states that this will mean more people can participate than ever before. Among the aims for the march are celebrating life, remembering the half million pre-born babies lost to abortion in New Zealand, and increasing public

awareness of abortion and its impact on women, families and society. Another aim is to bring New Zealanders of good will together, united in a common vision of making abortion unthinkable. The National March for Life has taken place each year in Wellington since 2017. It has been endorsed by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference.

Offshore mining decision welcomed

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand has welcomed the Supreme Court's dismissal of Trans-Tasman Resources' (TTR) appeal on an application to mine iron sands just offshore from South Taranaki. "This decision will give heart to coastal communities around the Pacific who are deeply concerned by plans by various companies to mine the seabed for minerals," said Caritas director Julianne Hickey. "Only on [September 28], we heard of ongoing Pacific concerns about deep sea mining at a Caritas talanoa [discussion/dialogue] on the state of the environment for Oceania."

Caritas in Oceania has followed seabed mining since 2014 through its State of the Environment for Oceania reports, and last year called for a ban on seabed mining in the Pacific. "Our moana [ocean] faces enough threats from pollution, overfishing and the climate crisis, let alone the unknown impacts of mining the seafloor," Mrs Hickey said. "This decision will strengthen calls for a ban in our national waters and internationally." Caritas opposed the TTR application to the Environmental Protection Authority in 2017 on the grounds that it would damage the immediate ocean environment, have potential

impacts elsewhere, such as from sediment plumes, and the application did not have the approval of Ngati Ruanui, who have recognised mana whenua (historic and territorial rights) over the project area. Caritas recently released its "risk indicator" on offshore mining and drilling and other environmental indicators in this year's Caritas State of the Environment for Oceania. In releasing that document, Caritas stated that it continued its call for a ban on seabed mining in both national and international waters. "The people of Oceania rely on the ocean for their livelihoods. Seabed mining puts all that at risk," Caritas stated.

NZ bishops issue care for the dying guidelines

by MICHAEL OTTO

Catholic health professionals, chaplains and priests are being given guidelines and pastoral help to work with people who decide to die under the End of Life Choice Act which takes effect on November 7.

Though the Church opposes the deliberate taking of human life, it cannot turn away those who choose "assisted dying" under the new law, said Hamilton Bishop Stephen Lowe, the vice-president of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference. "Life puts before us many questions and choices," Bishop Lowe said. "As a Church we try to help people look at these questions and choices through a Christian lens. Individuals often find themselves in complex places. In these times the Church tries to offer guidance to people as best as she can, but people make their own choices."

"Often, as a Church, we find ourselves caring for people dealing with the consequences of such choices. Our pastoral practice is always called to be a reflection of our God, who does not abandon his people." The bishops have written a pastoral statement and a set of guidelines for chaplains, priests and other Catholic professionals who care for the dying. The Church's Te Kupenga-Catholic Leadership Institute has been organising workshops on working with the law.

The Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand opposed the End of Life Choice Act Referendum held at the 2020 general election. However, the referendum was in favour of implementing the act. Bishop Lowe said that "medically assisted dying" or euthanasia would not be offered in Catholic rest homes or hospices, just as many non-Catholic carers would not offer it.

"However, it will become available in a number of hospitals and other public care facilities throughout the country. These are the places of work or ministry for some of our Catholic community. We do not need to deny the objective wrong of euthanasia in order to accompany, with consolation and hope, those who might feel drawn or pushed towards this type of death," said Bishop Lowe.

"The legal availability of euthanasia in New Zealand does not change Catholic convictions about the practice. At the same time, our faith tells us there is no place or situation, no matter how uncomfortable, where our faith cannot be expressed, or God's grace encountered."

The bishop's document "Ministers of Consolation and Hope Ngā Kaiārahi o te Aroha me te Tūmanako", contains "principles and guidelines for those working with, and ministering to, people contemplating assisted dying".

The pastoral statement is titled "Bearers of Consolation and Hope — Ngā Kaiārahi o te Aroha me te Tūmanako". The bishops said that, before writing the statement, they had surveyed Catholics, including priests, who work with, and minister to, the dying, sick and vulnerable.

"The responses we received were overwhelmingly characterised by a desire to show compassion in the face of complexity, combined with a profound respect for the Church's teaching on euthanasia," the pastoral statement explained. "We do not need to deny the objective wrong of euthanasia in order to accompany, with consolation and hope, those who might feel drawn or

EUTHANASIA



pushed towards this type of death." In the documents, the bishops drew on several sources, including Scripture, the Church's tradition of care for the sick and dying, and magisterial teaching, such as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's "Samaritanus Bonus", which Pope Francis ordered to be published last year. The bishops noted some of the truths spelled out in the CDF document that should be borne in mind. In many cases, the CDF document stated, the request for death is a symptom of the disease, aggravated by isolation and discomfort. Requests for death are not necessarily a true desire for euthanasia, but rather are almost always anguished pleas for help and love. Therefore, the Church's expectation is that "spiritual accompaniment will be offered to those considering assisted dying, who request it from a bearer or servant of consolation and hope".

The bishops also noted the likelihood of diminished responsibility in those requesting this type of death, adding that hope is never extinguished, and even a firm intention of opting for an assisted death does not become an objective reality until the moment it is administered. When spiritual accompaniment is requested from a priest, chaplain or pastoral worker, the "desire for a compassionate companion is already a sign of good intent".

"In accepting their request in a spirit of mutual trust, we recognise and respect the person's faith and their conscience. This entails a commitment to listen profoundly to them as their sacred journey towards death unfolds." Pastoral and spiritual accompaniment can be a "hikoī of hope", which leaves open the way for an encounter with God.

Presenting the loving face of the Church as a mother "contributes to assuaging the terrible, desperate desire to end one's life", the bishops stated, again referencing the CDF document. Therefore, the bishops stated, it is "proper that prayers are offered for, and with, those facing death and their family or whānau".

"Similarly, it is proper that the Church's sacraments — encounters with God — are provided to the person who requests them. In accordance with

pastoral practice in other areas, the sacraments should only ever be declined in those very rare cases when someone seeks them in bad faith. All ministers are entitled to presume that a person asking for the sacraments does so in good faith."

The bishops noted that accompanying someone who is expressing a desire for assisted dying does not imply moral agreement by the accompanier. Nor does it ask those doing the accompaniment to suspend belief in the Church's expressed teaching on euthanasia. Rather, accompaniment ensures that no one is abandoned to desolation.

The bishops added that the Catholic ethical tradition makes clear distinctions between "moral distance", "assent" and "physical proximity". "Accompaniment does not necessarily mean endorsement."

At the same time, cooperation in the act of facilitating or administering an assisted death must be excluded in all cases, the bishops stressed.

"The implementation of assisted dying for persons with a life-limiting illness will put many vulnerable people at risk. These include the elderly who may feel they have become a burden to family and society, and many others, some of whom will be young."

The bishops acknowledged that family members of people requesting assisted death might have varying views, and they should be listened to and attended to with great sensitivity. Speaking about individual conscience, the bishops stated that, "if an individual priest, chaplain, pastoral worker, healthcare professional or caregiver decides that there is a limit to their ability to accompany a person seeking assisted dying, such a decision should be fully respected".

At the same time, they should ensure that "provision is made for the person to be accompanied by another."

Regarding funerals, the bishops stated that parishes should "provide an integrated model of pastoral care, with priests ready to affirm God's mercy by presiding at the funeral or tangi of those whose motivation for choosing assisted dying may well have come through an act which might be seen as one of anguish".

The coming into force of the End of Life Choice Act provides Catholics with "an opportunity to renew our commitment to the dignity of every person in practical ways", the bishops added. These ways include advocating for equitable available effective palliative care; forming outward-looking parishes that reach out to the lonely, sick, elderly and disabled and their whānau; and supporting in prayer and other ways those who are engaged in caring for people at the end of life, including those contemplating assisted dying.

<https://www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Bearers-of-Consolation-and-Hope.pdf>
<https://www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Ministers-of-Consolation-and-Hope.pdf>

"The legal availability of euthanasia in New Zealand does not change Catholic convictions about the practice. At the same time, our faith tells us there is no place or situation, no matter how uncomfortable, where our faith cannot be expressed, or God's grace encountered."
 — Bishop Stephen Lowe

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Sat. 26 Feb. 10am	Memorial Mass & Morning Tea	Parish Hall
Sat. 26 Feb. 7pm	Dinner/Dance	Alexandra Park
Sun. 27 Feb. 10am	Centennial Mass	Parish Church
Sun. 27 Feb. 12pm	Centennial Photographs	Parish Hall
Sun. 27 Feb. 12pm onwards	Family BYO Lunch	School Grounds

Registrations for these events are now open on the parish website <https://epsomcatholic.org.nz/centennial/>

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Integrated schools must follow health order

by MICHAEL OTTO

Priests not vaccinated against Covid-19 will be unable to visit classes and celebrate Masses and other liturgies in Catholic schools in New Zealand once the measures in a Government health order take effect.

That is one of the conclusions that the New Zealand Catholic Education Office has drawn from a mandate for schools announced by the Government on October 11.

NZCEO chief executive Dr Kevin Shore told NZ Catholic that New Zealand's bishops have been "very clear that they will follow the health guidance to ensure that communities are safe, and this is no exception".

"This approach will extend to a school Mass held in a parish church — if it is a school event, whether on-site or off-site, the health order will

apply," Dr Shore said.

"The health and safety of the community is paramount, and our Catholic bishops are committed to ensuring that our clergy also play their part," he added.

The health order stipulates that only school staff and support people who are vaccinated against Covid-19 can have contact with children and students from January 1, 2022.

Staff and support people will need to have had their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine by November 15. According to media reports, only those who have had at least one jab by November 15 will be allowed to have contact with children after that date.

Dr Shore said that the NZCEO endorses the call by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference encouraging all eligible citizens to be vaccinated.

"NZCBC has taken a position that strongly encourages all Catholics to receive the Covid-19 vaccination, with Pope Francis going so far as to say that getting vaccinated is an act of love for all people. The more people who are vaccinated, the greater the chances that, as a community, we are protecting our staff and students, particularly those who are most vulnerable," Dr Shore said.

High vaccination rates will provide a line of protection for vulnerable staff and students, he added.

"The decision to mandate compulsory vaccination is contentious for many in our community, but as state-integrated schools, school boards have little choice but to follow this health order. To not do so could have serious implications for a school."

Dr Shore said that the NZCEO has been encouraging principals and school boards to promote the vaccination message to their staff, and to have conversations with those employees who have not been vaccinated.

"These conversations may not be easy, but are necessary if any resolutions are to be found," he said.

Nonetheless, it is highly likely there will be some Catholic schools who will lose staff because of the health order, but Dr Shore did not know the extent of this issue when NZ Catholic spoke with him.

It is possible that some of the staff losses could be for special character positions (tagged).

"The impact on principals and teachers in special character positions is an additional concern that state schools will not have to deal with, and it may prove to be an extra burden for Catholic state-integrated

schools," Dr Shore said.

"NZCEO is actively involved in sector group meetings facilitated by the Ministry of Education to develop advice and guidance in navigating this challenging space, and the New Zealand School Trustees' Association is also developing guidance — this is all happening at urgency in an area where there is limited previous experience to draw on," he added.

"Where NZCEO believes it can support our Catholic schools, it will provide guidance and information as issues and needs arise."

Another issue for schools will be that volunteers who have direct interaction with students will have to be vaccinated, although the impact will vary depending on how volunteers are used, and on how many don't want to be vaccinated. Some reorganisation of how volunteers are used may be needed in some schools, Dr Shore said.



Dr Kevin Shore

School board members vax status

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

The November *Lighting New Fires* newsletter from the New Zealand Catholic Education Office noted that the Association of Proprietors of Integrated Schools had received questions about whether or not school board members have to be vaccinated against Covid-19.

"The answer is 'not necessarily', however it does depend on circumstances," the newsletter stated.

"If a board member does not interact with the students, then the answer is that vaccinations are not required. However, in Year 9-13 or 7-13 schools, there is a student representative on the school board and, if the board members do meet in person with the student representative present, then the answer becomes 'yes' to mandatory vaccination. If the student attends the meeting remotely, then the answer becomes 'not required' again."

Hackers target Dunedin diocese emails

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Dunedin Catholic diocese's email system was the victim of hacking from three IP addresses in the United States between September 20 and October 6.

Five email addresses were hacked, which resulted in unauthorised users accessing those email accounts.

The incident, its effects and suggestions as to how email recipients could react, were included in a memo sent out by Dunedin Bishop Michael Dooley on October 27.

A notice was also placed on the Dunedin diocese website. "We can confirm that the incident has been contained," the memo stated, "and our emails are back up and running securely. You can continue to receive communications from us via email."

The memo included an apology: "We are sincerely sorry that this has happened. Your trust and confidence in our professionalism and care is central to what we do, and we take the security of our systems extremely seriously."

Dunedin diocese's IT specialists gave the diocese confirmation that "no information or documents were downloaded from the email accounts".

But the specialists "cannot ascertain what information in the email accounts has been viewed or accessed when access was gained by the unauthorised user. We therefore cannot say what or whose personal information may have been viewed by the unauthorised user."

"We run separate systems for our server and our email accounts. Our IT providers have confirmed that our server was not accessed by the hackers, and that nothing was embedded on any of our computers or our server, as the breach occurred via the cloud rather than on a local computer."

When the diocese became aware of the true nature of the hacking incident, it immediately contacted its IT specialists in order to contain the breach, the memo stated.

"The IT specialist located the source of the problem, strengthened the existing cyber security on our email accounts by including multi-factor authentication, and enacted a conditional access security on the email accounts to deny access to our email systems by anyone outside of New Zealand."

The memo stated that "we enacted the strongest security that we can on our email accounts, and we will continue

to work with our IT providers to safeguard our operations, now and into the future".

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner was alerted about the incident, and reports were filed with the Police and with CERT NZ.

The memo acknowledged the distress this incident could cause, and gave advice on safety precautions people could take. As information was viewed, at most, and not

downloaded, the risk to people is likely low. But people were advised to be on the lookout for potential fraud and identity theft.

People were informed that they could make a complaint to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, and contact details were given.

If people had questions about what had happened, they could also contact Bishop Dooley, the memo stated.

Fire damages former Holy Name Seminary in Chch

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

Another fire has seriously damaged the site of the former Holy Name Seminary in Christchurch.

Stuff reported that 11 fire crews attended a blaze on November 5, which saw 1200 square metres of the derelict Antonio Hall burned. Early indications are that the fire was suspicious, the article stated.

The building has reportedly been unoccupied since the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes. A fire in 2019

destroyed about one third of the building after a teenager set light to a mattress.

It is suspected that an historic section of the building was destroyed in the latest fire.

A visitor in 2014 reported that the chapel was still in a relatively good state then.

The building was bought by the Church in 1946 and Holy Name Seminary opened a year later. It closed in 1978 and the property was sold to private owners in 1981.

North Shore community likened to early Church

by ROWENA OREJANA

The St John Paul II Catholic community in Albany, Auckland was challenged to live as missionary disciples, as they celebrated their tenth anniversary with a Mass on Zoom on October 31, 2021.

Msgr David Tonks celebrated the Mass with Fr Ephrem Tigga, Fr Nathaniel Brazil concelebrating and Deacon Mark Napa carrying out his liturgical ministry.

The community, which is under the care of the St Joseph's parish in Takapuna, began as a tertiary chaplaincy at Massey University, which was being looked after by then-tertiary chaplain Fr Sam Pulanco.

Msgr Tonks, in his homily, said Fr Pulanco found a few students at Massey University who were eager to grow in faith, but couldn't go to Sunday Mass because of the unavailability of transport.

"So, Fr Sam invited, cajoled, hassled, encouraged, whatever word you might like to use as Fr Sam can do, a group of people whom he knew in the vicinity on the North Shore to come and support these university students at their Sunday Mass. And from this, the St John Paul II community at Albany was born. Isn't it amazing?" he said.

Msgr Tonks said the community reminds him of the early Christian community in Acts 2:42, which stated that the disciples devoted themselves to the teachings of the apostles, fellowship, the breaking of the bread and prayer. He also added outreach to the poor and needy.

"But I want to tell you this. When the community was established, John Paul II was only blessed. Now, he is saint. Does that also challenge you . . . to be a community on journey, on pilgrimage, growing from simply being blessed to being saints?" he said.

Msgr Tonks said the way to becoming saints, according to the Scriptures and Pope Francis, is to "Let the way that the Lord shapes us be lived out there", and "by allowing the Lord who is in



Fr Nathaniel Tat Brazil with some of the members of the St John Paul II Catholic Community, Albany, before lockdown

us [to] spill out".

He said that, when Jesus went to Jerusalem, the Lord cleared the Temple of those who were using it as a marketplace. Jesus also touched the heart of a scribe, so that there was an "extraordinary moment of transformation that comes to the scribe".

Jesus, said Msgr Tonks, talked about his dad and the love of his dad for everyone.

"He's the God that watches over all of us. He's the God who is there for us day by day. Love my dad. And when you do, you experience life."

And then, he (Jesus) looks at the scribe, and he looks at all the other people around him, and he says, 'you're not just simply strangers. You're my brothers and sisters. You're my family. Love my

family. Love Dad, our God and love one another," the monsignor said.

After this, the scribe realised that Jesus did not merely quote the commandments, "but actually talked about what shaped his being", Msgr Tonks explained.

"If we're going to be moving as people from blessed to saints, we've got try to be like Jesus, allowing our very beings to be shaped by the teaching of the teachings of the apostles, the Word of God, the breaking of the bread and prayer, the fellowship, and our service to one another," he said.

Fr Nathaniel Brazil is currently the chaplain of the community. Before Fr Brazil, Fr Christopher Brady was given the care of the community.

John Paul College to phase out class streaming in 2022

by MICHAEL OTTO

Class streaming at John Paul College in Rotorua will be phased out from next year, and the school's principal is encouraging other schools to investigate this option.

In a school newsletter sent out in late October, John Paul College principal Patrick Walsh advised parents that the Board of Trustees had decided to phase out streaming from 2022.

"This decision was made after a full examination of international and national research on the subject," Mr Walsh said.

"The college is entirely confident that this decision is in the best interests of all akonga (students), and will have zero impact on our consistently outstanding academic results."

An article in the *Rotorua Daily Post* noted that the college already has a nearly 100 per cent NCEA pass rate across all year levels.

The change reportedly only impacts students in years 8-10. All other year levels have "mixed ability" classes.

Mr Walsh reportedly said that there was no "strong evidence" that streaming benefitted any students — including top academic performers.

"The research is however



Patrick Walsh

unequivocal that streaming can have significant and adverse impacts on learners, including low self-esteem, narrow educational pathways, unhealthy competition and lost lifetime opportunities," he told the *Rotorua Daily Post*.

Negative impacts of streaming were "amplified" and "long-lasting" for Māori and Pasifika learners, the newspaper reported him saying.

"This is inconsistent with our Catholic worldview and commitment to being culturally inclusive," the principal reportedly said.

The newspaper also reported that Mr Walsh encouraged other schools to review the research and consult their communities about class streaming.

The school newsletter message noted that there had been a parent consultation process before the decision was made by the board. Some 80 per cent of parents are in favour of the move, the newsletter stated.

"We have also listened carefully to the voices of concern through the parent consultation process . . ."

Mr Walsh gave an assurance that the academic progress of every student at the college will continue to be vigorously assessed, monitored and reported on.

Existing student enrichment activities will continue, and more enrichment activities will be offered in years 7-10 for strongly academic children and gifted and talented students.

"The most able students in year 10 will be invited to complete some NCEA standards a year early, and be given mentoring as they move through the senior school in order to fulfil their academic potential."

Concerns could be referred to the deputy principal who "will have specific responsibility for these students and programmes".

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How to live a meaningful life

Recently, I had the great good fortune to sit down for a Zoom interview with Jordan Peterson, Jonathan Pageau, and John Vervaeke. As I'm sure you know, Peterson, professor of psychology at the University of Toronto, is one of the most influential figures in the culture today. Pageau is an artist and iconographer working in the Orthodox Christian tradition, and Vervaeke is a professor of cognitive psychology at the University of Toronto. All three of these gentlemen have a powerful presence on social media. The topic of our conversation was a theme that preoccupies all four of us — namely, the crisis of meaning in our culture, especially among the young. To kick things off, Peterson asked each of us to give our definition of meaning and, more specifically, of religious meaning. When my time came, I offered this: to live a meaningful life is to be in purposive relationship to value, and to live a religiously meaningful life is to be in pur-

dedicated, finally, to that reality. Thus, Plato said that the culminating point of the philosophical enterprise is discovering, beyond all particular goods, the "form of the good"; Aristotle said that the highest life consists in contemplating the prime mover; and the Bible speaks of loving the Lord our God with our whole soul, our whole mind, our whole strength. Jordan Peterson, echoing Thomas Aquinas, put it as follows: Every particular act of the will is predicated upon some value, some concrete good. But that value nests in a higher value or set of values, which in turn nests in a still higher one. We come, he said, eventually, to some supreme good that determines and orders all of the subordinate goods that we seek.

Though we articulated the theme in different ways and according to our various areas of expertise, all four of us said that the "wisdom tradition", which classically presented and defended these truths, has been largely occluded in the culture today, and this occlusion has contributed mightily to the crisis of meaning. Much has contributed to this problem, but we put emphasis especially on two causes: scientism and the postmodern suspicion of the very language of value. Scientism, the reduction of all legitimate knowledge to the scientific form of knowledge, effectively renders claims of value unserious, merely subjective, expressive of feeling, but not of objective truth. Combined with this reductionism is the conviction, baked into the brains of so many young people today, that claims of truth and value are simply disguised attempts to prop up the power of those who are making them, or to sustain a corrupt institutional superstructure.

Accordingly, these assertions have to be demythologised, dismantled, and deconstructed. And along with this cultural assault on the realm of values, we have witnessed the failure of many of the great institutions of the culture, including and especially the religious institutions, to present this realm in a convincing and compelling manner.

Far too often, contemporary religion has turned into superficial political advocacy or a pandering echo of the prejudices of the environing culture.



Still Life with a Curtain (1895) Paul Cézanne

So, what do we need for a meaningful life? From my perspective, I said, we need great Catholic scholars, who understand our intellectual tradition thoroughly and who believe in it, are not ashamed of it — and who are ready to enter into respectful but critical conversation with scientism.

We need great Catholic artists, who reverence Dante, Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Mozart, Hopkins, and Chesterton, and who are also on point to produce fresh works of art, imbued with the Catholic sensibility. And we need, above all, great Catholic saints, who show concretely what it looks like to live one's life in purposive relation to the summum bonum. We can and should blame the culture of modernity for producing the desert of meaninglessness in which so many today wander, but we keepers of the religious flame ought to take responsibility too, acknowledging our failures and resolving to pick up our game.

For people today will not enter into relationship with values and with the supreme value unless they can find mentors and masters to show them how.

Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles. This article was originally posted on www.worndonfire.org It is republished here with permission.

Robert Barron

positive relationship to the summum bonum, or the supreme value.

Following the prompts of Dietrich von Hildebrand, I argued that certain values — epistemic, moral, and aesthetic — appear in the world, and they draw us out of ourselves, calling us to honour them and to integrate them into our lives. So, mathematical and philosophical truths beguile the mind and set it on a journey of discovery; moral truths, on display in the saints and heroes of the tradition, stir the will into imitative action; and artistic beauty — a Cézanne still-life, a Beethoven sonata, Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* — stops us in our tracks and compels us to wonder and, in turn, to create. To order one's life in such a way that one consistently seeks such values is to have a properly meaningful life.

Now, I continued, the perceptive soul intuits that there is a transcendent source of these values: a supreme or unconditioned goodness, truth, and beauty. The fully meaningful life is one that is

Ronald Rolheiser

Beware of your inner circles

"No man is an island." John Donne wrote those words four centuries ago, and they are as true now as they were then, except we don't believe them anymore.

Today more and more of us are beginning to define our nuclear families and our carefully-chosen circle of friends precisely as a self-sufficient island, and are becoming increasingly selective as to who is allowed on our island, into our circle of friends, and into the circle of those we deem worthy of respect. We define and protect our idiosyncratic islands by a particular ideology, view of politics, view of morality, view of gender, and view of religion. Anyone who doesn't share our view is unwelcome and not worthy of our time and respect.

Moreover, contemporary media plays into this. Beyond the hundreds of mainstream television channels we have to choose from, each with its own agenda, we have social media wherein each of us can find the exact ideology, politics, and moral and religious perspective that fosters, protects, and isolates our island, and makes our little nuclear clique one of self-sufficiency, exclusivity, and intolerance. Today, we all have the tools to plumb the media until we find exactly the "truth" we like. We have come a long way from the old days of a Walter Cronkite delivering a truth we all could trust.

The effects of this are everywhere, not least in the increasingly bitter polarisation we are experiencing vis-a-vis virtually every political, moral, economic, and religious issue in our world. We find ourselves today on separate islands, not open to listen, respect, or dialogue with anyone not of our own kind. Anyone who disagrees with me is not worthy of my time, my ear, and my respect;

this seems to be the popular attitude today.

We see some of this in certain strident forms of "Cancel Culture", and we see much of it in the increasing hard, inward-turned face of nationalism in so many countries today. What's foreign is unwelcome, pure and simple. We will not deal with anything that challenges our ethos.

What's wrong with that? Almost everything. Irrespective of whether we are looking at this from a biblical and Christian perspective, or whether we are looking at it from the point of view of human health and maturity, this is just wrong.

Biblically, it's clear. God breaks into our lives in important ways, mainly through "the stranger", through what's foreign, through what's other, and through what sabotages our thinking and blows apart our calculated expectations. Revelation normally comes to us in the surprise, namely, in a form that turns our thinking upside-down. Take for example the Incarnation itself.

For centuries, people looked forward to the coming of a messiah, a god in human flesh, who would overpower and humiliate all their enemies, and offer them, those faithfully praying for this, honor and glory. They prayed for and anticipated a superman, and what did they get? A helpless baby lying in the straw. Revelation works like that. This is why St Paul tells us to always welcome a stranger, because it could in fact be an angel in disguise.

All of us, I am sure, at some point in our lives, have personally had that experience of meeting an angel in disguise inside a stranger whom we perhaps welcomed only with some reluctance and fear. I know, in my own life, there have been times when I didn't want to welcome a certain person or situation into my life. I live in a religious com-

munity where you do not get to choose who you will live with. You are assigned your "immediate family" and (but for a few exceptions when there is clinical dysfunction) like-mindedness is not a criterion as to who is assigned to live with each other in our religious houses. Not infrequently, I have had to live in community with someone who I would not, by choice, have taken for a friend, a colleague, a neighbour, or a member of my family. To my surprise, it has often been the person whom I would have least chosen to live with who has been a vehicle of grace and transformation in my life.

Moreover, this has been true for my life in general. I have often found myself graced by the most unlikely, unexpected, initially unwelcome sources. Admittedly, this has not always been without pain. What's foreign, what's other, can be upsetting and painful for a long time before grace and revelation are recognised, but it's what carries grace.

That is our challenge always, though particularly today when so many of us are retreating to our own islands, imagining this as maturity, and then rationalising it by a false faith, a false nationalism, and a false idea of what constitutes maturity. This is both wrong and dangerous. Engaging with what is other enlarges us. God is in the stranger, and so we are cutting ourselves off from a major avenue of grace whenever we will not let the foreign into our lives.

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Holocaust talk offends

Editorial

One of the ten areas that the synod preparatory document proposes as key aspects of living as a synodal Church is titled "Dialogue in Church and Society". Under that heading, one of the questions is, "What experiences of shared commitment do we have with believers of other religions and with non-believers?"

We are living in stressful times and many tempers are frayed. The need for scrutiny of Government moves is high, but the language of debate should not sink to a level that is very low.

A recent article by New Zealand journalist Miriam Bell on the website of the Australia/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council stated that moves around vaccination mandates in the public and private sectors have "been quickly followed by objectionable comparisons to the Holocaust . . ."

The article cited examples of this behaviour in New Zealand, and quoted Holocaust Centre of NZ chair Deborah Hart saying that "protests using the yellow Star of David and the Holocaust are making a false equivalence that diminishes the enormity of what the Nazis did in the Holocaust".

"In essence, no one is trying to systematically exterminate people who choose not to be vaccinated," Ms Hart said.

"To compare the Holocaust and a government requiring vaccination if you want to do certain things, but leaving individuals the choice to decide, is grotesque, wrong and deeply hurtful to Holocaust survivors and their families, she said.

The article also cited NZ Jewish Council spokeswoman Juliet Moses saying that, if people want to criticise the Government or claim they are being persecuted or denied basic freedoms, they should do so without invoking the industrialised genocide of six million Jewish people, survivors of which are in our society today.

"Such 'comparisons' are historically illiterate and trivialise the Holocaust, which constitutes soft core Holocaust denial, as labelled by renowned Holocaust scholar Professor Deborah Lipstadt. Those who engage in this are not showing any sympathy for, or respect to, the victims of the Holocaust — quite the contrary," she said.

"It is extremely disappointing that we have people in Aotearoa indulging this kind of behaviour, but it reflects what we have seen overseas," she added.

During the pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI, there was a furore over his lifting the excommunication of SSPX Bishop Richard Williamson (alongside three other bishops), who had made remarks denying the Holocaust (remarks of which Benedict was reportedly unaware when he lifted the sanction).

In an audience with Jewish leaders shortly afterwards, Benedict made his position over the Holocaust very clear, saying that the Church is "profoundly and irrevocably committed to reject all anti-Semitism".

"The hatred and contempt for men, women and children that was manifested in the Shoah was a crime against God and against humanity," he said.

"It is beyond question that any denial or minimisation of this terrible crime is intolerable and altogether unacceptable," he said.

The words of this German-born pope, who was alive when these atrocities took place, should resonate with Catholics and with all people of good will.

Catholics, including some in New Zealand, have used Holocaust-related analogies in describing the current state of society. Depth of feeling is understandable, but Holocaust analogies and comparisons must cease.

At the start of this millennium, St John Paul II apologised to Jews and others for the sins committed against them. The same year he placed a prayer in the Western Wall in Jerusalem. It read:

"We are deeply saddened by the behaviour of those who, in the course of history, have caused these children of yours to suffer, and asking your forgiveness we wish to commit ourselves to genuine brotherhood with the people of the Covenant."

Popes have acknowledged the Church's need for forgiveness from Jewish communities. Let us not add to the list of actions requiring apologies.

The Habit



Letters

Abortion

I support Ken Orr in his letter headed "Support Life" (*NZ Catholic*, October 3)

It may be convenient for certain politicians to encourage amnesia in their responsibility for facilitating abortion through the Abortion Legislation Act 2020. However, the child in the womb is a human person, and so the community, through the state and the process of politics and law-making, has a duty of ensuring the protection of the child as well as supporting the mother.

In Australia, there have been instances of attempted abortions with babies born alive and deliberately left to die without nutrition or medical attention. Abortion itself is appalling enough; deliberately letting any new-born baby die from neglect is a further step along the path of barbarism.

A bill has been introduced into the Federal Australian Parliament by George Christensen, MP, requiring life-sustaining support to be given to babies born alive after an attempted abortion. Attempts were made to amend our Abortion Legislation Act 2020 to protect babies born alive, but these attempts were rejected, as were other amendments such as giving pain relief.

It is a pity that the slogan "Be Kind" is not applied to all children

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in the womb and to all new-borns. Let's support repeal of the 2020 Act.

Richard Harward,
Onehunga, Auckland.

Communion

On the Eucharist, referring to Martin Ng's letter (*NZ Catholic*, August 7), the Church's magisterium sets out the inviolable position regarding the errant person's beliefs and actions.

Holy Communion is to be respected by all. That is the "bottom line", so to say.

Adherence to the Church's requirements is required.

John Sellars,
Lower Hutt.

Cullinane

We can be very grateful for the foresight and insight provided by Bishop Cullinane in his articles on "Mission, Ministries and Co-responsibility" (*NZ Catholic*, Oct. 17 and Oct. 31).

He has challenged us all to face the current reality, and to step up and undertake greater involvement in the front line of the Church's work. He reminds us of our obligation through baptism to be in the front line of the prophetic mission of Christ.

We, as laity, can only agree that the route the Church must take is "for a more just society and more truly human life

NZ Catholic welcomes readers' letters, although receipt of a letter does not guarantee publication. No correspondence will be entered into concerning publication. Letters should be no longer than 220 words and should be topical, to the point, and include the writer's address and phone number. *Ad hominem* attacks are not welcome. Emailed letters should be sent as part of the text message — not as an attachment — to editor@nzcatholic.org.nz and include the writer's physical address. Pseudonyms are not accepted, except by special arrangement.

Irenaeus

Pope Francis has said he will declare St Irenaeus of Lyon to be a Doctor of the Church.

Pope Benedict XVI spoke about St Irenaeus at a 2007 general audience. One quote from St Irenaeus, from Adversus Haereses, about tradition, the Church and the Holy Spirit, is relevant as the synod process starts.

"This faith, which, having been received from the Church, we do preserve, and which always, by the Spirit of God, renewing its youth as if it were some precious deposit in an excellent vessel, causes the vessel itself containing it to renew its youth also . . ."

For where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace."

John Cowen,
Te Atatu, Auckland.

Correction

A sentence in a letter to the editor from Kath Kenrick in the last edition of *NZ Catholic* should have read as follows: "Certainly those present at a Latin Mass appear more devout, as do those who attend regular weekday Mass." A change in the wording, which gave a different meaning, occurred during editing. *NZ Catholic* apologises for this oversight.

— Editor

In the Mind of Pope Francis

The experience of the power of God's love and the recognition of his fatherly presence in one's personal and community life is a fire in one's bones. Such a remarkable experience enkindles one to creatively express it in a way that engages others to believe, too. Jesus' first disciples even remembered the very moment it happened (John 1:39). And this experience can only be completed by the act of sharing the event (1 John 1:4). This is the heart of Pope Francis' Mission Sunday 2021 Message: "We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

The evangelisation — the proclamation of the Good News brought through the fullness of God in Christ's life — is, in fact, the declaration of the friendship of the Lord. Jesus solemnly exposed his heart to his followers during the intimate moment of the Last Supper: you are not servants; you are my friends! And I chose you! (John: 15:15-17). And he did not just speak of this friendship. Jesus truly lived this until the end. And he gave these friends a mandate to bear fruits that will last, which made the disciples apostles. This is why, right at the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis already called the baptised: "missionary-disciple". We are the friends of Christ who are always in a state of mission. The prophet Jeremiah describes this experience as one of a consuming awareness of the Lord's active presence in our heart, impelling us to mission, regardless of the sacrifices and

Bernard Espiritu

misunderstandings it may entail (Jeremiah 20:7-9). Love is always on the move and inspires us to share a wonderful and hope-filled message: "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41).

Such awareness did not make life easy for his followers. Instead, intimidating and difficult experiences impelled them to turn their realities into opportunities for mission. According to Pope Francis, the love of God discovered is the very Spirit that empowers one with certainty that "all those who entrust themselves to God will bear good fruits".

Our times are hard. For Pope Francis, the pandemic accentuated and amplified the pain, solitude, poverty, and injustices experienced by so many. The discouragement, disillusionment, fatigue, and growing negativity stifle hope. In these conditions, the powerful message of life echoed in our hearts that we need to proclaim is "He is



Pope Francis is greeted by Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, one of Shiite Islam's most authoritative figures, during a visit to Iraq in March, 2021 (CNS photo)

not here but has risen!" and he wants us to live. There is an urgent need for a mission of compassion and to be missionaries of hope. Everything we have received from the Lord is meant to be put to good use and freely shared with others. As Christians, we cannot keep the Lord to ourselves: the Church's evangelising mission finds outward fulfilment in the transformation of the world and the care of creation. "Missionary-disciples" are men and women who are gifted to give.

This year, Pope Francis' World Mission Sunday Message wants us to own and share with others what we bear in our "missionary-disciples" hearts. Our life of faith calls for a growing openness to embracing everyone, everywhere. He ended his message, affirming that the "Universal openness to love has a dimension that is not geographical but existential. Always, but especially in these times of pandemic, it is important to grow in our daily ability to widen our circle, to reach out to others who, albeit physically close to us, are not immediately part of our 'circle of interests'. A missionary disciple is willing to have the mind of Christ, to believe with him that those around us are also my brothers and sisters. May his compassionate love touch our hearts and make us all true missionary-disciples. And may Mary, the first missionary-disciple, increase in all of us the desire to be salt and light in our lands."

My baptism has given me the privilege of participating in the Missio Dei (the Mission of God). Mission Sunday is celebrated yearly in October. For many, it is just the Sunday to collect money

Mission Sunday 2021

for the missions. Let us not forget that it is primarily the special day when one should especially celebrate one's calling as a missionary for being a Christian. It is a day when we reflect, pray, give thanks to God, and yes, be generous to understand better what it means to be a missionary-disciple today. And this year, Pope Francis, who is the principal patron of the Pontifical Mission Societies (MISSIO), takes his cue from the Acts of the Apostles. "For we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:29).

While the Covid19 pandemic still puts its weight in many parts of the world, including Europe, Pope Francis, in March 2021, made an historic visit to the land of Abraham (Iraq) to express a message of hope and reconciliation. He went to bring support to the remaining Christian communities there, among the oldest in the world. It was a risky trip, but his message was of peace. As reported, the other mission he wanted to deliver, and of equally great importance, was to show the futility, insanity, and sheer evil of violent conflict between religions. Pope Francis demonstrated the power of symbolic action, exemplifying the call attributed to St Francis of Assisi, "Preach the Gospel at all times. And when necessary, use words."

The picture that declared an act more audible than words was captured when Pope Francis visited and held the hands of Iraq's most prominent Shia religious authority Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani. Sistani is a critic of the war-mongering messages that continue to split the two Muslim communities of Shi'ites and Sunnis apart. A leading publication in England reported that, for Pope Francis, "violence in the name of religion is blasphemy; fraternity was stronger than fratricide."

This Mission Sunday 2021, MISSIO-NZ wants to share the picture of Pope Francis, the image of a Catholic senior leader who has a missionary heart, mind, and practice. Since the beginning of his pontificate, he has summoned the faithful to be missionary people whose attention should focus on its service to the world. A missionary Church is ever ancient and ever new when it is a Church that goes forth. That way, she will always be relevant — "For we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Fr Bernard Espiritu, SVD, is national director of MISSIO — providing for the Pontifical Mission Societies. The reflection was written for Mission Sunday, which was celebrated in New Zealand last month.

Encounter 'at heart' of World Mission Sunday

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — At the heart of the celebration of World Mission Sunday are the experiences of countless missionaries, who share with others their own personal love story with Jesus, said Filipino Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle.

Promoting the celebration of World Mission Sunday on October 24, Cardinal Tagle, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, told journalists that the Church's mission to evangelise does not belong to just a select few, but is a "call for all the baptised".

"Spirituality and an encounter with the Lord is always missionary," he said. A relationship with Jesus is "an experience that moves us out of ourselves to share Jesus with all nations".

A missionary, he said, is anyone who "tells 'a story of love' lived with Jesus, and brings compassion from Christ to the world".

"We cannot keep to ourselves the encounter with God who has touched our hearts and who has done marvellous works," he said.

The theme chosen for the 2021 celebration was taken from the Acts of the Apostles: "We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard." The Vatican released Pope Francis' message for World Mission Sunday in January.

In his message, the Pope said one's life of faith "grows weak, loses its prophetic power and its ability to awaken amazement and gratitude when we become isolated and withdraw into little groups."

"By its very nature, the life of faith calls for a growing openness to embracing everyone, everywhere," he said.

Cardinal Tagle reiterated the Pope's words and said that the "encounter with Christ and his Gospel

generates openness and communion toward one's neighbour".

"The experience of Christ does not build walls, separating us from others, but pushes us toward others with joy, not as conquerors in a triumphalist sense, but in the sense of sharing the goodness of what we have seen, heard and experienced," Cardinal Tagle said.

"We must recover this aspect," he added. "The mission is in the heart of each one of us, each baptised person is a missionary of the kingdom of God."

When asked about the challenges facing missionaries during the pandemic, including the use of technology in the Church's evangelisation efforts, Cardinal Tagle said he was "grateful for the advances in technology" that allowed people to attend liturgies online and join Bible study programmes.

However, the cardinal told journalists the Church and its missionaries cannot forget reliance on technology has its downsides as well.

"We are corporeal beings, we need contact," he said. "As our young people are growing in what they call artificial intelligence, virtual intelligence, there is a call for us in the Church to develop other types of intelligences."

Cardinal Tagle said, in addition to the need to recognise the importance of relational, emotional and affective intelligence, which the digital world can only simulate, "contextual intelligence" is almost completely lacking, "because there is a tendency, like with a tweet, to be very, very short, and you don't have an appreciation of the complexity of context".

"We need that type of intelligence," he added.

Bearers of Consolation and Hope Ngā Kaihāpai o te Aroha me te Tūmanako

A Pastoral Statement from the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference on the spiritual and pastoral care of persons contemplating assisted dying in Aotearoa New Zealand.

1/. Faith sometimes leads us to places we might rather not be (cf. John 21:18; Pope Francis, Homily 14 April 2013, 2)

Soon, in Aotearoa New Zealand, some health professionals, chaplains and priests will find themselves in situations not of their own choosing. 'Medically assisted dying' (euthanasia) becomes legally available in our land on the 7th of November. While this course of action will not be offered in our Catholic rest homes or Catholic hospices, or indeed many others, it will become available in a number of hospitals and other public care facilities throughout the country. For some of our Catholic community, these are their places of work or ministry.

2/. The implementation of assisted dying for persons with a life-limiting illness will put many vulnerable people at risk. These include the elderly who may feel they have become a burden to family and society, and many others, some of whom will be young. The question arises: how might we, as Catholics, respond when someone confides in us that they are contemplating assisted dying? How can we be bearers of consolation and hope in these situations?

The Old Testament figure of Job is a striking example of one who struggled with his circumstances, both societal and personal. He was filled with angst about the prevailing culture, and he found his own life almost intolerable. Yet, he clung firm to his belief in the goodness of God and reasoned that "if we take happiness from God's hand, must we not take sorrow too?" (Job 2:10). Through perseverance in faith and trust in God's time, te wā o te Atua, Job was able to turn his personal cry of despair into a wonderful testimony of consolation and hope for all.

Many parents know only too well the mix of desolation and consolation. Sometimes their children — young or adult — make decisions, or behave in ways, contrary to the Gospel. Yet, as mothers and fathers, far from turning away, they stay close, ever ready to offer a hand or word that redirects rather than scolds (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 38). They pray for their daughter or son, entrusting them to our merciful God while continuing to walk alongside them in love.

3/. The legal availability of euthanasia in New Zealand does not change Catholic conviction

about the practice. We profess that we are made in the image and likeness of God and, furthermore, that we are drawn into God's own divine life through Baptism. Our fundamental belief, that all human life is therefore sacred, leads us to teach that we should never take the life of another.

At the same time, our faith tells us there is no place or situation, no matter how uncomfortable, where our faith cannot be expressed, or God's grace encountered. Perhaps too often we presume that God works only through our better parts or places. Yet, most of God's plans are realised in and through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses (*Patris Corde*, 2; 2 Corinthians 12:9-11), and often in places where, understandably, some might hesitate to go.

4/. What precisely is it that our Catholic health professionals, chaplains, priests and lay pastoral workers can bring to those contemplating euthanasia who, with good intent, turn to them for consolation? What is it that we can bring to these situations as whānau — parents, daughters and sons, siblings — or as friends?

Like Job, we could be tempted to give up, or turn away, and thus let the desolation of wrongdoing or despair take over. But, as Job reasoned, that would be turning our backs on God. Faith, in the first instance, calls us to remain present with the suffering other. That indeed is what consolation or con-solatio means: bearing another's suffering by sharing it and entering into the solitude of others to make them feel loved, accepted, accompanied, and sustained; simply being with the one who is dying; bearing witness to hope through our closeness (Samaritanus bonus, 10; *Spe Salvi*, 38).

Through this power of hope we can, person by person, transform the places of assisted dying into outposts of the Holy Spirit. Pope Benedict put it this way: "the dark door of time always remains open, when we are bearers of hope" (*Spe Salvi*, 2). Pope Francis puts it another way: "Time is always much greater than space" and so we need never be robbed of hope (*Lumen Fidei*, 57).

Pastoral and spiritual accompaniment of those considering assisted dying becomes a hikoi of hope most especially because it leaves open the way to an encounter with God; as an expression of an enduring commitment to care. Our prayer and ministry with the dying need



never know human barriers. Instead, through perseverance, we "stand with God" (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 9) in the knowledge of God's grace at work in all situations.

5/. Brothers and Sisters, e te whānau whakaponu, prior to preparing this statement we surveyed members of our Catholic community — priests and laity — who are working with and ministering to the dying, sick and vulnerable. The responses we received were overwhelmingly characterised by a desire to show compassion in the face of complexity, combined with a profound respect for the Church's teaching on euthanasia. We do not need to deny the objective wrong of euthanasia in order to accompany, with consolation and hope, those who might feel drawn or pushed towards this type of death.

As we enter a new era of secular history in Aotearoa may we be reminded by the tenacious Saint Paul that even in the most troubling of circumstances and places we are called to remain present, remembering the mercies of God and humble in the knowledge of our own faults (Romans 12:1-3) in order to pray "hoping against hope" (Romans 4:18).

Defend life, promote access to health care for all, Pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The fear, sickness, death, mourning and economic impacts of Covid-19 should make people who are relatively well off and have access to health care think about "what it means to be vulnerable and live in precariousness on a daily basis", Pope Francis told members of the Pontifical Academy for Life.

Acknowledging how people are "worn down" and tired of hearing or thinking about the coronavirus, the Pope insisted the challenges and suffering of the past 18 months would make sense only if people learned from them.

Meeting members of the Pontifical Academy for Life in late September, Pope Francis urged them to find new ways to collaborate with other physicians, researchers, scholars and theologians in defending human life at every stage of its development

and in every condition of health or frailty.

The Catholic Church cannot "water down" the truth that the defence of life includes opposition to abortion and euthanasia — the clearest signs today of a "throwaway culture", he said. But it also includes continuing the traditional Catholic advocacy for the right to health care for all people.

While disease is a natural occurrence, it often also is the result of human action or inaction, and responses to it are the result of social and political choices, Pope Francis said.

"Moreover, it is not enough for a problem to be serious for it to attract attention and be addressed" with the same kind of global commitment that is being seen in response to Covid, he said. In fact, "very serious problems are ignored because of a

lack of adequate commitment".

And while global measures to stop the spread of Covid and to get people vaccinated are good, he said, one cannot ignore the fact that millions of people do not have access to clean water or adequate food.

"I do not know whether to laugh or cry, sometimes I weep, when we hear government or community leaders advising the inhabitants of the slums to wash several times a day with soap and water. My dear, you have never been in a slum: there is no water there and they don't have soap," he said.

The Pope continued: "We affirm that life and health are equally fundamental values for all, based on the inalienable dignity of the human person, but if this affirmation is not followed by an appropriate commitment to overcome the inequalities," he said, "we, in fact, accept the pain-



Pope Francis during a general audience at the Vatican on Nov. 3, 2021 (CNS photo)

ful reality that not all lives are equal, and health is not protected for all in the same way."

"Here I would like to reiterate my concern that there will always be a free health care system," he said. For countries that have a free health care system, "don't lose it . . .".

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Reflecting on 50 years of priesthood, Dunedin jubilarian says God gave all that was needed

by JEFF DILLON

Performing at a high level for 50 years has all been taken in his stride by Dunedin diocesan priest Msgr John Harrison. Born the eldest of eight children in 1946, he was built more for running than rugby. In fact, he was to get involved as a competitive athletic harrier in his late teens. Before he got seriously involved in that passion, he grew up in the St Peter Chanel parish in the southern suburban approaches of Dunedin.

As a new parish, it had neither a proper church nor any school, so he started school at St Francis Xavier in Mornington in the early 1950s. Then, in 1955, he was drafted off to the junior boys' school of St Edmund's, run by the Christian Brothers in South Dunedin.

It was here that he first recalls hearing a formal appeal to consider a religious vocation by a brother whose job it was to go to schools run by the Christian Brothers promoting vocations to the religious life.

The idea of becoming a priest was aided also by the needs of the young, developing parish in which he was growing up. He recalls hearing his grandfather say many times that he was "looking for the day when it would be possible to have a weekday Mass in the parish." Fr Harrison acknowledged the role of being an altar server as helping in his vocation journey.

However, while the thought was there through his secondary schooling at Christian Brothers' High School, he had some reservations, and left at the end of the 6th Form (Year 12) in 1963 and began work at the BNZ in 1964. He admits that he had hoped to avoid exams, but on his first day in the new job he was informed that the new recruits would be expected to do some studies and sit exams.

Give it a go

His training at the bank did come in handy later when he was a priest, but the niggling thought about a vocation led to his decision to leave the bank in 1966 and "give it a go".

His parents also are given credit for supporting him. He had told his mother one day what he was intending to do. He had then gone out that evening to a Harrier Club "do" and crept home in the early hours only to be foiled by a squeaky floorboard. His father called him and just said "it's a big decision, but the door's always open".

Unbeknown to him, his younger brother Tony had also made the decision to go to the seminary, so the pair of them ended up attending Holy Name Seminary in Christchurch, where they started with a class of 40. That class was down to 20 by the end of that first year.

Since John was regarded in those days as a "late" vocation, because he had been at work for two years, he was moved on to the seminary at Mosgiel at the beginning of 1968, and was ordained in 1971. This year marks his 50th jubilee.

Some brief temporary appointments followed until he was appointed as an assistant at Gore in



Msgr John Harrison

1972. In 1974, he was contacted by Bishop Kavanagh and informed that he wanted him to do some University of Otago studies in social work. To be closer to Dunedin, he was shifted to Oamaru. There, he became also a chaplain to Teschmakers and St Kevin's secondary schools. He was then moved to Dunedin in July/August 1975, initially to St Francis Xavier covering while his uncle, Fr Pat McAleese, was overseas. Then to St Patrick's in South Dunedin and chaplain to Moreau College. He retained that chaplain role when he moved to St Bernadette's in 1982. His next move in 1983 took him to St Mary's in Kaikorai, and he took on the responsibility for Catholic Social Services, prison chaplain, and youth. He was appointed as parish priest at Holy Name in 1986, while continuing with his other duties. He was there until the middle of 1990, when he was sent to Ottawa, Canada, to study canon law, and he returned two years later to St Francis Xavier. In 1995, he headed to Mosgiel, then back to St Bernadette's as parish priest in 1998. In between those positions he had also become the assistant chancellor and was doing a bit of marriage tribunal work too. He moved again in 2002 to Port Chalmers, during which time he became the chancellor of the diocese, and four years later was moved to the cathedral, where he remained parish priest until late 2020. At 75, he is now an assistant priest at the cathedral and is still the chancellor.

Along the way, he became associate judicial vicar, police chaplain, and chaplain to the American Antarctic programme. He has been to the Antarctic about seven times over the years.

God's work

He is a firm believer that, if you are doing God's work, then God will give you what you need. He can recall many occasions, when dealing with people in difficult situations, where he was prompted to say something, and then he pondered afterwards about the source of that inspiration.

His dedication and efforts for the diocese were recognised when he was made a Monsignor in 2012, during Bishop Colin Campbell's tenure.

As a balance to all his duties, he managed along the way to fit in his interest in competitive running as a member of the Caversham Harriers Club, of which he was made a life member about a year ago. Unfortunately, a back injury some years ago robbed him of his enjoyment of "pounding the pavement", but he maintained his connection through an administrative role.

He recalled being on one run when his professional knowledge was requested by one of his fellow runners as they were powering along George Street. So a discussion ensued about how to get baptised which eventually took place and the fellow became a Catholic. It was a case of evangelisation on the run.

He has found a similar response through his involvement with a group of modellers in a plastic model club. Members sometimes come up to him on a meeting night and ask his professional opinion about questions or issues that are on their minds.

Msgr Harrison admits to having a hanger-and-a-half of models. He estimates he has about a thousand, with more unmade than made. His main focus is on planes, which developed when he was aged about 10 at St Edmund's. A brother at the school ran a model-making club.

Challenge

He enjoys the mental challenge as "it keeps the mind active and helps the motor skills, the dexterity". He also enjoys the fact that "you have created something. . . it is quite relaxing except when you drop a piece on the floor". He likes to research information about particular models he makes. At the moment, he has about eight models on the go, in various stages on the production line.

Family links in Dunedin, and also overseas such as Ireland and England, are another important part of his interests beyond his busy life as a priest.

Reflecting on his fifty years as a priest, he is surprised at how his early concept of what the role involved has had to adjust to all the aspects he experienced. When he was ordained, he recalled a telegram he had from then Fr Cullinane (later Bishop) which said "You'll enjoy His work if you enjoy His company", which highlighted the importance of a prayer life. He enjoyed pastoral work.

Materialism had been a big change in Fr Harrison's 50 years as a priest. He noted that you hear people say that they don't go to Mass on Sunday because it is family day. He observed that, if we gather there to celebrate Mass, we gather there as the family of God.



Chapel of the Snows at McMurdo Sound in Antarctica. (Photo: Alan Light)



The interior of the Chapel of the Snows. (Photo: Wikipedia)

PROMOTION

Turning shame into joy for mothers in Nigeria

by Dr MURRAY SHEARD

Could anything hurt a woman's spirit more than to be leaking and dribbling urine or bodily waste?

Obstetric Fistula occurs when the baby's head puts too much pressure on the mother's maternal tissues, cutting the blood supply. The tissue dies and leaves a hole, or fistula, causing urine and faeces to leak uncontrollably.

The main contributors to fistula in developing countries are extreme poverty, the low status of women and girls, and the under-resourced health system. Malnutrition is also a factor and contributes to stunting, when the female skeleton doesn't fully mature, leading to birthing difficulties like fistula.

An estimated 2 to 3.5 million women with obstetric fistula live in the developing world, and according to the World Health Organisation between 50,000 to 100,000 women worldwide develop obstetric fistula annually. Globally, for every woman who receives treatment, at least 50 women go without.

Currently, new cases of obstetric fistula are occurring faster than the treatment of the existing ones, resulting in a huge backlog of women requiring fistula repair. Women experience long waits due to very few hospitals being capable of providing treatment, and there are only a few trained health professionals able to provide quality clinical care for fistula patients.

Women living with fistula are often excluded from daily activities. Husbands frequently leave them, and there are many cases of women being pushed out of their village because of their incontinence. They become isolated, stigmatised, and often are severed of all means of livelihood. Many women live with the condition for decades, unable to access vital medical intervention that can transform their lives. The condition of obstetric fistula can only physically afflict women but its consequences impact the entire family. Obstetric fistula devastates the lives of its victims and leads to extreme socio-economic deprivation.

Nigeria is placed among the top 10 most dangerous places for a woman to give birth and accounts for 40 percent of fistula cases worldwide. This is the highest of any country globally, which is largely due to the lack



Maimunat, with Victoria from SFHF

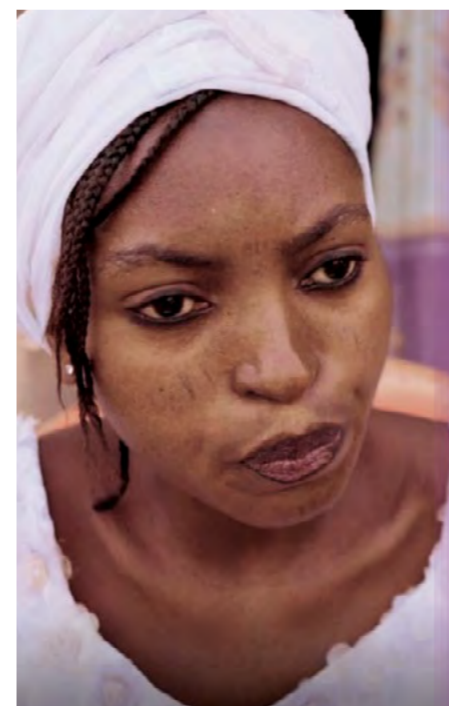
of medical care during labour. Sadly, these women endure the scourge of fistula for life unless they are told of corrective surgical repair, which can be provided free of charge through **cbm**-funded partner hospitals.

Through the generosity of **cbm** supporters, Maimunat (pictured above) was fortunate enough to receive free life-changing fistula surgery at a **cbm**-funded partner called Survive Fistula Health Foundation (SFHF). Maimunat's labour was very difficult and after hours of being in labour, it just stopped. Her baby's head was left wedged tightly in Maimunat's birth canal. No blood could reach the thin wall of flesh separating her birth canal from her urinary tract, causing a small hole. Fortunately, Maimunat was found by **cbm**-funded SFHF and was able to undergo life-changing fistula surgery.

cbm, also known as **Christian Blind Mission**, is an international Christian development organisation, whose mission includes delivering life-changing surgeries to those disadvantaged by poverty and disability. To find out more about how you can support women living with fistula, visit www.cbmnz.org.nz



— Dr Murray Sheard received his PhD in Ethics and Philosophy from the University of Auckland. He has worked in international development for over 15 years and is the Chief Executive Officer of **cbm** New Zealand.



Obstetric Fistula is a devastating and debilitating health condition

Globally, for every mother who receives life-changing fistula surgery, at least 50 go without.

After a traumatic childbirth Maimunat, from Nigeria, suffered the loss of her dignity due to obstetric fistula. With a tear in her birth canal, the fistula allowed bodily waste to escape uncontrollably, causing her to smell. She became depressed and isolated. Her daily life was unbearable. Adding to her misery, Maimunat and her husband could never afford to pay for her surgery and post-surgical care. All hope was lost.

But thanks to generous people like you, Maimunat was healed from decades of shame and heartbreak. She was found by a **cbm**-funded health care worker and soon after received life-changing fistula surgery at a **cbm**-funded hospital.

There are many mothers like Maimunat suffering decades of misery, shame and humiliation, but your generosity can set them free from obstetric fistula! Today, please help restore hope and dignity to sick, heartbroken and rejected young mothers like Maimunat.

www.cbmnz.org.nz | 0800 77 22 64



Pope Francis, President Biden meet at the Vatican

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis and US President Joe Biden had an unusually long meeting at the Vatican on October 29, talking about the climate crisis and poverty, but not about abortion, the president said.

Some US bishops have argued that Biden, who regularly attends Mass, should not receive Communion because of his support for legalised abortion, while Catholic Church teaching emphasises the sacredness of human life from conception to natural death.

Asked if abortion was one of the topics of his meeting with the Pope, Biden responded, "We just talked about the fact he was happy that I was a good Catholic, and I should keep receiving Communion."

Biden spoke to reporters at Rome's Palazzo Chigi, where he was meeting Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi after meeting Pope Francis.

The Vatican described the president's meetings with both the Pope and with top Vatican diplomats as consisting of "cordial discussions", with both sides "focused on the joint commitment to the protection and care of the planet, the health care situation, and the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic".

They also discussed "refugees and assistance to migrants", the Vatican said, and "reference was also made to the protection of human rights, including freedom of religion and conscience".

The Pope and the president also exchanged "views on some matters

regarding the current international situation, also in the context of the imminent G20 summit in Rome, and on the promotion of peace in the world through political negotiation", it said.

According to a statement released by the White House, "President Biden thanked His Holiness for his advocacy for the world's poor, and those suffering from hunger, conflict and persecution.

"He lauded Pope Francis' leadership in fighting the climate crisis, as well as his advocacy to ensure the pandemic ends for everyone through vaccine-sharing and an equitable global economic recovery," the statement said.

During a nearly 90-minute meeting in the library of the Apostolic Palace, which included 75 minutes of closed-door discussions between the two leaders, the pair gave each other gifts.

Among those given by Pope Francis to Biden was a signed copy of the Pontiff's message for World Day of Peace 2021, a collection of his major documents, including his document on human fraternity, and the book, "Why Are You Afraid? Have You No Faith? The World Facing the Pandemic".

The book contains photographs and homilies, messages and prayers the Pope delivered during the pandemic, emphasising the importance of love, hope, solidarity and the common good.

After meeting the Pope, Biden went downstairs to meet Cardinal



US President Joe Biden greets Pope Francis during a meeting at the Vatican on October 29 (CNS Photo)

Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, and Archbishop Paul Gallagher, the Vatican foreign minister.

The White House said in a statement that those discussions included "efforts to rally global support for vaccinating the developing world against Covid-19" and Biden thanking the Vatican for its "leadership in fighting the climate crisis", and for "speaking out on behalf of the wrongfully detained, including in Venezuela and Cuba".

"The leaders committed to continue using their voices to advocate

for personal and religious freedoms worldwide," the White House said.

The private papal audience was Biden's first presidential visit to the Vatican. Pope Francis had previously met Biden three times when Biden was vice-president; the previous time was in 2016, after they both spoke at a conference on adult stem cell research at the Vatican.

Biden is now the 14th US president to have met a pope at the Vatican, and the second Catholic president after President John F Kennedy met St Paul VI almost 60 years ago.

Pope may go to Canada as part of reconciliation process

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis is willing to travel to Canada as part of "the long-standing pastoral process of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples", the Vatican press office said.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has invited the Pope to visit the country, the press office said on October 27, although no date or time frame for the trip was mentioned.

A delegation of Indigenous leaders, accompanied by several bishops, is scheduled to meet with Pope Francis at the Vatican in December, to listen to their experiences of how they and their people have been

treated by Catholics in Canada, with special attention to the impact on the Indigenous communities of Canada's residential schools, many of which were run by Catholic religious orders or dioceses.

"Pope Francis will encounter and listen to the Indigenous participants, so as to discern how he can support our common desire to renew relationships, and walk together along the path of hope in the coming years," the bishops' conference said in a statement after their September meeting.

"We pledge to work with the Holy See and our Indigenous partners on the possibility of a pastoral

visit by the Pope to Canada as part of this healing journey," the bishops said.

The statement was part of the first formal apology the bishops made as a conference made to Canada's Indigenous people.

Acknowledging the "grave abuses" perpetuated, the bishops acknowledged "the suffering experienced in Canada's Indian Residential Schools. Many Catholic religious communities and dioceses participated in this system, which led to the suppression of Indigenous languages, culture and spirituality, failing to respect the rich history, traditions and wisdom

of Indigenous peoples." The residential schools have long been at the heart of discussions and reconciliation efforts between Indigenous Canadians and the Catholic Church.

The issue gained urgency in late May when the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation reported that, using ground-penetrating radar, an estimated 215 bodies had been found in unmarked graves at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, run by a Catholic religious order until 1969. Similar discoveries followed at the sites of other residential schools.

Vatican extends initial listening phase for Synod of Bishops to August

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — To ensure all Catholics have an opportunity to share and to listen as part of the initial process leading up to the Synod of Bishops in 2023, the Vatican has extended the local phase by more than three months.

Pope Francis officially opened the process on October 10, and bishops were to do the same in their dioceses a week later, opening a six-month period of prayer and discussion with the aim of involving any Catholic who wanted to participate, as well as reaching out to people who no longer practise their faith, and to the Catholic Church's ecumenical partners.

"During this period, we have heard, over and over again and from many quarters, the request to extend the duration of the first phase of the synodal process in order to provide a greater opportunity for the People of

God to have an authentic experience of listening and dialogue," the synod office said in a note on October 29.

"Aware that a synodal Church is a Church that listens, considering that this first phase is essential for this synodal path and evaluating these requests, and always seeking the good of the Church, the Ordinary Council of the Synod of Bishops has decided to extend until August 15, 2022, the deadline for the presentation of the summaries of the consultations" by bishops' conferences and the Eastern Catholic churches, it said.

In the initial process, members of parishes, dioceses, religious orders and Catholic movements are asked to consider the ways in which they currently experience the Church as "synodal", that is, as a community that walks together, and to suggest



Pope Francis at Mass to open the process that will lead up to the assembly of the world Synod of Bishops in 2023, in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Oct. 10, 2021. (CNS photo)

ways to strengthen that in practice.

The dioceses and local groups originally were asked to send a synthesis of what they heard to their bishops' conferences so that a na-

tional summary could be prepared by April, 2022. The synod office in Rome was hoping to prepare an initial working document for the synod by September, 2022.

Pope urges leaders at COP26 to be courageous

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Education, a change in lifestyles and a model of development focused "on fraternity and on the covenant between human beings and the natural environment" are urgently needed to slow climate change and care for its victims, Pope Francis said in a message to world leaders at the COP26 summit.

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state and head of the Holy See delegation to the UN climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland, read portions of the Pope's message to the assembly on November 2.

The cardinal was one of more than 50 speakers, most of whom were heads of state or government leaders, delivering three-minute "national statements" during the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The high-level segment will resume on November 9-10, and negotiations will close on November 12.

The Vatican released the full text of the Pope's message, which was submitted as part of the official record of the summit.

Like other leaders who spoke of the concrete commitments their governments were making, Pope Francis briefly explained the action the Vatican had adopted; the first is to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

But the Holy See, with its influence over parishes, schools and universities around the globe, also is committed, he said, to promoting "education in integral ecology",

meaning a focus on both the needs of the earth and on the needs of the people who inhabit it.

"These commitments have given rise to thousands of initiatives worldwide," the Pope wrote.

The "vital task" of the Glasgow meeting, he said, is to show the world that "there really exists a political will to devote — with honesty, responsibility and courage — greater human, financial and technological resources to mitigating the negative effects of climate change, and assisting the poorer and more vulnerable nations most affected by it."

The wealthier nations must lead the way, he said, not just because they have the resources, but also because they owe an "ecological debt" to the poorer countries whose resources they have long exploited.

"The wounds inflicted on our human family by the Covid-19 pandemic and the phenomenon of climate change are comparable to those resulting from a global conflict," Pope Francis said. "Today, as in the aftermath of the Second World War, the international community as a whole needs to set as a priority the implementation of collegial, solidary and farsighted actions."

The Pope assured the world leaders that the majority of their people, no matter their religious belief, see protecting the environment as a moral and spiritual issue that must be faced.

At a meeting at the Vatican in early October, he said, "we listened to the voices of representatives of many



Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, arrives for the UN Climate Change Conference, COP26, in Glasgow, Scotland (CNS Photo)

faiths and spiritual traditions, many cultures and scientific fields".

They were "very different voices, with very different sensitivities", the Pope wrote. But, he wrote, there was "a remarkable convergence on the urgent need for a change of direction, a decisive resolve to pass from the 'throwaway culture' prevalent in our societies, to a 'culture of care' for our common home and its inhabitants, now and in the future".

"Humanity possesses the wherewithal to effect this change," Pope Francis insisted.

Special attention must be paid to

the impact climate-change mitigation efforts will have on the labour market and on the world's poorest people, he said.

"Sadly, we must acknowledge how far we remain from achieving the goals set for tackling climate change," he said. "We need to be honest: This cannot continue!"

"Now is the time to act, urgently, courageously and responsibly," he told the leaders. "The young, who in recent years have strongly urged us to act, will only inherit the planet we choose to leave to them, based on the concrete choices we make today."

Pope plans December visit to Cyprus and Greece

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis' planned trip to the eastern Mediterranean in December will focus on migration, Catholic-Orthodox relations, and promoting peace in a region known more for its vacation spots than its ongoing political tensions.

The Vatican announced on November 5 that Pope Francis would visit Nicosia, Cyprus, from December 2-4, and Athens and Lesbos, Greece, from December 4-6.

The Pope had made a one-day visit to migrant and refugee camps on the Greek island of Lesbos in 2016, but this will be his first visit to the Greek mainland.

The Moria refugee camp the Pope visited was the largest refugee camp in Europe until it burned down in September 2020; a temporary camp was set up nearby and continues to host thousands of migrants and refugees.

While migrants and refugees crossing the Mediterranean and landing in Italy, Spain, Greece and

even Malta make headlines, significant numbers of them end up in Cyprus. As of October 31, according to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, 464 migrants had reached Malta since January 1, while 1515 had reached Cyprus.

Lasting peace, a true sense of kinship, and greater Christian-Muslim dialogue are expected to be topics during the Pope's visit to Cyprus, which has been divided between the Greek Cypriots in the South and Turkish Cypriots in the North since 1974. UN troops continue to patrol a buffer zone between the two parts of the island.

The Vatican said on November 5 that exact details of the Pope's programme would be released later.

The theme for the Pope's visit to Cyprus is: "Comforting each other in faith", highlighting the importance of comforting and encouraging one another, which are "essential dimensions for dialogue, encounter and welcome, and are

salient characteristics of the life and history of the island," the Vatican press office said.

The theme for the Pope's visit to Greece is: "May we be increasingly open to God's surprises", a quote from the Pope himself.

Explaining the theme, the Vatican press office said, "As Greece feels the effects of the pandemic and the recent financial crisis, the motto expresses the hope that the Pope's visit will bring a ray of light for the future of Greece, a country of deeply-rooted faith and an illustrious past."

Nun becomes Vatican's highest ranking woman

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has appointed Sister Raffaella Petrini, an Italian member of the US-based Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist, to be secretary-general of the office governing the Vatican City State.

The appointment, which includes overseeing departments as diverse as the Vatican Museums, post office and police force, effectively makes the 52-year-old Rome native the highest-ranking woman at the Vatican.

The position previously had been held by a priest, who was named a bishop shortly after becoming secretary-general.

Sister Petrini holds a doctorate in social sciences from Rome's Pontifical University

of St Thomas Aquinas, and a master of science in organisational behaviour from the Barney School of Business at the University of Hartford, Connecticut. In addition to working at the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples since 2005, she teaches courses in sociology and economics at the University of St Thomas Aquinas.

The appointment of Sister Petrini was announced by the Vatican on Nov 4.

Sister Petrini succeeds Archbishop Fernando Vérgez Alzaga, who was named an archbishop and president of the commission governing the Vatican City State on October 1.

Other women named by Pope Francis serve in the No. 2 po-

sition of several offices, just as Sister Petrini will, but they either share the post with a male colleague or have been given the post on a temporary basis, at least initially. And none of those offices employ as many people as the Vatican governor's office.

In August, Pope Francis named Salesian Sister Alessandra Smerilli interim secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and in February he named Xavière Missionary Sister Nathalie Becquart as one of two undersecretaries of the Synod of Bishops.

The other undersecretary named was Augustinian Father Luis Marín de San Martín, who became a bishop.



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Memorial honours NZ's most prominent pacifist

by MICHAEL OTTO and JEFF DILLON

The stand of Aotearoa New Zealand's most prominent wartime conscientious objector, Archibald Baxter, who became a Catholic late in his life, has been honoured with the opening of a national memorial in Dunedin.

The Archibald Baxter Peace Garden — The National Memorial for Conscientious Objectors was officially opened on October 29 by Deputy Prime Minister Grant Robertson. The memorial, on the corner of George and Albany Streets, was designed by Baxter Design in Queenstown. It features an artwork by Queenstown sculptor Shane Woolridge, depicting in abstract the infamous number 1 Field Punishment endured by Baxter after he was made to go to the Western Front in World War I, having refused military conscription.

Known by the nickname "The Crucifixion", this punishment "consisted of being tied to a post in the open with his hands bound tightly behind his back and his knees and feet bound — for up to four hours a day, in all weathers", stated the New Zealand History website.

Convinced of the immorality of war as a young man, Baxter was to endure much suffering for his principles. He was placed as close to the front line in World War I as possible, with death and artillery fire all around him, and he was labelled as insane for refusing to wear a military uniform. But he never relented from his beliefs. Of the original 14 conscientious objectors sent from New Zealand to England and then the Western Front, he and one other were the only ones who held out until the end of the war.

At the same time, the Te Ara Encyclopaedia of New Zealand describes his "saint-like absence of rancour, and readiness to find humanity in the common soldier".

This sentiment was echoed in an article in *The Common Good* in 2005, which stated that Baxter "is also a light within the Church. Being Christian for most of his life and a Catholic in the latter years, he took the teachings of Jesus on justice and peace very seriously. He should be recognised as one of New Zealand's true saints, a source of inspiration for those seeking moral courage or looking for moral leadership".

Archibald Baxter was the father of prominent New Zealand poet James K. Baxter.

The older Baxter's autobiography *We Will Not Cease*, was published in England in 1939. The Te Ara Encyclopaedia of New Zealand describes it as "a powerful account of dissent and its consequences, and [it] has become a classic of New Zealand literature".

According to the 2017 paper by University of Otago Professor David Tombs, in Archibald Baxter's public writings, he [Baxter] was highly reticent about his religious beliefs for most of his life.

"He deliberately kept his religious beliefs to himself, saying little to his wife or brothers, but this was because his faith was important to him, not because it was irrelevant (and he was a Kiwi farmer)," Professor Tombs wrote, adding that



The sculpture by Shane Woolridge (Photo: Jeff Dillon)



Archibald Baxter (Photo: Wikimedia)

"Baxter is best understood as a non-denominational (broadly Protestant) Christian believer, who 'believed but did not belong' (until his

conversion to Catholicism)"

"He did not see his Pacifism as dependent on his Christian beliefs, he saw killing people in a war as wrong, and he saw this as a sufficient reason for his stand," Professor Tombs wrote.

The professor also wrote that, "At one of the most challenging moments in his [Baxter's] life, during Field Punishment, it seems that he found comfort and strength in God, and this was a turning point in enduring the punishment".

Baxter, and his wife Millicent, were received into the Catholic Church in 1965 in Dunedin.

Professor Tombs noted the role played in this by Fr Stuart Sellar, whom Archibald Baxter met when he [Baxter] was in the Mater Hospital for a minor eye operation and Fr Sellar was the hospital chaplain.

Professor Tombs referred to a book by Penny Griffiths on the life of Millicent Baxter, which told of a friendship developing between the priest and the Baxters, and the couple's interest in Catholicism grew. In this, they were encouraged by their son James, who had already been received into the Catholic Church.

The Baxters asked Fr Sellar if they could be pacifists and Catholics. The priest gave them St John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* to read, and the strong papal teaching on peace reassured them.

According to *The Common Good* article, Archibald Baxter "continued to live in Dunedin, and he remained active in the cause of social justice and a pacifist all his life". He died in 1970, aged 88.

The Archibald Baxter Memorial Trust stated that a grant of \$369,000 from the NZ Lottery Grants Board in 2019 was a significant boost to the memorial project, which was also supported by Dunedin City Council, three community trusts and many individual supporters.

Stuff reported that two other suggested sites in Dunedin for the memorial were knocked back after opposition from some institutions and from some in the community.

"A temporary sculpture of Baxter appeared at Frank Kitts Park, Wellington in 2016, and prompted calls for a permanent place to honour conscientious objectors," the Stuff article stated.

At the opening in Dunedin, Archibald Baxter Memorial Trust chairman, Professor Kevin Clements said that it took about ten years to go from the beginning of the idea through to actual fruition.

He noted that when you stand near the memorial and look down Albany Street and across to the Otago Peninsula in the distance then you can identify high on the hillside there the Soldier's Memorial dedicated to those men from the Peninsula who were killed or wounded in World War I. It was somehow fitting that the two memorials to courage counterbalanced each other.

Commenting on the Soldier's Memorial, Professor Clements said: "It is entirely appropriate that that's there, so that we acknowledge all those who lost their lives in war, and the soldier up there can look down on here to a very different kind of memorial, a memorial to those who chose a different path, had to have a different kind of courage to say 'no' to war. And we want these two spaces to be in conversation with each other, so that together we can begin thinking about ways in which we can be more creative in the future about how to build peace and to maintain it."

The Deputy Prime Minister welcomed people to "this celebration", and he used that word advisedly — "it is a celebration of courage". He also praised the efforts of the trust members who had stuck to their task. He wanted to begin his main part of his speech by commenting also about Parihaka. He noted that the invasion of Parihaka happened in 1881, which he believed was also the year that Archibald Baxter was born.

He also noted the wrong of what amounted to state-sponsored torture with field punishment number 1, and in as far as he could he wanted to apologise for that being done in the past.

Mr Robertson spoke about the form of the sculpture and noted that its bent form was representative of one of the great attempts in New Zealand of someone attempting to stand upright. "Our commitment to peace and disarmament is intertwined in our identity, it is part of who we are on the world stage, it is part of standing upright as a New Zealander," he said.



Part of the memorial site (Photo: Jeff Dillon)

Knight's tale of two heads

by NEVIL GIBSON

The cinema has long been fascinated by the medieval legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Its main source is Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of England* (Historia Regnum Britanniae), published in the 12th century.

While they have little historical basis, these stories are captured in countless books and all forms of media. Modern movie adaptations began with *The Adventures of Sir Galahad* (1949), moving on to *Knights of the Round Table* (1953) and *The Black Knight* (1954).

In the 1960s, Cornel Wilde directed himself in *Lancelot and Guinevere* with Jean Wallace. The popular stage musical *Camelot* became a movie in 1967, starring Richard Harris and Vanessa Redgrave. *Camelot* was based on *The Once and Future King* series, T.H. White's retelling of Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, published in 1485.

Notable among recent productions were John Boorman's excellent *Excalibur* (1981), *First Knight* (1995), *King Arthur* (2004) and *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword* (2017).

King Arthur claimed to be the most historically accurate, depicting Arthur as a fifth century Roman commander who, with his knights, mounts a final mission as the imperial forces retreat from Britain. It ends with Arthur marrying Guinevere and being declared king.

The latest King Arthur tale is *The Green Knight* (Amazon Studios) which, due to the Covid disruption, wasn't given a cinema release in New Zealand or in most other places.

It is based on a late 14th-century romance poem, Sir *Gawain*



Dev Patel in *The Green Knight*

Movie Review

and the *Green Knight*, by an unknown author. Earlier versions were *Gawain and the Green Knight* (1973) and *Sword of the Valiant* (1984). Gawain is Arthur's nephew, and the least experienced among the Round Table.

As Christmas looms and misty snow falls around the court, Gawain agrees to a "game" where the Green Knight (Ralph Ineson), a half-man, half-tree figure, offers to trade his huge axe to anyone who can behead him. Gawain succeeds, using the Excalibur sword, but as the knight leaves carrying his head, Gawain is reminded the grim game will be played in reverse in a year's time.

As Gawain (Dev Patel, David Copperfield) begins his journey to the Green Chapel to meet his fate and complete the game, further setbacks occur. He is robbed by a gang gleefully led

by Barry Keoghan (*Dunkirk*, *The Killing of a Sacred Deer*), and falls for the wife of a hunting lord (Joel Edgerton, who played Gawain in the 2004 *King Arthur*). Gawain's confused mental state conflates her with the girlfriend he left behind (both played by Alicia Vikander).

American writer-director David Lowery made the minimalist and atmospheric *A Ghost Story* (2017).

A bigger budget gives him options, though the dark interiors do not look so good on a small screen.

However, the spectacular Irish exteriors — including the castles at Charleville Forest and Cahir — are enhanced by Weta Digital's special effects, and contribute to an immersive experience that is rarely matched in modern cinema.

Amazon rating: 16+. 130 minutes.

A dark episode in US Catholic history

NAZIS OF COPLEY SQUARE: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front by Charles R. Gallagher. Harvard University Press (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2021). 336 pp., US\$29.95. Reviewed by TIMOTHY WALCH (CNS)

There was a dark side to American Catholicism in the 1930s and 1940s. Even though many in the Church showed compassion for their fellow citizens, others lashed out against Jews, communists, and even President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Hate, hostility and conspiracy infiltrated the clergy as well as the laity.

Virulent evidence of this hate came from a priest named Charles Coughlin. Each week, Father Coughlin railed against those that he castigated as un-American on a national radio programme that reached millions. Although Father Coughlin didn't speak for most Catholics, there was no denying his influence.

In this new book, Charles R. Gallagher of Boston College tells the story of the "Christian Front", the most violent manifestation of Father Coughlin's rhetoric. The front began in Brooklyn in the late 1930s and caught fire in the Irish community of Boston in the 1940s.

The book is a compelling read. "Gallagher's *Nazis of Copley Square*,"

writes one early reviewer, "is a potent brew of spy story, detective story, and frank, fearless account of how a significant wing of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States spawned a movement aimed at defending Hitler and sabotaging America's war effort."

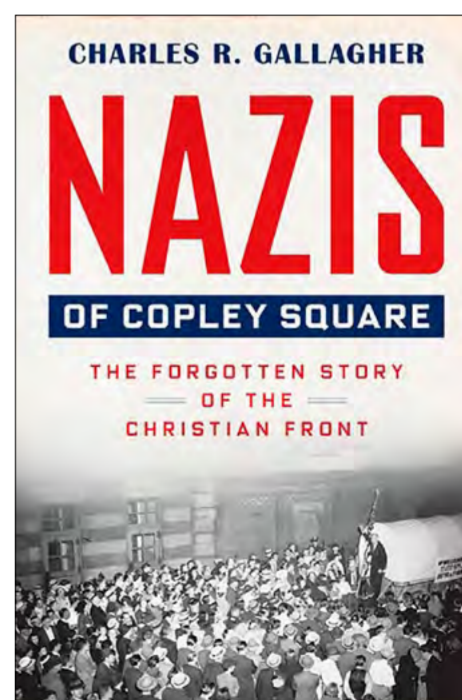
Admittedly, the title is provocative. There were no brown shirts in the streets of Boston. There's no question, however, that leaders of the front were guided by Father Coughlin and by representatives of the German government. Yes, members of the Nazi Party.

Gallagher starts his story with Father Coughlin's influence over a group of young Catholic conservatives in New York City. They responded to his call for a "crusade" against the "Reds" and the "Jews" — targets of the radio priest's wrath.

By November, 1938, these young men had organised themselves as "the Christian Front". They held rallies to denounce Jews and socialists and support fascist causes.

The militance of the front increased exponentially in 1939. The organisation was active in the German American Bund rally held at Madison Square Garden that February.

And in the months that followed,



front members harassed and attacked Jews and other minorities in the streets of New York. Appeals to Cardinal Francis J. Spellman and other bishops were largely ignored.

It was, in fact, the US Justice Department that took the lead in curbing the front's anti-American activities. A

CLIPS

Army of Thieves (Netflix)

Zach Snyder's cult status rose with his recent re-working of the original Justice League, and his zombie apocalypse thriller *Army of the Dead*, in which criminals break into a Las Vegas casino. The early career of that team's ace safecracker, played by Matthias Schweighöfer, is on display in this prequel, which lacks the non-stop action of the sequel, but stands alone as a low-key heist adventure. Schweighöfer also directs, from Snyder's script, which makes this too much of a one-man show. The plot focuses on breaking into three of the four soon-to-be decommissioned safes designed by a man called Wagner and modelled after his namesake's Ring cycle. The fourth, *Götterdämmerung*, is the one in Las Vegas. The action takes a while to wind up, but finishes on a high note after moving from Paris to Prague and St Moritz, with no zombies in sight, except on the TV news. Netflix rating: 13+. 129 minutes.

Fever Dream (Distancia de Rescate) (Netflix)

This psychological thriller from Chile is written and directed by Claudia Llosa, from a novel by Samanta Schweblin. It concerns two women and their children, a son and daughter respectively. The mother and daughter are on a summer holiday in wheat-field country that can only be described as idyllic. But the setting is deceptive as the town is largely devoid of other children and animals, with suggestions a witch and a poisoned river are responsible. The girl's mother keeps her on a tight leash — hence the original title in Spanish meaning "distance to rescue" — while the other considers her son has become a monster through an unexplained personality change. The mothers compare notes during various outings, including whether one should leave her abusive horse-training husband. The children's contrasting characters add to a rising sense of danger as explanations about the boy unfold. This is not an easy story to decipher, possibly due to the number of extraneous threads shrouding the mystery. Netflix rating: 13+. 93 minutes.

In for a Murder (W jak Morderstwo) (Netflix)

The spirits of Agatha Christie and Alfred Hitchcock lift this domestic murder mystery as a frumpy housewife (Anna Smolowik), who is seldom seen without a cardigan, outwits the professionals in seeking the killer responsible for two deaths in a small Polish town. One is the Christie-reading heroine's friend, who disappeared 15 years earlier, while the other has just occurred. Linking them is a necklace pendant with the letter W, after the victims' first names. A bumbling detective, once the heroine's boyfriend, stumbles his way through, thanks to the woman's insights. Meanwhile, her husband is dallying with a ditzy blonde, and insisting his wife remain housebound instead of taking a part-time job with a handsome vet. These domestic issues recall how Hitchcock used to plant a murder among ordinary folk, these being stereotypically hopeless or plotting men, and their long-suffering spouses. Piotr Mularuk directed and co-wrote the screenplay with Katarzyna Gaczk from her novel. Netflix rating: 13+. 104 minutes.

grand jury convened in December 1939, and that led to the arrest of 17 men for conspiring to overthrow the federal government. Although the 1941 trial did not lead to convictions, the front was discredited in New York as a bunch of "unbalanced cranks".

But the trial did not end the front. By 1943, it had re-emerged in Boston in a more violent form. Young Catholic thugs who identified with the front were targeting Jews. Their hate crimes increased precipitously throughout the year.

At first, Boston civic leaders were in denial and church officials did nothing. Even Jewish leaders did not speak out for fear of further aggravating the hostility. Thanks to a small cadre of Catholic activists and journalists, however, the violence was exposed in the press, and order was restored by the end of the year.

Gallagher traces this tragic chapter in American Catholic history and he shows how evil can flourish, even among individuals who claim to embrace Christian values.

Gallagher's book reminds us to renew our commitment to the ecumenical and interfaith principles of religious tolerance.

Timothy Walch is an historian of American Catholicism.

THE CHURCH YEAR

We are here: Thirty-third Sunday ▼

Advent Christmas Ordinary Time Lent **Easter Time** Ordinary Time

A need to prepare ourselves for the endtime

Scripture

by Fr Kevin Waldie sm

Each of today's Scripture passages looks forward to a time when all that God wills will be brought to a fitting conclusion.

This point is most evident in Daniel as he speaks about "that time" when all those who have become wisely informed and have acted rightly on this earth will inherit eternal life. Consequently, preparing for that time is of great importance. So Daniel is simply encouraging us to be especially conscious of our eternal destiny.

After quite a few weeks of listening to the Letter to the Hebrews, its message is obvious.

Today's text simply throws into relief Christ the High Priest. What he achieved by death in the past should trigger in each of us a daily anticipation of what the last day will usher in.

At that time, we must surely know that our Christ will welcome into his company all those for whom he died in his most extraordinary act of self-offering. Our response to that gift is therefore much awaited.

Mark's Gospel verses sit well with these first two readings. In Jesus' words, as Mark presents them, we hear a distinct echo of Daniel's words. The imagery of the stars and the bright sun link

November 14: Thirty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time. **Readings:** 1. Daniel 12:1-3; **Psalm:** 16; 2. Hebrews 10:11-14,18; **Gospel:** Mark 13:24-32.

into the fact that some things in this earthly life will pass away. But most importantly for us all, there is a future that is clearly spelled out in Jesus' speech to his disciples. And the nearness of this event is enough to stir within us a sense of needing to prepare ourselves for the end-time.

As we near the end of another liturgical year, these biblical readings are a clarion call. They beckon us all to weigh up how our lives have been fulfilling the will of God in light of the outcome that will be our lot eternally.

The true nature of Jesus' kingship is revealed

This last Sunday of the Church's liturgical year is one of fitting celebration. Being people of faith, we must naturally rejoice in a day that honours the kingship of our Lord and God.

With Daniel, we enter into a visionary's presentation of God's universal reign, and the role the "Son of Man" plays in it. The picture revealed comes to us as privileged recipients of the Word of God. Presented here is the unique and all-powerful kingship of the person who became one like us.

This Christ/Messiah in the flesh showed us the way to eternal life. And so, by celebrating this day, we accept to become champions of this Christ for all peoples, nations and languages.

In a literary vein similar to that of Daniel, the author of the book of Revelation also welcomes us into his visionary world. Here in his verses, we hear that Jesus Christ is the king who outranks all kings known to humankind. His authority and power have been proven. For in his earthly life he conquered death by crucifixion and showed to us his unique dominion over all creation.

This second reading is a mightily powerful endorsement of Daniel's vision, and its reality displayed in the person of Jesus the Christ.

John's Gospel text is dominated by five questions that underpin the dialogue between Pilate and Jesus. By means of those questions, the

November 21: Christ the King. **Readings:** 1. Daniel 7:13-14; **Psalm:** 93; 2. Apocalypse 1:5-8; **Gospel:** John 18:33-37.

true nature of Jesus' kingship is revealed. And it is our faith in that kingship that John wants us to proclaim boldly to the world in which we live. This day our response to this passage of Scripture is therefore a key element of this annual celebration.

Christ the King is heralded through these readings. By our active reception of them we enter fully into the festivity of this particular Sunday.

SAINTED GLASS



The Solemnity of Christ the King is on November 21, the last Sunday of Ordinary Time. Celebrating Jesus as King of the Universe is a great way to mark the end of the liturgical year! This window of Christ as King is from All Saints, Portland, Australia. As King, Jesus is simultaneously the ruler of all and the servant of all. He is responsible for caring for us and, in response, we need to be subject to him in every way. He makes it easy for us by giving us food from heaven.

— Glen McCullough

Scripture scholar among winners of Ratzinger Prize

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has selected two German scholars as winners of the Ratzinger Prize.

The winners for 2021, announced by the Vatican are:

Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz, a retired professor of philosophy of religions at the University of Dresden, and an active contributor to the "Opera omnia" or collected works of St Edith Stein, and the Italian edition of the collected works of Father Romano Guardini.

Ludger Schwiendhorst-Schönberger, a professor for Old Testament studies at the University of Vienna and chair at its Institute for Old Testament Biblical Studies. He is considered one of the leading experts in the so-called Sapiential books or Wisdom books of the Old Testament.

The prestigious award, a sort of "Nobel Prize in Theology", is given to two scholars each year who stand out for their scientific research in the field of theology, regardless of their religious faith.

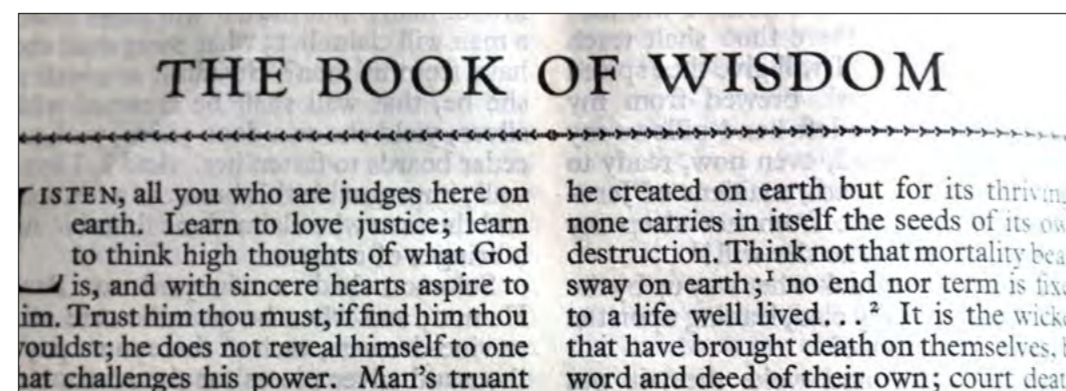
Pope Francis was scheduled to confer

the award to the winners at the Vatican on November 13.

Because last year's ceremony was not held due to Covid-19 restrictions, the 2020 winners were also invited to attend the mid-November ceremony. Those winners were: Tracey Rowland, professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame Australia, and Jean-Luc Marion, a French philosopher and Catholic theologian.

The Pope approves of the winners among a short list of candidates recommended by a papally-appointed five-person committee of the Joseph Ratzinger-Benedict XVI Foundation, which was established in 2010 to support theological research, and to promote studies on the theology and teaching of the retired pope.

The committee seeks to include experts who are not strictly theologians or specialists in sacred Scripture, but who still enrich theological studies through their work as artists, scientists or philosophers.



One of the Wisdom books of the Old Testament

Local Diocese News

Much-loved Auckland priest Fr Alleman dies

by ROWENA OREJANA

Fr Nicholas Alleman, a priest in the Auckland diocese for almost 60 years, passed away on October 23, after a long illness. He was 91.

A requiem Mass was celebrated at St Patrick's church in Panmure on October 26, with 10 priests attending, in line, as much as possible, with the pandemic Alert Level 3 step one protocols.

Auckland Bishop Patrick Dunn thanked those who were present, as well as those who were watching the Mass livestreamed on the St Patrick's, Panmure facebook page.

"It seems strange to be farewelling such a wonderful priest in this rather unusual situation with just ten or so present, because we could have filled this church with parishioners who knew Fr Nick and loved him and were grateful to him for the support," Bishop Dunn said.

"It seems a bit sad to be having such a quiet celebration but, on the other hand, I think, Nick would have quite liked it that way because he didn't like a big fuss."

The bishop said Fr Alleman would

have been "infinitely thrilled" with the attendance of Emeritus Bishop Denis Browne, who was ordained with Fr Alleman in 1962.

Bishop Dunn said Fr Alleman was born on St Patrick's Day in 1930 in the Netherlands. He was one of ten children.

Fr Alleman was about 10 years old when German forces invaded his country. Germany occupied the Netherlands during his early teen years.

Bishop Dunn said this must have had a huge impact on his life.

"He never spoke to me much about that, but on one occasion, in Warkworth, he showed me the pantry in the presbytery. He opened the pantry and said, 'come and have a look at this'. And on the shelves of the pantry were cans and cans of food and packaged food. He said, 'I know this is a bit silly, but I have such a memory of the food shortages of the war, I like to be well-stocked just in case'," Bishop Dunn related.

The bishop said Fr Alleman arrived in New Zealand in 1952 as part of a wave of Dutch migrants looking



Fr Nicholas Alleman

archbishop [Liston] would have realised he was a stable pair of hands," Bishop Dunn said. "Also, he was willing to go."

Later, Fr Alleman was appointed to the parishes of Beach Haven, Howick, Warkworth, Dargaville and Point Chevalier.

When he was 75, he went to Liston Village as chaplain. Five years later, he moved to St John Vianney House. At age 87, he transferred to Mercy Parklands.

"I'd like to acknowledge the wonderful care he received from the nursing staff at Mercy Parklands," Bishop Dunn said.

The bishop said Fr Alleman epitomised the vast majority of our priests who just carried on with their work.

"They're just there all the time, year in, year out, faithfully looking after those entrusted to their care," Bishop Dunn said.

"So today, we thank you Fr Nick, for over 60 years of faithful service. A faithful and humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord. And we pray that you now enjoy the fruits of your labour."

for a better life.

Fr Alleman was a tailor, but he heard the call to priesthood. He went to Holy Cross Seminary in Mosgiel.

After his ordination, Fr Alleman had 11 appointments in his first 13 years as priest, which Bishop Dunn found curious.

"I think it was because he was probably a little older than the other newly-ordained priests, and the

Former Opotiki parish centre up for tender



The former parish centre in Opotiki

by MICHAEL OTTO

St Mary's parish in Opotiki in the Bay of Plenty is putting its former parish centre up for tender.

The building dates from the late 19th century or early 20th century, and it is planned that the eventual buyer will remove it from the property in Kelly Street, Opotiki. The building used to be the residence of the priest assigned to Opotiki.

Parish priest Fr Rico Enriquez told NZ Catholic that the parish has discerned that selling the building is the best option, as against the cost of upgrading the building to make it useable for community meetings and ongoing maintenance costs.

The space left will be used as "extra

space for the parish lawns", Fr Enriquez said.

The parish doesn't use a parish centre at present, he added, noting that smaller meetings are held in a school building, and larger ones can take place on the parish grounds.

Fr Enriquez said parishioners are sad that the building is going, but they have recommended that someone from the local community will take it, if possible.

"Hence, it could still be seen around." A notice about the building being sold by tender stated that the 140 square metre building "offers great potential as a home, office, coffee shop or even a restaurant".

Tenders close on November 15. Fr Enriquez said there had been five or six enquires by the end of October.

Palmerston North hui postponed

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

A three-day Palmerston North hui on liturgy, music and pastoral life has been postponed until late April, 2022.

Te Hahi Hurihuri — The Evolving Church was originally scheduled for September and then for October. Now, with Covid-19 restrictions in place, it has been put back to next year.

A diocesan notice in September stated that the hui is planned because "our parishes are in transition".

"As a result, we are experiencing changes in liturgical practice, pastoral priorities and musical repertoire. Te Hahi Hurihuri — The Evolving Church, is a place of conversation where we share how we are experiencing this transition," the notice

stated.

Presenters at the hui are listed as Fr Joseph Grayland, who will speak on "Liturgy, music and parishes in evolving times. Impacts, threats, opportunities, intracultural living and worship", Dr Robyn Andrews, whose topic is "Who are we now? The Evolving Face of Aotearoa New Zealand", Judith Courtney (director, Auckland Liturgy Centre) who will address "Music in the evolving church". There will also be a panel discussion on an "intracultural church".

The venues are Te Rau Aroha — The Diocesan Centre in Palmerston North on the Friday evening and the Saturday. On Sunday, the hui will be held at Our Lady of Lourdes church in Palmerston North.

A koha of \$25 is suggested. For further details, see www.pndiocese.org.nz/liturgyhui

Correction

An article in the October 31 edition of NZ Catholic about an organ project in Southland contained several errors. The expert estimation of the cost of strengthening the organ loft at St Mary's Basilica, Invercargill was \$250,000, not \$500,000. The total project cost of the installation at St Theresa's in North Invercargill was \$170,000, not \$340,000 as reported. The cost of the strengthening work at the basilica could not be afforded by the parish, rather than not being afforded by the organ project supporters, as reported. Attribution should have been given to The Southland Times for the original article on the project (corrections were also made to that article). NZ Catholic apologises for this omission and for these errors.



Papal Prayer

The Pope's November universal prayer intention: People who suffer from depression.

We pray that people who suffer from depression or burn-out will find support and a light that opens them up to life.

Some of the artwork from the Everything Blessed website. See story page 20.



Online novena for vocations

by NZ CATHOLIC staff

To conclude the Year of St Joseph, people are invited join an online novena to St Joseph for vocations.

The novena is being organised by the Auckland diocese vocations team, and their website states that all people, "from wherever you are", are invited to enter into this diocese-wide time of prayer.

The novena begins on November 29 and finishes on December 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

The novena will be livestreamed daily at 7pm from the Cathedral of St Patrick and St Joseph, Auckland, via Zoom and Facebook. A thanksgiving Mass will be livestreamed from the cathedral at 7pm on December 8.

Advertising for the novena states: "Now, more than ever, we need St Joseph's loving, fatherly, intercession. We want to join together as a diocese and, over nine days of prayer, ask St Joseph to intercede for us and our young people: that they would perceive the Holy Spirit's movement in their hearts, that the Lord will bring to light and help us to recognise those whom he has called to the priesthood and religious life, and that they may be willing and enabled to play their part in the history of salvation."

The vocations website states: "We'd love to know where you're joining us from, and whether you're praying with your parish, school or prayer group, so please fill in the contact form to be added to our Novena Map.

Register to be sent daily reminders and intentions to help us journey along together in prayer."

For more information, and to register, visit www.aucklandvocations.org.nz/novena

WORDS TO PONDER

“Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received — only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.” — Francis of Assisi

40 YEARS AGO

HAMILTON'S NEW PLANS

"Think small" is the likely theme for the Hamilton diocese over the next few years, following the successful Diocesan Assembly held at Waikato University last weekend.

The 180 clergy, religious and lay people who attended the assembly opted to base the future of their diocese on the small Christian community, and in this move they have the full backing of Bishop Edward Gaines.

"What we had in mind has eventuated," he told the assembly. "Over the past 12 months, I have said nothing about parish pastoral councils, and now I want you to stop thinking about the parish council in the terms you know it."

Bishop Gaines also asked the delegates to drop regional and diocesan pastoral councils in their present form, adding that what was proposed now came from their talks over the weekend.

"Ultimately," he said, "you will evolve a diocesan pastoral council which will fulfil the needs of your groups' thinking. But when you talk of the future, keep in view the

terms of what you have done this weekend."

The small (or basic) Christian community has been a key to Catholic renewal in Latin America in recent years. It involves neighbourhood groups, operating within larger parishes, combining Scripture reflection, liturgy and social action, in an effort to relate faith more directly to people's lives.

Bishop Gaines said that, while basic Christian communities were being formed in Hamilton's parishes, it would be necessary to keep some essential services going, like building, maintenance and finance. "But the important thing is to take the Church where we are, as we are, and where we are going."

Hamilton's decision to develop the small Christian community came towards the end of a day-and-a-half of study, in which the assembly, either as a body, or in groups, looked at such topics as "Our local church", "Praying", "Communicating", and "Looking towards the future".

— *Zealandia*, November 15, 1981

CAPTION CONTEST



Write the best caption for this photo and win a \$30 Countdown voucher. Send in your ideas by Tuesday, Dec. 7 to Caption Contest 625, NZ Catholic, PO Box 147000, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144. Or email: design@nzcatholic.org.nz Please include your postal address so that your prize, if you win, can be sent to you.

The winner of the Caption Contest from issue 623 (right) was Nancy Hill, Wainuiomata.

Some other suggestions were: "So how long did it take you to make the World Wide Web?" — John Lewis, Hamilton.

"Please pray for me, Holy Father; I'm quite tied up at present." — Sr Mary Scanlon, Christchurch.

"A bit extreme as Covid protection don't you think?" — Helen Barry, Christchurch.

"Pope Francis being encouraged to include crime-fighting in the Vatican WEB-site." — Fr Michael Pui, Hurunui.

"I know we have to mask up but that is a bit over the top." — Russell Watt, Auckland.



Pope: "Thank you. No. My power comes from a higher source."

"Haven't I seen you before on the web?" — Anne Kane, Pleasant Point.

"I thought you were a figment of my imagination!" — Brian Skinner, Orewa.

"Pope with Mr Hope". — Elias Martis, Auckland.

Family Matters

Helen Luxford



Coming alive again

I feel that Auckland city and the Church are slowly coming alive again. I am sure that many were confused and blind-sided by the "outdoor picnic" announcement some weeks ago. It gave Auckland some freedoms, but seemed inconsistent with the plan up to that point in time. We have been enjoying more outdoors time. Over the weekends, we have walked up Mt Eden, gone out to Piha, and explored local parks. We've seen one other household outside, which has been some much-needed social interaction for all of us. But what I feel has been markedly missing has been Church.

It feels like a different lifetime ago already when the kids were in school and kindy, we were doing school sports and gathering with people indoors! I've lost count as what week of this extended lockdown we are now in. Currently, we don't know when anything is going to look like "normal" again. When will we be able to gather for Mass in Auckland? When will we be able to go to confession? I think we are all getting online fatigue.

This week and this weekend, we have seen many more offerings for Catholic options popping up. This weekend, the kids went to the first St Patrick's online children's liturgy. Then we had online Mass livestreamed. St Patrick's had an online 24-hour rosary prayer session on Zoom. It was such a divine blessing

to be able to join in for this. I saw Pukekohe was offering adoration — as I understood it, it was outside with people in their cars adoring Jesus. What a fabulous idea!

Our spiritual needs are just as important as any other needs. We need to keep thinking of ways to be Church during this lockdown and going forward. The current Traffic Light System is going to have different gathering limits for anyone using vaccination certificates as against those who don't. This is a major issue for churches and leaves churches in a no-win situation. Church is a place for everyone. We don't turn anyone away from Mass. If a service goes with vaccination certificates, they can minister to larger numbers, but this excludes unvaccinated people. If a service goes without the certificates, then the numbers able to attend is limited, and some people who are vulnerable to Covid infection won't attend for fear of an increased risk of catching the virus. A no-win situation. Can organisations do both? Is that practical? This is uncharted territory.

Our country needs prayer more than ever. Our cardinal, bishops and priests need prayer. The leaders of our country need prayer. Our health professionals need prayer. We are entering into a phase of increased cases and increased pressure on the health system. Our teachers need prayer — this is a difficult and trying time for them, especially secondary

teachers preparing seniors for exams. Our children need prayers. This is a highly uncertain and anxiety-provoking time. There are so many people suffering in different ways. Small businesses, people awaiting elective operations, families separated by domestic boundaries or international waters.

There have been some upsides to the lockdown, though sometimes these are hard to remember! We have found that there is more time for the outdoors, more time for doing things together as a family. We've enjoyed finding some local businesses to support. Our petrol bill has gone down! With the allowing of catching up with people outdoors, I've been having active catch-ups such as local walks, so there is exercise as well as company rolled into one.

You also get to see what you miss. We miss Church. We miss Mass. Like most Catholics we don't go to confession as often as we should and, yes, we are missing confession.

Proverbs 3: 5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

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.

WIT'S END

Some more parish notice bloopers.

The senior choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to addition of several new members and the deterioration of some older ones.

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.

The sermon this morning: Jesus Walks on the Water. The sermon tonight: Searching for Jesus.

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person(s) you want remembered.

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www.carmelites.org.nz

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EVENTS

AUCKLAND DIOCESE

NEW DATES: Triple Centenary, Feb. 25-27, 2022. Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School and the Sisters of Mercy, Epsom, Auckland will be celebrating their centenary. To celebrate our legacy and share in our successes, we invite our parishioners, students, teachers and alumni to attend one or all of the events planned to mark our 100th birthday. Please check our parish website for details on how to register: epsomcatholic.org.nz

Ruakaka: The Ruakaka Holy Family Catholic Community celebrates 30 years since moving into the new church in Peter Snell Road, Ruakaka. Sadly the 2021 event has been postponed until 2022. For further information, please contact Ray Timmins: 02102788867, email: raydale.timmins@xtra.co.nz or Monica Johnson: 021382401, email: monica.johnson01@gmail.com

TE AWAMUTU

St Patrick's Catholic School, Te Awamutu Centenary This event has sadly been postponed until 2022. For more information and registration details visit www.stpatta.co.nz

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In the November 28 issue: Adoration in lockdown carpark

Website showcases young Catholic artists

by ROWENA OREJANA

A new website featuring art created by talented, but not well-known, young Catholic artists, launched in the last week of October.

Called "Everything Blessed", the website was an idea that came to Daniel Morton-Jones, who knew creative people who didn't have a platform to promote their work.

"My sister, for example, she has done amazing artwork just for fun in her free time, which I've always thought was ridiculously good," he said. "But then, I moved to the South Island. And so many people down here in the Catholic communities have unbelievable art skills."

Mr Morton-Jones, 21, thought this was a niche that has not yet been filled.

"I have so many people around me who are amazingly talented, and if I can put a platform together where they can show inspiring Catholic art at pretty humble prices and get it out there . . . so, that's what we've done," he said.

The youth-driven project was conceived during last year's lockdown. By Christmas last year, Mr Morton-Jones and his sister Rebekah and Elaina Milnes were working out ways to make the dream a reality.

"It's been a year in the making, slowly accumulating and figuring things out, and talking to a lot of people and seeing who can get pro-



Daniel Morton-Jones

fessional, proper quality, German etching prints and prices. It's taken a long journey, especially when all of us are in full-time dedicated work or student life," he said.

"We do not have the funds to buy our own so, in the meantime, we use local manufacturers known for professionalism and premium quality."

Mr Morton-Jones said that, at the time of the launch, they had three artists, the youngest of whom was 13 years old. There are three others waiting to join them.

"They are all cool people who love God and love life and are great at art," he said.

He said the prices are being kept at a humble level, to make the art accessible to everyone.

"We need enough to keep it running and we need enough for the artist to be able to keep producing art. But we're definitely being humble about the profits. You can't charge people too much," he said.

He said he loves helping out the young artists.

"It makes the artists happy. It's really cool for them, and I'm just happy to keep on going and see what happens with this," he said. "It's definitely not a capitalist business that's trying to make money."

The art they accept is not limited to religious images.

"Though we encourage that, it's really up to the artist. It comes down to the inspiration they



Elaina Milnes with one of her artworks

have, and what they're feeling. What I can offer is a platform and getting the word out," he said.

"We just like beauty. Beauty and artwork glorify God. I think, God is beauty and everything beautiful will glorify him," he added.

Mr Morton-Jones said that they

are also on social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest. Artists who would like to join them can leave a message on their website or contact them on their social media accounts, he said.

(More artworks from the website are on pg 18)

Creativity and prayer guide students

by ROWENA OREJANA

Marcellin College students have responded to the current social problems plaguing the country in the only way they can — with creativity and prayer.

Principal Dean Wearmouth told NZ Catholic that the students had been happy to get back to school, and they were eager to get their work done.

In the midst of schoolwork, they found time to mount a vaccination campaign, as well as pray for those with terminal illness, as the End of Life Choice Act came into force.

"The big thing about St Marcellin was he said the most that you can do for a person is to pray. It is the charisma of Marcellin (College). That's why we're doing it," Mr Wearmouth said. "Hopefully, if we do that, that might give other Catholic

colleges a bit of a prompt to get students to pray through November."

The college, which is in Royal Oak in Auckland, started a St Peter Chanel Society towards the end of July, and had been seeking the saint's intercession for those suffering with terminal illness.

Assistant principal Joanie Roberson, who has responsibility for special character and community, said, "We're looking at this issue of euthanasia and thinking this is a huge problem for the Catholic Church, in terms of the value of life and protecting life. And we thought there is not much we can do politically".

"We decided, actually, if we pray for those who are suffering with terminal illness, and [for] those who are caring for them, that is the best action that we can do."

Two young Religious Education

teachers set up a special prayer space in the college chapel over the lockdown and school holidays. Prayers have resumed at the start of the term.

The students also came up with a campaign to promote a vaccination day called "Shot Marcellin" at the school. The event took place on October 27.

"The DHB came to us to offer us the opportunity, and then we met with the media service group student leaders to ask how best to market it and encourage students. So, it was student-led," Mr Wearmouth said.

The students in the media service group presented four different concepts to the school's leadership team, complete with posters, videos and a social media plan.

"The students felt student leaders who have already been vaccinated should encourage the other students to get vaccinated, if they haven't been already," the principal said.

Mr Wearmouth said he was im-



Dean Wearmouth

pressed, but not surprised, by the students' actions.

"They work so hard, and they really want Marcellin to be the best place it can be for them and for everybody else around them," he said.



The prayer space at Marcellin College



Marcellin College, Royal Oak, Auckland

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Provide Transport for Pastoral Care

Project Example: The Diocese of Coari in the Amazon region, Brazil.

The parishes of Coari are located in the middle of the forest. The only means of transport are boats. As the region is poor the Diocese asked ACN for help to buy new boats. The Bishop of Coari, Mgr. Marian Marek, wrote to ACN explaining: "The only means of transport for all our Parishes and communities are boats. All 8 boats in the Coari diocese are wooden, old, slow,

dangerous to navigate and require constant renovations. Aluminium boats would be much more useful, faster and cheaper for maintenance. All of this would serve to improve the quality of our pastoral action!"

Will you offer a Gift of Faith providing transport for priests and religious around the world?

Meet Fr Piotr and watch his story:



\$40



Help a Seminarian complete his studies

Project Example: Formation of Seminarians, Ukraine.

In his early years Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of the Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine, experienced persecution himself. He is pleased that nowadays his seminarians can freely follow their vocation to faith and priesthood.

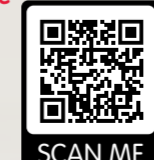
After the fall of communism, seminaries were rebuilt throughout the country. The Three Holy Hierarchs Major Seminary was founded in Kyiv on June 3, 2010. It is the only seminary in Eastern Ukraine, where Greek Catholics form a small minority.

Today the seminary trains 69 future priests. Fr. Petro Zhuk as its rector is responsible for their human, spiritual and intellectual formation. In his letter asking for support, he explains: "The students participate in the life of the Church through their service at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection and assist in many parishes. During summer, the seminarians organise Christian camps for the children of these parishes."

Can you give a Gift of Faith in support of future priests in Ukraine and around the world?

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Will support a seminarian for a month



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Project Example: Sisters of the Congregation of Word and Victim, Peru.

The congregation of Missionaries of Jesus Word and Victim travel many hours to be with those most neglected. The sisters teach the people that in the light of the faith they can overcome their difficulties and accept their sufferings because they know something better awaits them. They accompany people in their most difficult situations, in their ailments, and they help people to die in peace. In those moments they are not alone.

For the faithful in Peru, the presence of the sisters is crucial. They represent "the face of the Church," the only contact those people can have with Christ's Sacraments.

Could you give a Gift of Faith to help support religious sisters like these in Peru and elsewhere?

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Will support a sister for a month

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POPE FRANCIS

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