



# WelCom

Newsletter of the Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand

ISSUE 2 - July 2025

## Ordination of Kinh Van Nguyen celebrated



The spirit of the Lord swirled about in the air at Sacred Heart Cathedral as thickly as the smoke from censers of incense on Saturday, July 12. As midday light bathed the hundreds of parishioners in a bright, warm glow in all the colours of the rainbow, Deacon John the Baptist Kinh Van Nguyen was ordained.

Ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Paul Martin SM, the cathedral was filled with Kinh's friends, family, parishioners from his home parish, and priests, deacons and seminarians from across the motu. Cardinal John Dew was also in attendance for the ordination.

Originally from Vietnam, Kinh began studying at the Holy Cross Seminary in Auckland in 2019. During his formation, he wrote: "when we give something to others, we do not lose it, but we really receive something back, and that is the beauty of a life of service."

Fr Kinh's father and brother travelled from Vietnam to Wellington for his ordination. Many more friends and family watched the ceremony online from Vietnam.

Speeches and prayers were in English and Vietnamese. Following Holy Communion – which Fr Kinh helped distribute along with Archbishop Paul – Fr Kinh spoke to the congregation. His emotional speech – in English and Vietnamese, sharing his faith journey and thanking many of the people who'd helped him along the way to becoming a priest – brought many in the audience to tears.

The ordination concluded with a reception and cutting of cake. A buffet lunch included spring rolls, purple ube cupcakes, and Vietnamese dishes like bánh mì sandwiches.

The ordination was the second held in the Archdiocese of Wellington this year, following Matthew White in February.

Fr Kinh will remain at Holy Trinity Parish in Wellington East, where he's also served as a Deacon.





# From Archbishop Paul

Tena koutou katoa,

We are in the midst of winter and often at this time we nestle down and become preoccupied with our own warmth and comfort. Yet we know that we need the seasons in order for things to be able to grow and develop.

During wintertime, the preparations are being made for the new life that comes with spring. So, this can be a time when we can reflect on the things that we are grateful for, to give thanks to God for the good things in our lives and for God's love and care for us. Developing a heart of gratitude in all seasons will enable us to be people who are open to the Holy Spirit and enable God's grace and power to work in us.

I had the privilege of joining the Te Awakairangi Parish in Lower Hutt for their 175th Jubilee at the end of last month. That parish began in 1850 when the Diocese of Wellington was established. From it, many other parishes sprang up.

The celebrations were wonderful in terms of the many different people and cultures that were present. It is a community that has given great witness to the Gospel over so many years and continues to do so today.

I know that each of our parish communities have histories like this. God has blessed us, and we in turn play our part by bringing God's presence into the world in which we live.

On July 12, we celebrated the ordination to the priesthood of Deacon Kinh Nguyen. It was wonderful that his father and brother were able to be present from Vietnam. For many years, New Zealanders went as missionaries to other countries; now, we are receiving people from other lands to minister to us. We are very grateful to Fr Kinh for his generosity in saying "yes" to the call of God to be a priest and to joining our Archdiocese.

It is important for the life of our Church that more young men respond to the call to priesthood and so I ask that you continue to pray for those who are being called. We also need to talk with our young people about this vocation and its importance in the life of the Church. I don't think God has stopped calling people to priesthood and religious life; it is more about encouraging and supporting our young people to take up this call and to have the courage to say "yes".



In August, our Archdiocese will be focusing on a Gifting programme in each of our parishes. We will reflect on the spirituality of gifting and then on the practical expressions of this. The sharing of resources for the Church community has been at the heart of the Christian life and it is one of the constitutive elements of our faith. I would ask that you open your hearts to this work in August and to see what part you can play in all of this for the good of our Church and its call to mission.

Yours in Christ

+Paul Martin SM  
Metropolitan Archbishop



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# Signature Choir wows Sydney Opera House

Performing a concert in front of a big audience can be intimidating. But the Signature Choir – a Wellington-based ecumenical Pasifika choir – were undaunted when they performed in Auckland at Spark Arena in May.

That's a good thing, because in June they performed two back-to-back concerts at the Sydney Opera House, one of the most famous concert venues in the world.

After their debut performance in Wellington at the Michael Fowler Centre in 2022, followed by Spark Arena in 2023, an invitation to perform two concerts at the Sydney Opera House was a historic opportunity for the choir to accept.

The Mana Moana Concert the group performed was made up of classic and modern folk songs from the Pacific islands, infused with the melodies of the Sydney Symphony



*Catholic members of the choir who performed at the Sydney Opera House.*

*Back row: Jadrah Tupa'i, Asi Tana Tupa'i (CPWS), Dion Lealofi (Te Wairua Tapu), Paul Leitupo (Holy Family), John Meli (Our Lady of Hope), Elama Elama, Julian Tupa'i (CPWS), Matt Peni (Holy Trinity), Jesse Antonio (CPWS).*

*Front row: Jessica Slade, Melania Luka Lui (CPWS), Hepisipa Tonga (Sydney Catholic Diocese), Leu Ulu (CPWS), Emeline Moa Pusa (Our Lady of Kapiti) & Teresa Lealofi (Te Wairua Tapu).*

*Absent: Fepulea'i Helen Moananu Tupa'i (CPWS), Leilani Tupa'i-Faaete'eete (Te Wairua Tapu) & Henrietta Hunkin-Tagaloa (Our Lady of Hope).*

Orchestra and performed by singers from Wellington and Sydney.

Choir directors Fepulea'i Helen Moananu Tupa'i and Jadrah Tupa'i, with section leaders Kisena Asi,

Elama Elama, Atelina Malagamalai'i and Tepora Samia, led the choir.

Concert attendees came from across Australia, New Zealand and even as far as Hawaii. Also in attendance were the New Zealand High Commissioner to Australia and other dignitaries. Both the Sydney Opera House performances were sold out, as was the Spark Arena performance.

Now back in Aotearoa, the choir intends to perform more – having recently performed two sold-out shows in Wellington on July 24 and 25 – and uplift communities and celebrate Pasifika music and culture while honouring Christ.



*Catholic Music Directors of the Signature Choir, Fepulea'i Helen Moananu Tupa'i & Jadrah Tupa'i*



*Taui'i'ili Tofiga Fepulea'i and New Zealand High Commissioner to Australia Daniel Sloper*



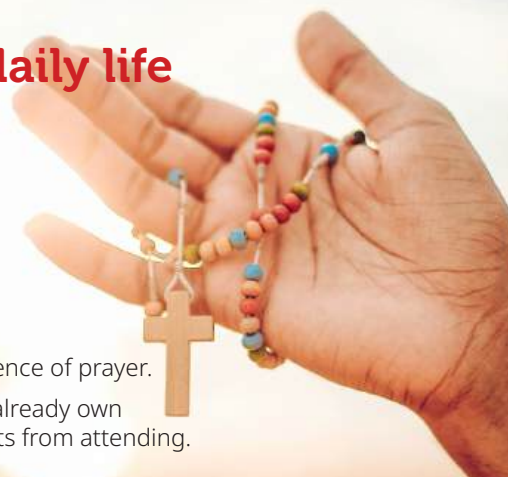
## Ignatian retreat for prayer in daily life

*Christian Life Community Wellington invites people to an Ignatian First Spiritual Exercise retreat in daily life.*

The retreat is open to all and will be held at St Thomas More Church (30 Worcester Street, Wilton in Wellington) over five Sundays in August. It is also being offered by Zoom on Thursday nights in August and September.

Based on a programme developed by Australian Michael Hanson SJ, the programme supports self-directed prayer at home during each week. Participants meet weekly in guided small groups to pray and share their experience of prayer.

The cost of the retreat is \$50, and the cost of the material is \$15 if one doesn't already own the required book. Sponsorship is available if the cost would prevent participants from attending.



**To register or for further information:**

Contact Sarah Dench on 021 0814 4424 or email [christianlifecommunitywgtn@gmail.com](mailto:christianlifecommunitywgtn@gmail.com)



# New director appointed to lead Catholic Enquiry Centre

Twelve years after approaching the Catholic Enquiry Centre to support her in a journey towards the Catholic Church, Carly Mulqueen will take up the role as the Centre's director.

The New Zealand bishops last month confirmed Mrs Mulqueen's appointment after a national search. New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference president Bishop Steve Lowe said she emerged from the field of applicants as the choice to carry forward decades of history.

"For more than 60 years, the Catholic Enquiry Centre has been a first stop for countless people on their way to finding a spiritual home in the Catholic Church," he said.

"While some of the strategies and techniques have changed over those years, the Centre's goal remains the same – help people to know and love Jesus and His Church.

"As someone who has experienced and benefited from the Centre's

work, Carly brings a wonderful perspective and broad experience to this director's role."

Mrs Mulqueen has worked in parish and diocesan settings within the Catholic Church, as well as in roles within national faith-based organisations.

She said it is a privilege to be invited to continue the Catholic Enquiry Centre's legacy.

"I am truly grateful to God for revealing His love to me and for drawing me into His one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. In all I do, I seek to make Christ known and to help others follow Him as a disciple," Mrs Mulqueen said.

"When this role became vacant, I felt a very strong calling to offer myself in the service of the Church in this particular way. I've experienced first-hand how powerful this ministry can be, and feel privileged to now be able to accompany those enquiring

as they take the next steps in their faith journey."

Mrs Mulqueen will start in the new role on July 7, leading a team of three and collaborating with other NZCBC staff and with diocesan leaders to carry out the Centre's mission.

"There are many wonderful things happening within the Church in New Zealand. Responding to and reaching out to those who are curious and open to the Catholic faith will be a great joy," she said.

"We find ourselves in a moment when Pope Francis' passing and Pope Leo's election have heightened interest in the Church. What an opportunity we have to respond to that interest."



*“In all I do, I seek to make Christ known”*

## NZ bishops making joint pilgrimage for Assumption feast

New Zealand's bishops will gather at the national Marian shrine in August to mark the country's patronal feast day – the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

St Mary of the Angels in central Wellington was dedicated as the Shrine to Mary, Assumed into Heaven on August 14, 2022. It followed the renewal of New Zealand's dedication to Mary, using that title, in 2021 – 183 years after the country's first bishop, Jean-Baptiste Pompallier, had done so.

The August 15 Mass this year marks the second of two shared pilgrimages the six active New Zealand bishops are making during the Jubilee Year. In January, they all made a pilgrimage to Northland, culminating in the anniversary of the first Mass on New Zealand soil at Totara Point.

Wellington Archbishop Paul Martin SM said he looks forward to welcoming his brother bishops to

the archdiocese, along with other pilgrims from near and far.

"We are celebrating this year of jubilee, with the theme Pilgrims of Hope," he explained. "This pilgrimage is one we are all making – young and old, women and men, bishops, laity, priests, religious, from our various cultural and ethnic traditions.

"May the Feast of the Assumption be an opportunity for we pilgrims to share in the hope of the Lord and in the understanding of the importance of His Blessed Mother, whom we honour and celebrate in a special way on that day."

The Mass will be celebrated at 6pm on Friday, August 15.  
All are welcome.



# Head of Vatican Observatory preparing for fourth NZ trip

The director of the Vatican Observatory will soon make his fourth visit to New Zealand, taking in the Southern Hemisphere skies and sharing his insights on theology, astronomy and science.

Br Guy Consolmagno SJ first travelled to New Zealand in 1996 as part of a trip that featured collecting meteorites from the East Antarctic Plateau and a New Year's Eve concert headlined by iconic band The Muttonbirds.

His visits have included astronomical observations from Lake Tekapo, exploration of Great Barrier Island and a well-attended speaking tour in 2019.

During the upcoming visit, Br Guy will give talks in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Timaru in early August, as well as spending time at a number of world-renowned sites for stargazing.

As a member of the Society of Jesus, his tour will commence with an event at St Ignatius of Loyola Catholic College in Drury, which opened last year with a Jesuit charism.

He will speak at other Catholic schools, at Te Kupenga – Catholic Leadership Institute campuses, at a Christchurch parish and at universities as he makes his way down the country.

While he is looking forward to renewing friendships and offering his thoughts with new groups of people, Br Guy concedes the Southern Hemisphere skies hold great appeal.

"New Zealand is one of the few places of dry land on Earth that's at the same latitude south as the places where



*Mia Boothroyd was a student at Carmel College in Auckland when Br Guy visited New Zealand for a speaking tour. She is currently a summer school doctoral student at the Vatican Observatory.*

I have lived in the north. Southern stars are not to be missed," he said.

"But I say that in part because I know that the stars (if not the clear skies needed to see them) can be predicted. The more important part of the trip, the people, can't be predicted; I am prepared to be surprised."

Br Guy concedes that life as a scientist and a professed member of a religious order often prompts some interesting questions. After decades of speaking around the world, he has detected a change in recent years.

"I've noticed in the past five years or so a fascinating shift in the sorts of questions I get and the attitudes that people have," he said

"My fellow scientists are much more open now to questions of faith than they were 30 years ago, while there's been a lot less faith in science among the general public.

"I will be fascinated to see what sorts of questions and conversations I have when I get to New Zealand, to see how these changes are playing out there."

One line of questioning he's preparing for is how the new Pope views faith and science.

Br Guy said, of Pope Leo XIV: "Since he's a mathematician by training, I know he understands the beauty of finding God in our academic search for truth.

"His name is also a good clue; his predecessor, Pope Leo XIII, was the Pope who founded the Vatican Observatory!"

Te Kupenga acting chief executive John Kleinsman said the tertiary provider is pleased to be supporting Br Guy's visit.

"The Catholic tradition is one steeped in the interaction between faith and science, and Br Guy stands at the forefront of that connection today," Dr Kleinsman said.

"We encourage people to come and hear about some of the wonders of our creation from someone who gazes upon it and reflects on it through a lens of faith."

Br Guy wonders if his visit might encourage the next generation of scientists or astronomers. A high school student who attended one of his 2019 talks in New Zealand is now a doctoral astronomy student attending the Vatican Observatory Summer School.

To view Br Guy's New Zealand schedule of public events, visit <https://www.catholic.org.nz/news>



# Sts Peter and Paul celebrates 175 years

Life in Lower Hutt and Aotearoa New Zealand was very different in 1850. But one thing that hasn't changed from that distant era: the sense of an outpouring of love, of a sense of community with followers of Christ, at Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Church.

The church celebrated its 175th anniversary on June 28 and 29. There were special events

throughout the weekend, and at each one was a common theme of Christian fraternity and community connection.

A special 10am Jubilee Mass on Saturday was proof of just how diverse the church's community is and showcased the beautiful diversity of God's kingdom.

Celebrated by Archbishop Paul Martin, joined by priests, deacons and seminarians from throughout the Archdiocese, the Mass began with a mihi whakatau by Richard Kerr-Bell. Catholic school students presented banners, then Dr Anita Jacob performed a traditional Indian dance.

The Mass included many other cultural elements. The altar area was covered by tapa cloths from the Samoan community. The Bible

was carried in by members of St Bernadette's Tokelau Community in Naenae on a handmade wooden catamaran specifically for the Bible's enthronement. It took three men to transport the catamaran on their shoulders.

And there was still more. Prayers of the faithful were given in languages spoken by parishioners (including Te Reo, Samoan, Spanish, Tagalog, Malayalam and Polish). A Samoan sword dancer (fortunately safely) showcased her skills with a blade during the offering of gifts, and leis were given by parish Samoan communities. St Michael's Samoan Youth also performed a liturgical dance, among other cultural performances.

The diversity and joy continued after Mass – which was so packed even the







overflow areas were completely full, meaning many hundreds of people were in attendance. Current and former parish clergy and parishioners shared stories. Fr Alfred Tong, the assistant parish priest from 2022 to 2023, played the piano and sung a stirring rendition of *You'll Never Walk Alone* (jokingly warning people who weren't fans of the Liverpool football club to cover their ears).

Guests shared more stories and connected with each other over a potluck lunch of homemade food. There was everything from cakes and biscuits and Weet-Bix slices with chocolate icing to pies, sausage rolls, island flavours like savoury (and very tasty) taro and chop suey, Filipino dishes and cheese rolls.

A Jubilee cake was also cut, the honours being done by Kees Zwaneveld. At 99 years old, he's the church's second-oldest parishioner.

After the cake cutting came a tree planting by students from Sacred Heart College in Lower Hutt. The tree that was planted was from a much larger tree currently growing on the Sacred Heart grounds.

Other anniversary weekend events included another Mass that evening followed by a Jubilee Dinner, as well as a family Mass on Sunday morning and Mass led by parish youth in the evening. Wine and cheese for adults and pizza for youth came after that.

It was a busy weekend, but many attendees expressed how grateful they were for the church's continued presence in a changing community,



and its presence in their lives and the lives of whānau. It was also expressed that, in another 175 years, the Sts Peter and Paul community could hopefully be just as diverse and joyful.

But that could prove difficult: after all, at all the 175th anniversary events, there wasn't a frown to be found.



## Sacred Heart restoration wins awards

TEAM Architects Ltd and Paul Cummack Conservation were recently recognised at the 2025 New Zealand Architecture Awards from Te Kāhui Whaihangā The New Zealand Institute of Architects for the restoration work undertaken on Sacred Heart Cathedral.

The awards were:

- Wellington Architecture Award in the Heritage Category;
- Wellington Architecture Award in the Resene Colour Award Category.

Congratulations to all those involved.





# Liturgy at a landfill: 10 years of *Laudato Si'*

The sun was shining brightly on a crisp, clear, frosty winter morning. The sapphire waters of Porirua Harbour shimmered in the distance, surrounded by emerald hills. Flocks of birds circled overhead, calling and occasionally swooping before resuming their aerial recon of the terrain. A pair of red-beaked, black and blue-feathered pūkeko scurried past. Nearby, a large, clearly well-fed semi-feral tabby cat stalked unseen prey with quiet steps.

The site was a landfill.

It was an emotional morning on June 16 as the Archdiocese of Wellington's Ecology, Justice and Peace (EJP) Commission held a penitential liturgy at Spicer Landfill in Porirua.

Marking 10 years on from the publication of Pope Francis' landmark encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the event served as a stark reminder of our impacts on the planet and to advocate for positive change in the Wellington Region, across the motu and the wider world. By being at the landfill, it was clear there ultimately is no "away" – everything goes somewhere. And that somewhere can be right here in Aotearoa in our own backyards.

Fr Alfred Tong led prayers, singing and shared a message at the event, which began with a waiata at Rangituhi/Colonial Knob Scenic Reserve and Walkway before moving



to the nearby landfill itself. Particular songs and prayers included *Kyrie Eleison* and *Purea Nei*, which Fr Tong sung in Te Reo.

Other participants at the event included EJP deputy chair Adrienne Gallie, Stephanie Clarke, Carolyn Carr and John Kleinsman. Dr Deepa Goswani, community waste minimisation advisor at the Porirua City Council, led the group around the landfill, sharing statistics about the impacts of waste in Aotearoa.

Among the statistics Dr Goswani shared included that more than 17.5 million tonnes of waste is produced in New Zealand each year – the weight of which equates to more



than a million elephants. She also shared how 130,000 tonnes of perfectly good food is thrown out in New Zealand annually. That is enough to feed about 688,000 Kiwis, and worth about \$3.2 billion in total. The amount of food waste, she added, comes out to about \$1,510 per Kiwi household.

As participants shared how the morning had impacted them, a couple of questions came to mind. How can we care for the gift of creation and all the gifts of our common home, meant for the benefit of all? And how can we turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation, the poor and future generations?

Reflecting on this, a quote from *Laudato Si'* came to mind: "The earth was here before us." So did another: "We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it."

## WelCom

- Have an event coming up in your parish?
- Something you're proud of, or would like to get the word out about?
- Need volunteers or help with something?

Please let us know!

Info can be sent to [b.mack@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:b.mack@wn.catholic.org.nz)

We look forward to hearing from you!



Please send us your stories!



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