



Stories of HOPE

July 2020

News from Our Lady of Hope Catholic Parish in Titahi Bay and Tawa

Say it With Flowers ... Special Feature Inside



Notice to contributors

We always like to hear about your group or parish organization. We generally prefer content relating to specific events and persons - as a guideline, 500 words will fill one page of this magazine. Short news articles, anecdotes, reflections, poems, family events and page fillers are also welcome.

E-copy is preferred but hard copy can be submitted. Photos enhance all content - high resolution please.

Send copy to the editor or leave for collection at the parish office.

Jane Langham

232 7206 magazine@ourladyofhope.org.nz

Deadline for next edition: 30th October 2020 The date will also be advertised in the weekly newsletter nearer the time and may vary from the one shown.

Disclaimer

Any views or opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the author, and do not necessarily represent those of the Editorial Committee or the administrators of Our Lady of Hope parish. The editor exercises sole discretion as to the acceptance of items for publication, insofar as they reflect Catholic life in the parish and do not tend to give offence. All items submitted may be subject to editorial amendment, revision or rejection and all items published are without prejudice.

Stories of Hope - Mission Statement

Our mission - To promote a sense of community in the Catholic parish of Our Lady of Hope, Tawa & Titahi Bay, by publishing the full variety of Catholic life in our parish.

Principal source of written contributions is the people in our parish.

Our objective: Every edition to every Catholic home in the parish.

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With Thanks to:

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Contents for Winter Issue 2020

Magazine Policy Statements	2
Editorial	4
Politics - a lofty vocation	6
‘A Life’	9
Impact of Covid-19 on Parish Finances	10
OLoH St Vincent de Paul During Lockdown	11
Covid-19: of lab tests and life tests	14
Alpha—but not as we know it	16
Our Lady of Fatima Flower Team	18
Marian Mothers in our Parish	20
St Francis Xavier School Report	22
St Pius X School Report	24
Obituaries	26
Parish records: Baptisms, Deaths, Marriages	29
Notices, Coming Events	30
Message from Ninness	31

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From the Editor

by Jane Langham



The last edition of *Stories of Hope* was to be distributed in church on the day that turned out to be the start of church closures. Very many thanks to the dedicated and generous volunteers who collected and delivered bundles of magazines in the few days leading up to the weekend closure and eventual total lockdown.

I have heard that some people did not receive their copy, but we all did our best. Anyone who wishes to catch up with what was missed can access the last edition (and all previous editions) on the parish web site. (See details on next page)

Everyone has a personal or family story to tell of what it has been like for them over the last few months - relaxing or stressful, caring for others or being cared for by the kindness of friends or strangers, economic security or devastating loss of job. There is a fascinating insight to a less-known front-line from Judy on page 14

In this edition, we can read some of those stories of how people coped and of how our world - local, national or international may change as a result.

The stabilising anchor for children of our Catholic Schools (and indeed, all schools) in times of such uncertainty is sure to be something we greatly appreciate. You can read about our parish schools (St Francis Xavier School and St Pius X School) and how they navigated lockdown, on pages 22 and 24.

There are a number of very important decisions facing us all in a few month's time with the General Election and two referenda at the same time. On page 6 Ian gives us some food for thought about choosing politicians. There will be lots of information from many sources about Euthanasia and Cannabis law reform. I hope you will make time to read the official information and material from such places as the Nathaniel Centre (Catholic Bio-ethics Centre) so that you can make good choices in your voting decisions.

Photographs are always better in colour, and especially the stunning flower arrangements created by Evelyn, shown on the front cover and in the feature on page 18. To see these, and all the other images, at their best, you could have a look at the online version of this magazine on the parish website.

Always remember that there are many caring organisations and individuals within our parish community—if you or your family are facing problems, if we can't help directly, we can suggest organisations that can help you.

[Back](#)

July 2020



30 July - World Day against Trafficking in Persons

Human trafficking and slavery occur in New Zealand and even in Wellington, as well as most other countries of the world. ***Every country in the world is affected, as a country of origin, transit or destination.*** The latest person to be found guilty under NZ trafficking and slavery laws is to be sentenced in August this year.

Please join in prayer on 30 July for the hundreds of thousands of individuals currently trafficked around the world, for an end to this exploitation.

To learn more about the international organization Talitha Kum (*the words of Jesus when he raised a little girl from the dead*) check out their Facebook page or search on YouTube.

For local information, you can contact:

Anne Phibbs (Brigidine Sisters) annephibbs@xtra.co.nz or (04) 237 8254

Anne Powell (Cenacle Sisters) ampowell@cenacle.org.nz or (04) 293 8344 [Back](#)

Remember that you can access *Stories of Hope* online

The parish web site: ourladyofhope.org.nz under the 'News' tab, has the latest magazine edition and an archive of all past editions, as well as the weekly newsletters.

This is a good way to share the magazine with family away from Tawa.

If you now live 'out of area' or for any other reason no longer wish to receive a printed copy of *Stories of Hope* you can request to receive email notification when a new edition is published, with a link to it on the web site. Any parishioner can request to receive the email link as well as their printed copy.

Just contact: ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz or 232 5611

Please notify the parish office if you wish to be removed from the printed copy mailing list because you are moving away or for any other reason.

Politics - a lofty vocation

by Ian Munro



It is the responsibility of the State to safeguard and promote the common good of society.

So wrote Pope Francis in 2013. [Evangelii Gaudium (“The Joy of the Gospel”) #240] And again in 2015:

True statecraft is manifest when, in difficult times, we uphold high principles and think of the long-term common good. [Laudato Si’ (“Praise Be”) #178]

These comments, although made seven and five years ago respectively, seem never truer than now as we face one of the biggest recent challenges to humankind. This time of global crisis on several fronts has exposed a number of hollow leaders in the western world who do not seem focussed on the common good and the well-being of their people, but rather on personal power and control. Leaders who believe that the law, and even the rules that they themselves have made, do not apply to them.

These leaders have been caught out. In the virus they have met an opponent that they cannot threaten, berate, fire, buy off, sue, imprison or otherwise cower into submission.

They tend to be bullies and blusterers, blatantly lying, browbeating and berating, motivated by personal political power, prestige, ego, wealth and broad personal gain. And great at grandstanding.

In an interview in April with *Commonweal* magazine, Pope Francis said that this pandemic is affecting us all, rich and poor alike, and putting a spotlight on hypocrisy, adding that he was worried by the hypocrisy of certain political personalities.

The coronavirus has revealed the extent to which modern life is organised around money rather than people. He acknowledged that there are governments that have “taken exemplary measures” in putting people’s safety first. “But,” he added, “we’re realising that all our thinking, like it or not, has been shaped around the economy. In the world of finance it has seemed normal to sacrifice [people], to practise a politics of the throwaway culture, from the beginning to the end of life.” In this year’s Easter message, he said that this wasn’t a time for self-centredness.

"Indifference, self-centredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time."

Whatever our political leanings, I think we can be proud of the manner in which our government prioritised people's safety. That the Prime Minister managed to weld us virtually overnight into a 'team of 5 million' speaks volumes both for her leadership and the underlying attitudes and values of New Zealanders.

As we watch the rest of the world being ravaged by the pandemic, we sit here in splendid isolation, but very aware of the disaster lurking outside our door, waiting for the slightest opportunity to slip in.

Whatever we think of the philosophy of kindness in the political sphere, we have to acknowledge that it worked. While other political leaders talked of waging wars, winning battles against the enemy and opening up the economy as quickly as possible, we waged kindness. Kindness supported by transparent and clearly articulated "exemplary measures" based on scientific advice and evidence. With no egos involved, measures could be speedily modified to reflect new information rather than clung to for fear of looking vulnerable.

While the government looked after that side of things, we focussed on showing kindness to each other, many of us acting as if we had Covid-19 ourselves and, in doing so, took the appropriate actions to keep others safe.

But, then, isn't this exactly what Jesus told us to do? Isn't this how we should be living our daily lives anyway?

"Do to others as you would like them to do to you." [Luke 6:31]

"We can draw lessons from the many people who – even though fearful – have responded so selflessly, some even giving their lives - medical personnel, supermarket workers, cleaners, priests, police officers, and volunteers," Pope Francis said. "This is the force of the Spirit poured out and fashioned in courageous and generous self-denial."

As I write, at the end of June, kindness seems to be waning. With an election nearing and political survival at stake, aggressive stances have begun to be taken at the highest levels. Kindness can quickly go out of the window when political power and economics rear their heads.

Even though it's often maligned, Pope Francis has described politics as a 'lofty vocation' and one of the highest forms of charity in as much as it seeks the common good. [Evangelii Gaudium ("The Joy of the Gospel"), 2013, #205]

In an online homily in April this year, he repeated this description and asked us to pray for men and women who have a political vocation "so that in this moment of pandemic they seek together the good of the country and not the good of their party".

May this be our prayer as we elect a new government that is going to have to face up to some of the most difficult decisions any New Zealand government has had to face in living memory.

"You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:25-28

[Back](#)

His Touch



He kneels, and servant-like, he takes my feet
to wash, and then to gently wipe them clean
and I am purified by his esteem.
Intimate, his hands my loneliness defeat.
I feel discomfort, my unease is much
accustomed to the dust and soil-ed end.
But He, from God, would have me as his friend!
No fantasy! Who could forget his touch?
Gently wash my heart and mind
- the whole of me;
and forever, I your dearest friend, will be.

From *Sonnets to Enhance the Lectionary, Introduction to the Gospel for Lent*

A Life

by Catharine Gallen

A life is granted from God above,
a life is born through parental love.
Such beauty and wonder in this precious life,
to live and grow towards eternal life.
To experience this paradise here on earth,
to wonder at the milky way and the universe.
To find another heart at one with my own,
to share that life is God's love shown.
To give birth to new-born creations -
such treasure and elations.

My life is truly blessed
when these I have possessed.

A good life has been given me
with abundant love, friends and family.

Life is like a flower unfurling toward the sun
beauty revealed as it blossoms,
releasing its fragrance till it's done.

The flower slowly withers and returns to the soil,
while its seeds reemerge with renewed toil.

Life begins anew! but each and every life is never forgotten,
by the Creator through whom each life was begotten.

Give thanks for the wisdom of love and compassion,
for all that Jesus taught us along The Way.

Give thanks for 'a life' on Judgment Day.



[Back](#)

The Impact of Covid-19 on our Parish Finances

by Nicola O'Keefe



As we went into lockdown at the end of March, the Parish Finance Committee was about to meet and finalise the annual parish budget. At the time, we were facing a situation where our collection and income was only just covering our annual expenses. There was not a lot left over to meet the maintenance needs of our aging buildings.

The closure of our churches for two months did however bring a few benefits for us. We were able to claim the government wage subsidy, which covered the wages of our two staff during this time. Like many of us who were required to find a way to work from home, Jane Lee was able to move the Parish Office to her home and continue to support the Parish from there. There were also a number of expenses that were significantly reduced, such as our electricity bill and vehicle expenses.

However, our Parish receives about half its income from the weekly collections at mass. With no masses for two months, and specifically over the Easter period, having no collection, nor additional Easter collections and the usual donations received for weddings, funerals, baptisms, and mass stipends, have meant we have received far less than we would normally expect.

As we came out of lockdown the Finance Committee met to discuss our financial situation. We have developed a revised budget, which seeks to limit our expenditure as much as possible for the remainder of this year, while still ensuring we can all enjoy the sacraments and fellowship that are important to us.

Our finances are going to be very tight this year, and we will therefore be limiting our repairs and maintenance activities to only what is necessary, and deferring as much work as is practical. Our revised budget position at the end of June expected to see around \$4,700 more income than expenses, but the actual outcome was \$11,800 of expenses more than income. This is a worrying position as we still have some significant annual expenses to come in, such as our insurance.

As we work through the remainder of 2020, we will continue to explore ways in which we can continue to reduce our expenditure.

We welcome any suggestions Parishioners may have and would also welcome anyone who wishes to join our committee meetings.

[Back](#)



Our Lady of Hope St Vincent de Paul Conference during Lockdown

by Marie Nicol

Although I have been a member of our local SVdP conference for a few years now, I had only ever delivered a handful of food parcels. All of that changed when the Covid 19 Lockdown occurred.

Government age-restrictions left us with fewer members allowed to deliver food parcels, so I stepped up to help. Our delivery area covers from Grenada North right through to Titahi Bay.

Our busiest month was April, which saw an increase in demand, with a total of 33 parcels feeding 154 people; whereas in 2019 at this time we delivered 28 parcels feeding 66 people. We found that bubble sizes increased at that time with students, grandparents and other family members coming to live together in one home.



Generally, we would have food donations made via the basket in the church foyer, but this was not an option during lockdown, meaning more food had to be purchased to fill the parcels requested. Supermarkets were initially not able to fill our large order, due to their restrictions on certain products e.g. pasta and rice. Thankfully Countdown Tawa were very supportive in supplying us with a large order placed to them via email.

***Thank you so very much to our generous parishioners who
donated online directly into our Tawa bank account.***

This money has allowed us to purchase basic food staples to make up each parcel that, for a family of 5, costs around \$65. We have been very fortunate to have been offered frozen bread and milk by Kiwi Community Assistance (KCA). This would normally have gone to local schools, but as they were closed, SVdP and other foodbanks were able to collect it each week. This was a way around having to go and wait in line at the supermarket and it was free! KCA have also regularly supplied us with the likes of coffee and other dry goods in bulk, but in lockdown had their own funding cut back, so this is no longer available.

Stories of Hope

This means that we now have to purchase it ourselves.

For me personally, I felt very privileged to be able to enter the church during this time, albeit wearing a mask and gloves! It felt strange not seeing the little red light flickering next to the tabernacle, but I knew that the Lord was with me. Seeing the photo of Pope Francis and the large Divine Mercy picture of Jesus on the wall in the foyer, I was reminded to trust in Jesus and that he was guiding me every step of the way.



I, and my fellow Vinnies throughout New Zealand, prayed daily for the people of our world and the effects Covid 19 was having on us all. I also prayed the Divine Mercy Novena for the first time and found this to be spiritually uplifting, allowing me to focus on doing the Lord's work by feeding the hungry and serving the poor.

Moving forward, there is still continuing need to help an increasing number of individuals and families struggling from the impacts of Covid 19.

Locally, within Our Lady of Hope Parish, we are in need of more volunteers to help with the delivery of food parcels in the Elsdon - Titahi Bay areas.

A roster is currently being made up to get people to commit to help once a month . If you have a vehicle and few hours to spare on Wednesday and Friday afternoons I would love to hear from you. If you don't have time to spare, but would still like to help out, we are grateful for continued donations into both our food collection basket and our 'poor box' located in the church foyer.



Food parcels ready for delivery

You can also continue to donate via direct credit to the SVdP bank account:

03-0547-0885236-000 or donate online at: donate.svdp.org.nz

A SVdP National Recovery Appeal has been launched, which is running from June to December with the goal to raise \$4 million to provide people with economic social and emotional support during these times of severe hardship.

For information about the parish conference or to offer any help, please contact:
Marie Nicol ph. 027 215 1553 marienicol@xtra.co.nz

A Photo Prayer Reflection



Holy Thursday ... waiting in line at the Pharmacy ...

We are all social-distancing

Below me on the ground is this cross that I have to stand at the foot of ...

I am reminded of that other Cross, the one coming next day, the event I am not able to mark and celebrate in the way I have every other year.

But today I stand at the foot of this cross and it reminds me that I can be with the suffering Jesus wherever I am, at whatever time in history.

He is crucified every day in every place ... how can I be there with him?

[Back](#)

COVID-19: of lab tests and life tests

by Judy Bocacao

It was 6th of January when I received a message from my former colleague in RITM, Manila asking if I am aware of the mystery illness in China. I was clueless, but then just shrugged my shoulders and just brushed the idea that it will be just a small outbreak like the Flu A/H7 and A/H9.

But on 20th of January, being the Research and Development Scientist of our lab, I was tasked to check out and validate the first WHO recommended assay (released 17th January) for the then-called '2019 novel coronavirus'. Day after day, as we learned how the virus was spreading in Wuhan, we were also substantially preparing and strengthening our capability to safely handle samples that would be referred to our lab. All of us at the lab had been retrained for proper donning and doffing of personal protective equipment (PPE) including the use of powered respirators and familiarization with the use of a high-level containment laboratory (PC3+).

The threat that the new virus might arrive at our border ahead of the testing kits was a race to beat during the last few weeks of January. At this stage, any suspected patient samples were still being sent to Australia for testing and confirmation. Long days ticked by as I prepared, adapting the tests for our lab. Sleep became shorter as I worried what the next day would bring. Hope was magnified and prayers were intensified as pressure to produce our own tests increased day by day, as the virus continued spreading in other countries. Due to the US holidays, our order was delayed but a heaven-sent supplier from Germany was identified by our local distributor and shipment was made in no time. I am forever grateful to this local distributor and his team for their technical expertise and for the extra mile gone to get this shipment in just a very short time.

Validating this assay was a big challenge, as all eyes were focused on us to provide the test as soon as possible. With the kits on hand, I had to anchor my nerves on my faith. I made several 'signs of the cross' throughout the whole testing process. Then with God's grace, just over 24 hours after we received the kits, the first PCR test was successfully adapted and completed using our own lab set-up. After I completed all the necessary quality checks, MOH announced that ESR was ready to test on the 31st January.

Succeeding days became stressful as samples started to pour in. By 29th February, we received the first positive sample for confirmation; I was so tense that even the slightest sound in the lab made me lose my concentration while doing the

testing. I prayed earnestly to clear my mind and guide my hands. Soon after, samples flooded in and more positive samples were detected.

There is one Saturday (21 March) that most of all I cannot forget: with just three staff on duty, we started work at 10am and worked non-stop (no lunch and no toilet break!) until 6pm. It was Lent and fasting was my other intention for enduring that moment!

Lockdown happened and with it came a 'new normal'. More samples, more tests, more results to prepare, more hours at work. My imagination scared me endlessly as I drove through pitch-black empty highways at 8p.m. The sign of the cross comforted me. Constant trips for groceries are inevitable as our 3 young adult children are at home 24/7. My eldest daughter decided to stay in Dunedin as an essential part-time worker in the lab. With very few spare hours, I awkwardly skipped the supermarket queues and presented my ESR ID and letter confirming I am an essential worker, but then would feel guilty about the patient people I bypassed.



Food distribution in Fr Rex's parish



But things were not as bleak as they could have been. The Ministry of Health provided machines that would speed up turnaround times by automating the process. Also, as more work hours meant extra money, this allowed me to share more

blessings with hundreds of families in Fr Marlon's former parish, now with Fr Rex Palaya as their parish priest. Fr Rex was also a classmate of Fr Rico's. The lockdown in the Philippines affected millions of poor families who were already living hand to mouth, having no more means to work or even to find food. Government support is not enough and they still need assistance to this day, as the virus is still out of control.

As we went back to Level 1, I have never stopped thanking the Lord for what we, the team of 5 million have achieved. Looking back before COVID-19, I tried to question Him why I never got to move

back to the closer Kenepuru branch. Although the positions I applied for were different from the expertise that I have and would be a step down to my position, I did not care then, as the daily travel from Tawa to Upper Hutt was already taking its toll on me.

During this pandemic, He gave me the answer. He knows where I will be needed most. A place where I can serve more.

[Back](#)

Alpha - but not as we usually know it!

by Simon Rayner



15 March 2020:

the signs are up and promotion is underway for Alpha, which is due to start shortly.

But as we all know, that was to change, as coronavirus overtook us rapidly and 10 days later I was back at Our Lady of Fatima removing the signs as my last outing before lockdown.

All was not abandoned, however, as our team agreed that we would attempt to run Alpha online through Zoom instead. This was a very new idea, but was being attempted in many places around the world as existing and new Alpha courses had found they could no longer meet. As a group we agreed that we would commence on the same day as originally planned and stay online, even if we got to a stage where we could meet again. This has proved to be a good decision as it has provided stability while many things were uncertain and it meant that some have joined the course who wouldn't have otherwise (including one from Whangarei!)

But I am getting ahead of myself. Our next challenge was to promote the new format to a community in lockdown. We did this through invitation videos placed on YouTube and then promoted through the churches. Numbers looked quite small until the last few days, but we wound up with 24 participants, not large but certainly worth continuing with. Many of the participants have had church connections but there are a few for whom this is quite new.

I was originally nominated to help with technology, sound & projector etc, but that turned into my having to learn all about Zoom and orchestrating the meetings, videos etc. The technology was challenging for some, but we have surmounted the problems.

As I write, we have been meeting for 10 weeks , with 3 more sessions to go, so we will finish before this magazine reaches you. It is a little too soon to say what a difference it has made in the participants' lives as such things have only been shared confidentially in the small groups at this stage. However, the small groups have grown in closeness and openness, and God has been working.

We have been praying for one another online which seemed a little more remote; however, to quote Nicky Gumbel (Alpha presenter in UK)... *"the Holy Spirit is not confused by Zoom"*.

We are planning to have a 'real' get together once the course is completed, which will be the first time most of us have met in person and will be quite interesting: "Oh, you're much taller in person!". It has been a great experience once again having our Catholic parish working and praying with people from the Salvation Army, Baptist, New Life and the Anglican churches in Tawa, as all these have worked together to promote and lead this Alpha course, using the presentations that are available online from Alpha.

***Our God is the God of Surprises, He cannot be caught out,
and is always doing something new!***

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FOX-SHOTS NO. 518



The help I need
most urgently

is help in admitting
that I need help.

Brilliant
Excellent

[Back](#)

Our Lady of Fatima Flower Team

by Evelyn Lang

The presence of flowers can enhance the atmosphere in a room, introducing a sense of calm and natural freshness and colour.



My name is Evelyn Lang and I am one of six ladies who do the flower arrangements in our church. I have had the privilege of preparing the flowers in the sanctuary for over 20 years, which initially I never dreamed I could do.

I have had no formal training, but I do love flowers, with their beauty and freshness, their colour and texture. I could not believe what could be done with flowers and how much detail and passion was involved in the preparation.

Originally, I used to go to the morning market in Grenada North to purchase the flowers, however this is now closed so I use local shops, also picking some foliage and greenery from my garden and from friends.

Some of my favourite flowers are roses, lilies, orchids, protea, and chrysanthemums. Chrysanthemums are popular flowers available in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colours. Lilies are majestic and fragrant flowers, and I love the beauty, the scent and romance of roses.

Protea is an exotic flower renowned for its large size and extended vase life. Orchids are the most diverse group of plants, with so many shapes, sizes, colours, and patterns on their stunning and often extraordinary blooms. They are recognised as a symbol of beauty and love. On average, orchids in an arrangement bloom for four to six weeks, depending on air quality, watering, and light.

For fresh flowers, I select the stem partly in bud, but to last longer I try to mix varieties of similar longevity. Bold eye-catching flowers provide the focal point for an arrangement. Almost every arrangement includes foliage as filler material or to add textural and colour contrast. Stronger bold pieces can be used to form the outline of an arrangement while longer supple foliage adds weight and a sense of movement. Ivy is popular year-round foliage; it softens any display with its trailing lines. Supple lengths of rosemary and eucalyptus provide a delicious scent and silvery tones.

I have completed a few arrangements for special occasions like church weddings, wedding receptions and birthday displays, christenings and funerals.

Some occasions demand a large eye-catching display of flowers and bold statements. An urn or pedestal create drama and classical grace.

A container is integral to the design of flower arrangements. In our Church we have a range of containers or vases in all sorts of sizes. I soak the oasis in water to support the flower stems and allowing them to draw off as much water as they need. It is usually necessary to top up the vase every other day. The oasis acts in much the same way as soil. Sometimes I add flower food to the water to extend the life of the arrangement.



Our team of flower arrangers are all ladies at present (*but that is not a ban on men!*). Each of us have our own 'rules', our own choice of style and materials. Joy Chaplin has been arranging even longer than I have. I love her style - it is sophisticated, and she uses flamboyant foliage. Also involved are Angela Birch, Jeanie Fyfe and sisters Espie Hernandez and Jing Moredo.

Because flowers now are pricey, we mix fresh flowers and foliage with artificial silk flowers. Our practice is to buy the best of the artificial ones. Although expensive, it is better to buy a few stems of life-like flowers than to purchase a mass of cheap ones. Not only do they look better (just about 'real') they also last much longer. You can find an extensive range of silk flowers in garden centres and florists. The stems of silk flowers are made of plastic, plastic coated wire or wire covered with floral tape. I flick over the petals and leaves with a feather duster occasionally, or wipe with damp cloth in warm water with a little bit of detergent.

The parish reimburses \$30 a week for any bought flowers. We welcome people to join the team in this important and fulfilling ministry. All you need do is contact Jane in the office, or a team member, and register your interest.

[Back](#)

Marian Mothers in Our Parish

by Amie Fouhy

Marian Mothers Tawa-Titahi Bay is a group of mums who meet for fellowship, community, encouragement and inspiration. Our Catholic Faith is central to who we are. *Included in this article are thoughts from some of our members.*

Fellowship: In this group we share food, hot drinks and warmth. It is a place where mums can relax and children can play. There are always plenty of hands to help with babies or toddlers. We talk a lot, laugh a lot, and pray for each other.



We have become friends. Many of us meet socially at the playground or a local cafe with our children, and have movie nights in for the mums. We also have a private Facebook page.

Community: We welcome all mums to our group! Currently we run the full gamut from expectant mothers to mothers of young adult children. Being part of a group like this, where we have both our faith and our motherhood in common, helps give us a sense of community, and also is a place of nourishment which then opens us up to playing a more active part in the greater community around us.

"We Marian Mothers and our families, encourage and support each other to share what we can - like our blessings and talents. Many of us are involved in a variety of Church and community ministries."

Encouragement: There are many times when we struggle in our roles as mothers. Pregnancy, miscarriage, illness, or just raising our little ones can sometimes bring us down. At other times we may lack the confidence we need to try something new, or we may have doubts about what God is doing in our lives. We are here for each other. Sometimes it is just an encouraging word that's

required, at other times we bring meals or offer childcare to each other. During lockdown we met regularly over Zoom to check in on each other.



"We're just ordinary people, sometimes happy and loving life, sometimes struggling. The cool thing is, regardless of how you feel when you turn up for a meeting, you always leave in a much better frame of mind."

Inspiration: Each month we listen to a talk on CD usually about our faith or parenting. We then discuss and share our thoughts. I always find these talks interesting and often inspiring. But it's during the discussion time that we share our strategies and come away with inspiration and new ideas. We share our stories and often find new nuggets of wisdom from different perspectives.

(The material for these meetings is provided by Marist Laity New Zealand - the lay branch of the Society of Mary. Ed.)

Faith: As Marian Mothers, we hope to follow in Mary's humble footsteps and to make Jesus the centre of our families. At our monthly meetings we begin and end with prayer. We pray for each other, for all mothers, and for any ongoing situations in our community and the world.

"What I like most is that we can come together socially as well as spiritually to strengthen our faith and witness this to our children."

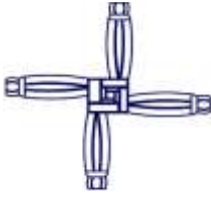
So could this be what you're looking for? Do you need something to fill your cup? Would you like to join our group? We'd love to meet you.

Contact Mary on (04) 232 2088 or email: simonraynernz@gmail.com

(If you have an existing circle of friends - either all women, or a mixed group - and would like to start a group like this, see maristlaitynz.org for full details of Marian Mothers or Lay Marist groups. Editor)

[Back](#)

St Francis Xavier School - by Joan Woods (Principal)



School Life in Lockdown

How different school life proved to be in lockdown! All of a sudden we learnt about 'bubbles', social distancing, distance learning, Zoom class meetings to mention a few.

St Francis Xavier School
Strength and Gentleness
Tu Maia, Tu Aroha

Staff had weekly Zoom meetings and the Board of Trustees also had some of their meetings via Zoom. Challenging times but so much learning was able to continue in different ways. Our

teachers were amazingly quick to adapt to distance learning for our students. Distance learning was through the SeeSaw app used by the school. This proved to be an extremely useful tool during lockdown. It allowed teachers, whānau and children to have easy contact with each other. Through the app teachers were able to be in daily contact with their students, setting learning for the day, sending videos etc. Children were able to share what they were doing with their learning, again sending videos and work samples.

During lockdown, a new teacher was employed for Pohutukawa class so the class got to meet their new teacher via Zoom! Two new entrant children started school through our distance learning programme. What a different start to school life for these two children. Now in Level 1, we were able to formally welcome Mrs Hinds and our new five-year-olds to school at our first school assembly .

School life has gradually, but calmly, been returning to normal. We have been sharing with the children the importance of handwashing. Tissues, soap, paper towels and hand sanitiser are available in the classrooms and throughout the school. We have been closely following the Ministry of Education and Health guidelines ensuring our school is a safe environment.



As part of their Religious Education programme Kowhai and Nikau classes have been learning about **Pentecost** and what life was like for Jesus when he was a child. When learning about Pentecost the children made headbands with flames to remind them of the Holy Spirit. When learning about the life of Jesus the children dressed up

wearing what children would have worn in Jesus' times. The children then had a special celebration where they ate the food that Jesus would have eaten.

Recently our Years 3 – 6 students took part in a school-based **cross country race**. The weather was kind to us and, whilst there was some mud to run through, this was very limited and the wind and rain stayed away for the races. It was wonderful to see so many parents at school supporting this sporting event.

One of the highlights during this different term has been **Book Week**. A range of events were held including a school literacy quiz. All the children in the school were in mixed-age-group teams and answered questions about books including: their characters, settings, plots and authors. The shared knowledge our children have is amazing and this was a wonderful way to share and grow their knowledge. Some children brought their favourite soft toys to school to read to them and family members came into school to read to classes.

Book Week ended with the children (and some teachers) dressing up as their favourite book character.



When school re-opened our Parents and Friends group were able to draw their **Easter raffle** and \$1,332.50 was raised. This was an amazing effort considering the raffle had to be drawn after Easter because of lockdown. Our grateful thanks to members of our parish for supporting Parents and Friends with their raffle by purchasing tickets.

In Term 3 we look forward to school life hopefully continuing as normal under Level 1. We will have our **Learning Conferences** at the start of the term. All our children will take part in **swimming lessons** during the term.

Enrolments for 2020/2021

If you have a child turning 5 years in 2020/2021 please contact us to arrange for an Enrolment Pack. St Francis Xavier School is open for enrolments and we would love to hear from you if you wish to enrol your child at our school.

I am very happy to meet with any prospective new parents.

For any enrolment enquiries or to arrange an appointment please contact our school office on 232 8927 or email: office@sfxtawa.school.nz

[Back](#)

St Pius X School - by Christine MacDonald (Principal)



‘WHANAU-ATUA-KURA-AROHĀ Together we Shine’



Kia ora e te whānau, what an interesting term it has been! None of us could have predicted or prepared for what 2020 was going to be like. The day to day routine of school changed dramatically due to COVID-19. With Alert Level 4 and subsequent lockdown, schools closed in late March for an early holiday break. This allowed teachers time to prepare for remote on-line learning in the new term (and not a lot of down time for them). On-line learning from home commenced on Wednesday 15 April when term 2 started. Teachers juggled teaching from home plus managing their own families and households at the same time. As a school, we sent out 25 devices to enable our students to learn on-line.

On Wednesday 29 April St Pius X opened its doors for students during Alert Level 3, plus continued on-line learning. Fortunately, we only had two students in attendance, who were supported by those teachers and support staff who returned to school then. That meant we were running both remote on-line learning plus classroom learning! This continued until Level 2 was announced and schools prepared and opened their doors for all staff and students on Monday 18 May. Safe hygiene practices and contact tracing continued. The majority of our students returned that day, with a few coming in later in the term. It was a long term - 12 weeks in total - but I do feel God blessed us as many people were able to work from home and be with whānau. At times this was stressful, but it was also a time of personal reflection and prayer for many.

The effects of COVID-19 and the lockdown have been far reaching. Staff and students have returned and settled back into the school routine but some are tired and anxious. We have had students who have returned with high anxiety about catching COVID. Other students have shown some concerning behaviours that seem to have been exacerbated. Many families have faced the uncertainty of job losses and this has put pressure on their financial situations. We are grateful to organisations like St Vincent de Paul, who have helped our whānau.

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, I would like to say that we are very grateful to our staff who organised and managed remote learning, ran on-line Zoom sessions, packaged up and sent out devices, plus many other tasks, and returned to school to a lot of uncertainty, then carried on as ‘normally’ as possible, continuing safe hygiene practices, and settling the students into school again. Thank you to our

parent/whānau community who were the 'teachers' enabling their children to learn at home and liaise with the teachers. It is not an easy job to do especially when you have many other things to do at home! Let's hope Term 3 runs a lot more smoothly!

Whanau Matariki Mid-Winter Dinner: On Friday 26 June we held our first school community gathering and shared a meal together, followed by Matariki waiata and optional star making activities. Many of our whānau enjoyed time catching up with friends and making new acquaintances. It was great to see so many people there and to be able to relax together to eat, talk and share experiences. Thank you to those who organised this event and to everyone who came – it was a great way to gather post-COVID.



Mufti Day for Caritas: On the last day of term our students gave generously to the Caritas Pandemic Appeal. We displayed this on a world map. Thank you for your contributions.



Enrolments for 2020

Is your child turning 5 this year or in 2021, or you might know of someone who is looking for a Catholic school for their child this year? St Pius X School is open for enrolments for the remainder of 2020 and for 2021. We look forward to hearing from anyone who is interested in enrolling their child at our school. Please contact our office manager at office@saintpius.school.nz or ring 236 7006 for an enrolment pack and more information.

Thank you to our community who continue to pray and support us as we look forward to Term 3. May God's blessing be with each and every one of you.

Our Friend Henry Smith - RIP 1955 - 2020

by *Ted Gallen*

It was with great sadness that, at the 5:30 Mass on Saturday 14 March, we learned of the death of Henry earlier that day, following a major heart attack. (2 days before his 65th birthday.)

The parish lost a 'big man' in every sense of the word.

The loss to Sue, their family and the wider Smith family is enormous and to them we extend our heartfelt sympathies.

Henry's parents, Louis and Lily, came to New Zealand from Samoa and Henry grew up very much immersed and involved in the activities of Titahi Bay and the wider Porirua community.

To recount all the activities and contributions that Henry has made across a wide range of interests is a catalogue that I could not do justice to.

In sport he was a noted athlete winning a gold medal in discus and silver in shotput in the South Pacific Games in Apia in 1983 and representing Samoa in discus at the Olympic Games in 1984 in Los Angeles (the first time Samoa had competed in the Olympics) and in 1988 in Seoul. He later became a well-regarded coach and mentor.

In civic responsibility he was a Porirua City Councillor for three years.

At work he was a respected manager for NZ Post.

In music. For most readers, it was as the lead musician for Masses and other liturgies at St Pius X that Henry will be most remembered. In the mid-1980s an American Catholic evangelist couple got together a group of aspiring musicians to establish a music ministry in the Parish. Henry took to it as a natural and took the leading role, gaining the appreciation and support of the parish community. Other members of the group moved on over time, but Henry carried on solo covering both guitar and vocals, with the Samoan community providing respite. Later, he was joined on guitar by his wife, Sue, and more recently by his daughter, Lily, who took over the vocals.

His love for music, and the celebration that it so often reflects, led Henry, together with Sue, to be fully involved in the life of the Church and the Parish and its many manifestations.



However, for many of us who have done the pilgrim's walk with him, it is Henry, the person, we most remember. The spiritual, generous, caring, loyal, calm, responsible, balanced, encouraging Henry. With his guitar and music he made himself available as a support and service to many. Through that, Henry demonstrated leadership through service.

Unfortunately the Covid-19 pandemic prevented his family and parishioners and very many friends from all walks of his life from celebrating Henry's life in the way we would wish. However, as we return to normality, he, along with his family, continue to hold a special place in our memories, our thoughts and our prayers.

Rest in Peace good friend.

[Back](#)

Henrika (Ricky) Faber - 'Oma' to many 1926 - 2020

(Material taken from eulogies for Ricky)

Ricky was born into a large family, 12 children, and this was significant in many ways to her philosophy on life, "my house is your house". She was the last survivor of her siblings. She was very social, and enjoyed having family and visitors, which allowed her to enjoy the wonderful art of conversation.

She met her husband, Con, during WW2, when both were teenagers, and despite living in New Zealand since 1951, she maintained close contact with both sides of the wider family network in Holland. At first they lived in Upper Hutt and Ricky spent a lot of time coming to grips with the English language, not easy, and even to her last days her Dutch accent remained dominant.



In early years in NZ, she had several jobs: caregiver, tomato plant grower (with no clue what a tomato plant even looked like), kindy teacher, yoga teacher, tai chi instructor. Their first child, Bo was born in Upper Hutt, then more arrived in Opunake. The community of Opunake were vital to them and many friendships remain to this day.

Sundays were for Church and after mass Ricky and Con would catch up with other Dutch families for coffee and conversation, reverting back to their native language.

In 1962 they moved to Tawa where many will have fond memories of the Faber family and their home at 24 Oxford Street. Bike riding was central to Ricky's years in Tawa, and this enabled her to extend her conversation skills outside of the home. And no journey outside was ever complete without colourful clothing and lipstick!

After the death of Con in 1996, Ricky moved into Redwood Village. She now had to develop her independence, and this home proved valuable in later years. Ricky cherished family and this was reflected in her delight at visitors to Redwood Village. Her door was always open and of course so was every window and blind as the light of day was vital to her, particularly in summer to maintain that beautiful tan!

In the church community of Tawa, Ricky was involved with many parish activities, for several years being a daily mass attendee and she was on the Adoration roster. She was also one of the instigators of the now well-established monthly luncheon and she helped with this for a long time.

She was a much-appreciated friend and support to newly-arrived Dutch families and became 'Oma' to several children of these families. Ricky maintained a strong mind and good health for much of her life, but her health declined in the last year. The day before lockdown Ricky celebrated her 94th birthday with her beloved family.

May she rest in peace

[Back](#)

Mass Times in Nearby Parishes

For your information so you can attend a church most convenient for you when you need a different time from your usual one.

Our Lady of Hope parish times highlighted.

Saturday vigil	5:00pm	St Andrew's Newlands;
	5:30pm	St Pius X, Titahi Bay
	6pm	St Teresa's, Plimmerton & Holy Family, Porirua
Sunday	8:30am	Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa
	9:00am	St Benedict's, Khandallah
	9:30am	St Teresa's, Plimmerton & Holy Family, Porirua
	10:00am	Te Ngākau Tapu (Māori Mass)
	10:30am	Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa and Sts Peter & Paul, Johnsonville
	5:15pm	Te Ngākau Tapu (English Mass)

Parish Notices - Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths

Baptisms

Name of child	Parents	Date
Miela Charlotte Tapp	Rebecca Lankshear & Jay Tapp	21 March 2020
Ardelle Clare Winter	Marnela & Tristan Winter	22 March 2020
Kinsey Deeann Pinlac de Castro	Ma Anntonette Pinlac & Lourdrigo de Castro	30 May 2020
Elyza Noelle M Maranca	Meriam & Jon Maranca	20 June 2020
Thurston Daniel Tupac Anae	Theresa Lafaele & Daniel Anae	3 July 2020
Trinity Summer de Guzman	Amor & Tyrone de Guzman	12 July 2020
Michael Faber	Con & Jill Faber	12 July 2020

Deaths

Henry Michael Smith	14 March 2020
Leslie Denham	1 May 2020
Carol Anne Sinnott	9 May 2020
Momotu Sefo	11 May 2020
Rosaleen Mary Davin	27 May 2020
Rosalie Jean Duncan	5 June 2020
Henrika Elizabeth Faber	8 July 2020
Kenneth Williams	8 July 2020

[Back](#)



New Parishioners

If you are new to the parish, Welcome!

Please introduce yourself to the celebrant, another parishioner,
or call the parish office 9am-12noon weekdays . 04 232 5611

Current Parish Pastoral Council Members

Fr Rico de la Torre - parish priest, Marie Prescott - chair; Telesia Alaimoana, Lagi Anamani; Jane Bolton; Raymond Fernando; Dorothy Jansen (St Pius X School rep); John Lafaele; Ray Lindsay; Rupi Mapusua; Litea Meli and Regan Stallard.

Regular events

Dove Catholic Fellowship for Women, Third Sat. 1:30 p.m., at Connolly Hall,
Next to Cathedral, Wellington.

Joshua Catholic Fellowship for Men, Third Thurs. 7:30 p.m., at Connolly Hall

Monthly luncheons in Tawa church foyer, First Tuesday of each month.

Time together, weekly games, Tawa church meeting room, Thursdays 1:30 p.m.,

Marian Mothers - 2nd Monday a.m. each month - see weekly newsletter

Women of Faith - 2nd Friday a.m. each month - see weekly newsletter

Youth Group, College Years 9 to 13, Fridays, 8:00 - 9:30p.m.

Leo Connor Hall, during school term;

Other events: check website calendar: www.ourladyofhope.org.nz

[Back](#)

We hope you enjoyed reading this issue of *Stories of Hope*.

When you've finished reading it, why not pass it on to a friend?

We need your input. Keep those contributions coming!!

**This edition of *Stories of Hope* is sponsored by
Ninness Funeral Home**

17 Kenepuru Drive, Porirua ph.: 04 237 4174 fax: 04 237 4172
email: info@ninness.co.nz web site: http://ninness.co.nz.

Green Burials and Cremations

Ninness Funeral Home are a provider of modern funeral services for families in Wellington and Porirua who want a simpler, more graceful and more environmentally-friendly ways of celebrating a life well lived. As a modern funeral home, we use modern cremators with lower emissions that reduce the environmental impact of cremation.

Many of us have concerns about the depletion of the earth's resources, sustainability, and the size of our own 'carbon footprint'. So now more than ever is the time to be seriously exploring greener options in our lives. Times of death should be no exception.

Here are some ideas on how you might arrange a 'greener' funeral.

- Eco-Friendly Embalming... or No Embalming At All?
- Eco-Friendly Care Alternatives For the Deceased
- Natural Burials or other Green Burial Options
- Eco-Friendly Cremations
- Bio-Degradable and Eco-Friendly Caskets

For full details of any of these options, or other further helpful information,
visit the Ninness Funeral Home website: ninness.co.nz

Shuttle Service to Whenua Tapu Cemetery

Ninness Funeral Home provides a complimentary shuttle service for people who either do not have their own transport or where the cemetery is not on a public transport route. The shuttle runs to Whenua Tapu cemetery every month (excluding December) on the last Wednesday.

Whenua Tapu Shuttle - dates for the coming months

Wednesday – 29 July
Wednesday – 26 August
Wednesday – 30 September
Wednesday - 28 October

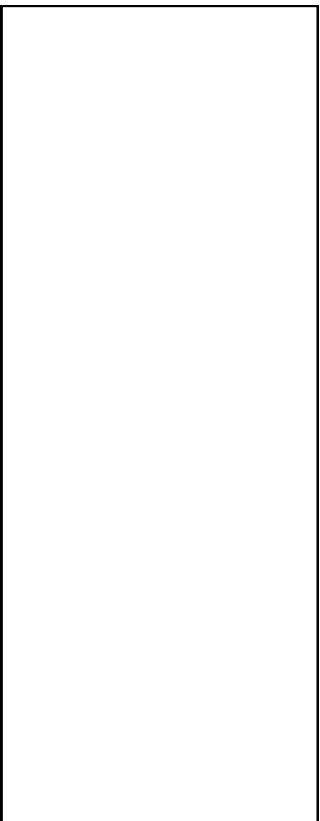


[Back](#)



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