



Stories of HOPE

Summer 2020

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



A 'Wel-Com' Wreath - See Eco-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

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Deadline for next edition: 26 February 2021 The date will also be advertised in the weekly newsletter nearer the time and may vary from the one shown.

Disclaimer

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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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From the Editor

by Jane Langham



After a year like no other in recent times, it seems as though some sort of calm and 'normality' has returned. But, as after the Christchurch earthquakes and the Lake Ohau fires, even when the event itself has ended, there is still a great deal of loss, grief, clearing up and restoration to do for families and for the country as a whole. And Covid-19 has not yet ended in the world, so there is still a threat hanging over us.

Yet we are reminded once again that "*Emmanuel - God is with us*". We can stop and reflect, give thanks, celebrate the news ever ancient, ever new, that this promise is for each one of us, today and every day.

In this edition you can read how the joy of God-with-us is shown in the young adults' group *the Upper Room* (p.10) and in the activities of our younger parishioners at school (p.22 and p.25). There is also a reminder of the miracles of healing (physical, emotional, spiritual) that happen all the time, especially when we pray for each other; read about the visit of Fr. John Rea sm for a healing meeting. (p.16)

A new feature in this edition is a book review (p.20) Perhaps there is a book you have read that you think is worth recommending to others? You could send in a short summary and tell us why you think it is special.

The latest encyclical from Pope Francis (Fratelli Tutti) has such significance that two parishioners have been moved to write about it - each highlighting different aspects of the teaching. See Ian's thoughts on refugees on p.6 and Fr John's summary of the implications of the parable of the Good Samaritan on p.18

The encyclical also challenges all aspects of political and economic inequality and is well worth reading all of it. See a short extract below:

[22] It frequently becomes clear that, in practice, human rights are not equal for all. Respect for those rights "is the preliminary condition for a country's social and economic development. ..." by closely observing our contemporary societies, we see numerous contradictions that lead us to wonder whether the equal dignity of all human beings, solemnly proclaimed seventy years ago, is truly recognized, respected, protected and promoted in every situation. In today's world, many forms of injustice persist, fed by reductive anthropological visions and by a profit-based economic model that does not hesitate to exploit, discard and even kill human beings. While one part of humanity lives in opulence, another part sees its own dignity de-

nied, scorned or trampled upon, and its fundamental rights discarded or violated”.

You can download a pdf of the whole encyclical from the [Vatican website](#).

More than ever we need to be eco-friendly in all our actions. See the home-made Christmas decorations for our churches on p.9 Write and let us know what your family does this year to be more eco-friendly! We can make a feature for this time next year to share these with the whole parish.

One simple idea: once this Christmas is over, you could cut out and save appropriate pictures from Christmas cards you receive. Use them to stick on plain card to make your own cards for next Christmas.

I wish every individual and family a peaceful and blessed Advent and Christmas, filled with the knowledge that ***God is with us.***



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Advent and Christmas Timetable

Sunday 29 November - 7pm Combined Churches Advent Service

at St Christopher's Anglican Church, Tawa

15-23 December - 7pm Simbang Gabi Filipino 9 Day Novena Our Lady of Fatima

Friday 18 December - 10am-12:30pm Christmas Fun Morning

for children aged 4+ at Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa - see page 13

Saturday 19 Dec. 5:30pm (T. Bay) & Sunday 8:30 & 10:30 (Tawa) Mass as usual

Thursday 24 December - 7pm Family Mass at Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa

- 11:30 pm Carols, followed by Midnight Mass at Our Lady of Fatima

Friday 25 December

- 9:00am Christmas Day Mass at St Pius X Church, Titahi Bay

- 10:30am Christmas Day Mass at Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa

- 9:30 am Combined Churches of Tawa Community Service,
held in Tawa College Hall

This is a very family-friendly service, and an especially good way for inter-denominational families to worship together. It has run for over 50 years!

Thursday 31 December - 12 midnight New Year Mass at Our Lady of Fatima

Friday 1 January - **9am New Year's Day Mass at St Pius X Church, T. Bay**

Note: there will be no 9am mass in Tawa on 1 January

For you were strangers in the land of Egypt

by Ian Munro



Four years ago, I visited the UK during the Brexit campaign. It was an interesting time to be there. However, for me, the historic importance of the vote's outcome was overshadowed by a chance meeting the day after.

I was leaning on the railing along the promenade of a south coast town, stoically enjoying the cold, grey, drizzly summer's day, watching the waves break on the stony beach, when a young man suddenly appeared beside me. He was silently waving a piece of paper in one hand while pointing at it with the other. Aware that no one else was around, I wasn't sure just what to prepare myself for.

However, I needn't have worried. With his gestures and handful of English, he asked me to tell him what was in the letter. It was from the government informing him that his benefit had been approved and what he needed to do next. His name was Ali. It's very difficult to mime an official letter and just as difficult to tell him that I wasn't a local so probably not the best person to help him. But I did attempt to find out a little about him and he produced another letter that said he'd been granted refugee status.

By the end of 2019 there were 79.5 million displaced people worldwide. Nearly 26 million of them were refugees, around half of whom were under 18.

I managed to discover that he was Iranian, eighteen years old, and had made it to the refugee camp in Calais after walking and hitch-hiking on his own over two years. He'd then managed to get to England on the axle of a truck and was now living alone in a flat in this tired seaside town.

We conversed in our strange way until the rain arrived and we parted, but I often think about him and wonder how he's coping and if I could have better helped him.

By the end of 2019 there were 79.5 million displaced people worldwide. Nearly 26 million of them were refugees, around half of whom were under 18. There are many, many Alis out there.

In their desperation, many migrants fall into the hands of traffickers who exploit them and subject them to physical and psychological abuse. Many end up in inhumane detention camps, including in our part of the world. And many die.

Pope Francis discusses the plight of those fleeing war and persecution or searching for a better life for themselves and their families in his latest Encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, on *Fraternity and Social Friendship*.

He also notes that those who do eventually make it to safety aren't necessarily welcomed. Many forget that refugees "*possess the same intrinsic dignity as any person*". By our decisions and the way some treat them, "*we can show that we consider them less worthy, less important, less human*". [Fratelli Tutti, 39]

"For Christians, this way of thinking and acting is unacceptable, since it sets certain political preferences above deep convictions of our faith: the inalienable dignity of each human person regardless of origin, race or religion, and the supreme law of fraternal love." [39]

Unfortunately, the sense that we belong to a single human family seems to be morphing into indifference. It seems to me that we're losing sight of the fact that we're all in the same boat, a boat that's in grave danger of overturning.

Pope Francis points out that even in the oldest texts of the Bible, such as Exodus 22:21, we can see why we should embrace migrants. And, similarly, in Leviticus:

When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. [Leviticus 19:33-34].

He notes that, in the New Testament the parable of the Good Samaritan shows us how, by identifying with others' vulnerabilities, we can reject exclusion and act instead as good neighbours. [67] *

"There is a problem when doubts and fears condition our way of thinking and acting to the point of making us intolerant, closed and perhaps even – without realising it – racist. In this way, fear deprives us of the desire and the ability to encounter the other." [41] Good neighbours develop an openness to others.

In an ideal world there'd be no refugees, but we're not there yet and Pope Francis reminds us that our response must be "*welcome, protect, promote and integrate*". He says that we need to work together through these four actions, while preserving our respective cultural and religious identities, being open to differences and knowing how to promote them in the spirit of fraternity. [129]

[* See the article by Fr John on p. 18 for more on this aspect of the encyclical](#)

Stories of Hope

He gives many practical examples of how we can support this, for example by simplifying the granting of visas; adopting programmes of individual and community sponsorship; providing suitable and dignified housing; guaranteeing personal security and access to basic services; equitable access to the justice system; guarantee of the minimum needed to survive; the possibility of employment; protecting minors and ensuring their access to education; guaranteeing religious freedom; promoting integration into society; supporting the reuniting of families; and preparing local communities for the process of integration. [130]

I think often of Ali and pray that he's been able to establish a meaningful life for himself in the UK. I remember, too, that Jesus was a refugee for a period when his family fled to Egypt to avoid persecution. And I reflect on the fact that here we're all immigrants or the descendants of immigrants who, over the last 700 or so years, arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand seeking a better life.

While our borders may be closed for the moment, we can still open our hearts to those who have newly-found refuge here and are now 'us'; and we can pray for peace for all those still seeking refuge and for those working to build a more humane and just world for all.

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For I was a stranger and you made me welcome Matthew 25:35

An Eco-Friendly Christmas

Photos by Fr Rico de la Torre

Christmas decorations for our church have been made over the last couple of years by members of the Filipino community. There are paper-covered stars on frames with a light inside and wreathes made from strips of old Wel-Com newspapers - this paper is much better quality than standard newsprint so it is better suited for this.



The Upper Room - Young Adults' Prayer Group *by Group Members*

Who we are and what we do:

We are Catholic brothers and sisters centred on Christ, journeying together and discerning God's truth through faith, formation, and fellowship. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we aim to courageously bear God's word to all we meet.



As with all good things, the idea came up in adoration time. Two young people, sitting together with Jesus in a small adoration room, with a mutual desire to do God's will. The conversation came up – what can we do to draw young people, our peers, closer to God? The rest, as they say, is history.

'*The Upper Room*' is a prayer group for young adults, who meet every Wednesday evening, usually at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Tawa, to share with each other our lives and journey with Christ. Every single member that has come, that does come, and that will come, is an essential part of our group. ***We believe that no-one is drawn to our group by coincidence, and that everyone who joins us has been brought to us by God.***

How can we believe that with such certainty and conviction? Well, our group has been meeting every week since the 22nd May 2019 (excluding a couple of months over Summer) which is a miracle in itself! Looking back, this group most certainly could not have happened by our own power or desire, but it has truly been a group brought together and always guided by Christ himself. When God is truly at the centre, when something is His will, what can go wrong?

What's required to be a member of our group? Nothing – God must simply call you to us. Besides you feeling that call, a desire to know, to serve, and to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself, is highly desirable!

How can you join? Send Catharina a text on 022 533 2284 to find out when and where we will be meeting that week.

What can you expect? Don't expect anything! Come with an open heart, surrendered and with complete trust in our Heavenly Father. (In all seriousness, we generally don't have a set structure or plan).



Where is the road map? - My Story

Nobody is given a road map to figure out how to live a life for Christ. Each of us stumbles along, some looking down at their own map, others looking up at the stars, others just going where their intuition leads. We all seem to be on our own path, yet somehow, we are also trying to get on the same path - the narrow road that leads to the gate, which is Christ himself.

It is not easy being a young person in the Catholic Church. But neither is it easy being a parent in the Catholic Church. Just as it is not easy being a priest or religious in the Catholic Church. Just as it is not easy being a convert to the Catholic Church. Just as it is not easy not being in the Catholic Church. *Life is never easy.* It is not made to be, nor will it be any easier being old or young, male or female, rich or poor, Christian or Catholic, religious or not. But each breath in our lungs, each moment of laughter, each tear, nothing is spared when it is given up to God. We do not hope in the things of this world, our hope is in eternity. That is what we are fighting for, that is the reason we live, and that is our hope. When God is with us, nothing can stand against us. Our joy does not come from 'easy' but from 'peace of heart'.

So, what does this have to do with what I am writing?

Recently, I was at the AGM (Annual General Meeting) of a Catholic parish. *What struck me was the lack of hope people had. Especially in young people, and even in God.* When some people see a young person at daily mass, it's a surprise to them. What would a young person be doing here? When a young person is seen in the line to confession, it's a surprise. Good on them, they think, but I wonder what brought them here? When a young person receives Christ with reverence in the most Holy Eucharist, it's a surprise. How, why, would they do that?

What young people do to truly live for Christ should not be a surprise; it should be the norm. For all of us. When it's a surprise, how can we expect young people to believe there is more? When we do not make time to pray, especially as a family, how will young people know there is more? When we, young people, are misled that the sins we confess in reconciliation are not serious and we can still receive the most Holy Eucharist (even though the Catechism of the Catholic Church says we cannot), what should we do? When we, young people, do not see examples of parishioners, priests, parents, siblings, approaching Christ with reverence and devotion in the Mass, praying with their hearts and not just their mouths, what do you expect us to do? If we want young people to burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit, if we want to see our Church renewed and the one, true faith truly alive in our parishes, what do you think you must do?

We, young people, are not much different from you older ones. We crave deep personal connection and friendships. We desperately need Christ in our lives. We need others to show us how. We can try to do it alone, but we are prone to stumble, to turn back, to fall. **We need you. We need your help. Please help us.**

"He who trusts himself is lost. He who trusts God can do all things."

St. Alphonsus Liguori



Another Member's Story

I've struggled a lot with my faith over the past few years. As a young adult trying to find my place in the world, I have often lost sight of God and have pushed Him away constantly. Especially while going through my own trials and pains, it was difficult for me to find my way back to God and do something as simple as asking for His guidance.

It's not an exaggeration when I say that being part of the Upper Room has been life-changing for me. The group has provided me with endless love and support since day one. Not only have I been able to grow in my faith and grow closer to God, but I can also be assured that if I'm going through any struggle (whether it's a spiritual struggle, concerns about life in general, literally anything!) I can always turn to anyone in the group for support.

We all bring something unique to the dynamic of the group and we all learn something from each other's knowledge, wisdom, and life experiences. Even amidst our busy schedules as young adults finding our way through university and the workplace, God has provided us a way to come together each week just to be with each other in His presence. Especially in a time when young people are finding it difficult to see their place in the church, I hope that the Upper Room can inspire other young adults to respond to God's call just as we have.



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Christmas Fun Morning

Friday 18 Dec 10am-12.30 pm

At Our Lady of Fatima Church, Tawa

Leave your 4 year-olds upwards with us while you catch up with some last minute shopping!

We will be practising for the Family Mass from 12 noon.

(Christmas Family Mass - 7pm 24 December)

For more information contact Marie: 021 476 153.

A New Zealand Christmas

by Dorothy Shea

I wonder did the bellbird's song
Announce the Saviour's birth?
And did it join the angel throng
Though far across the earth?



And did the mighty kauri tree
Which reaches to the sky
Foretell that one would also be
The way the Lord would die?

And was the tree of red and gold
Which blooms on Christmas Day
A symbol of the Days of Old
When Kings did homage pay?



As in the starry sky above
The southern cross shines bright
We stand and sing our hymn of love
On this fair Christmas night.

And now Te Harinui* rings
Down under far away
In every tree a tui brings
New Zealand's Christmas Day

*Great Joy

Dorothy Shea was a parishioner of St Pius X parish in Titahi Bay.
She died on 19th April, 2014, in her 99th year . Thank you to her family
(friends?) who shared her poems with us.

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A note from the Parish Pastoral Council

by Marie Prescott



What an interesting year 2020 has been for the country! With the outbreak of Covid-19 we could no longer access our churches for Masses, weddings or funerals. We were, however, able to access Mass on-line, both Sundays and weekdays, which was a blessing. For those of you who are house-bound there is still access to Mass on-line from locally and overseas, or on Shine Television every Sunday at 2pm.

When we dropped to Level 2, we were able to have Mass, including weddings and funerals, providing no more than 100 people were in attendance. Every second pew in the churches was taped off. This worked really well. It was wonderful when we were able to return to Level 1 and attend Masses as a parish community again.

Thank you to those who assisted the St Vincent de Paul Society with the distribution of food parcels and financially. The St Vincent de Paul Society distributed a large number of parcels to needy families and individuals during lockdown.

This year all Parish Priests are administering the Sacrament of Confirmation as the Cardinal is managing two dioceses – Wellington and Palmerston North. This move was planned to give the Cardinal more time to carry out visits to parishes, but alas Covid-19 struck.

Due to Covid-19 the Sacramental Programme this year has been interrupted. The children have all now made their First Reconciliation. The Cardinal has given his permission for the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Communion to be administered within the same Mass.

This year's candidates will receive the Sacraments on 29 November.

A Safeguarding Team has been established in Our Lady of Hope Parish, in line with policies and procedures established by the Cardinal and the Bishops of New Zealand. Our Safeguarding Administrator is Rupi Mapusua. Measures are required to ensure that we are protecting our children and vulnerable adults as well as ourselves within the Parish.

On behalf on the Parish Pastoral Council I wish each and every one a peaceful Christmas and all the best for 2021.

Marie Prescott, Chair, Parish Pastoral Council (*See page 30 for names of members*)

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Healing Service in Tawa

We were blessed to have Fr John Rea sm lead a healing service at Our Lady of Fatima church on 29 September.

A Marist priest, Fr John spent many years involved with the core Marist ministry of leading parish missions. He is also a member of Catholic Charismatic Renewal and this led to 10 years of monthly rallies (Encounter Jesus Christ) that were held in Wellington Cathedral of the Sacred Heart leading up to the Jubilee Year in 2000. From these two ministries the parish healing services developed and the aim of these is to evangelise and strengthen faith. Fr John has visited parishes and groups throughout New Zealand, Australia, the Pacific and even as far as the UK and USA.



Fr John Rea sm



A large number gathered for the healing service - people from our parish, from other churches in Tawa, and others from around the area, to be inspired, blessed and healed. We began with worship music from Simon Rayner and his group, to get us all in the right frame of mind.



We then heard a reading from Galatians 5 on the importance of being guided by the Spirit and listing the fruits of the Spirit. There were then three testimonies of healings: Marie told of her spiritual journey that accompanied a rapid recovery from Guillian Barre Syndrome

(you can read full details of this in the November 2019 *Stories of Hope* online); Ajith reported how he could immediately raise his arms after prayer at an earlier healing service, following 3 years suffering from both shoulders being 'frozen'. Earlier this year, he also was offered a new job just a few days after receiving prayer, after losing his job to covid-19. Althea also reported two healings – one a physical recovery following a time when she had severe pain in her jaw and was unable to open her mouth or eat properly. The other healing was following a 'word of knowledge' she eventually realised related to her.



The gospel reading from Matthew 7:15 onwards was on the topic of false prophets, recognising people by their 'fruits' – sound fruit from sound trees. Fr John then preached about the fruits of the Spirit – graces given to us are like 'seeds' and they grow into virtues by being used, and thus we become Christ-like. Virtues overcome vices, and as we hear so often in Scripture, "*the greatest is Love*". This love is for all people and all of creation. Spirit-fruits show in our lives and create an 'atmosphere' so we can evangelise others just by being ourselves. This love for others is the greatest and final command given to us by Jesus.

Those present then came to request prayer for healing - physical, emotional, spiritual. A welcome supper was then available, organised by members of the parish Filipino community.

If you were there, or someone was there to pray for you, and you received a healing or blessing of any sort - immediately or gradually over the following days or weeks, then Fr John would really like you to let him know about this.

Please send information, with as much detail as you can about the situation/condition and what has happened for you. You can email: johnrea8@gmail.com or send a letter to: Marist Centre, 88 Hobson Street, Wellington 6011.

Over the years, Fr John has collected many stories of healings of every sort. You can read some of these in his books: *Witness to Wonders*; *Proclaim with Wonders*; and *Wonders Still Abounding*.

These are all available from [Pleroma Christian Supplies](#). Freephone 0508 988 988 *Witness to Wonders* is also available to borrow from the parish library at Our Lady of Fatima church. (*Blue dot section*)

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FRATELLI TUTTI

by Fr John van der Kaa AA



Fratelli Tutti (All brothers) is the third encyclical of Pope Francis, subtitled "*on fraternity and social friendship*". The encyclical calls for more human fraternity and solidarity, and is a plea to reject wars. The document was signed on 3 October 2020, on the occasion of Pope Francis's visit to the tomb of his namesake, Saint Francis of Assisi, and was published the following day, the saint's feast day.



Part of the opening paragraph reads: "*FRATELLI TUTTI*". *With these words, Saint Francis of Assisi addressed his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel. Of the counsels Francis offered, I would like to select the one in which he calls for a love that*

transcends the barriers of geography and distance, and declares blessed all those who love their brother "as much when he is far away from him as when he is with him". [FT 1]

Further on: *Saint John Chrysostom expressed this pointedly when he challenged his Christian hearers: "Do you wish to honour the body of the Saviour? Do not despise it when it is naked. Do not honour it in church with silk vestments while outside it is naked and numb with cold". Paradoxically, those who claim to be unbelievers can sometimes put God's will into practice better than believers. [FT 74]*

Central to the Pope's letter is the **Parable of the Good Samaritan**. In the parable we have the *brigands*, who beat up the *traveller*, the *priest and the Levite* who walk by on the other side, the *Samaritan* and the *inn-keeper*.

Fraternal love. The opposite is shown by the robbers, to whom the travelling Judean is a great opportunity to fill their own pockets. They had no conscience exploiting and almost killing the man. They represent some of the dark clouds casting their shadow on our world.

The victim stands for all those suffering and badly treated, the weak, those fleeing from war and misery, the handicapped, the poor, the forgotten elderly, the hungry. They are the hand in the picture crying out for help.

The priest and the Levite. They are well aware of the plight of the victim. Well educated, they know their obligations. But right now, it's not convenient, too expensive, or time-consuming. We have to look after our own group first before we can even think of helping others. They hid behind the Law that would make them 'unclean' if they touched a dead person - ignoring the greater law of love.

The Samaritan – in the eyes of the Jews listening to Jesus – is a nobody, someone you do not associate with, different culture etc. But he was also a man who was not bogged down by the rules of the priest and the Levite. The Good Samaritan and the **inn-keeper who supported** him are the models of fraternal love that Pope Francis holds out, not only to Christians, but to all people who share this planet.

We are all created in God's image, every man, woman and child deserves to be treated with the same love, respect and concern. But there is more. Matthew 25:35-36 tells us that we meet Christ in our neighbour. *I was hungry and you gave me food. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, sick and you visited me.*

Pope Francis, in this encyclical, gives us a whole range of examples of people in need who reach out to their neighbour for help. Sometimes we build walls between ourselves and the needy, walls to keep out the refugees and migrants, the 'undesirables'. We build walls between 'them' and 'us'. We create invisible barriers between people - relying on free-market forces to share around the goods of mother earth, not caring whether or not they reach their targets.

The entire encyclical stirs our Christian conscience into a new explosion of good will and fraternity, reminding us to work towards models that will last, creating a better world for all.

Let us pray:

Lord, Father of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity;
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter, dialogue, justice and peace.
Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.
May our hearts be open to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects, and shared dreams. Amen.

(Prayer at the end of the Encyclical)

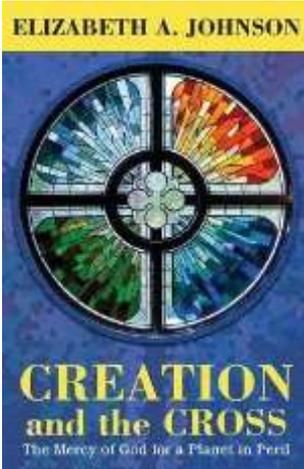
Why not read the whole encyclical on the [Vatican website](#)!

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Book Review - Creation and the Cross

by *Jane Langham*

*I haven't previously seen a book review in Tawa Catholic News or Stories of Hope. If there is something **you** have read that had a significant impact, perhaps you would like to share this with all of us.*



When I read *Creation and the Cross*, I felt as I imagine many people did hundreds of years ago when it was shown that the earth was round, not flat – that despite what many had told them (and some do still believe!) this new concept fitted much better with their experience of the world and what they could see, and it could even be demonstrated by known science. This book helped me see that the death and resurrection of Jesus can be understood in a way that made sense to me and all that I have learned and experienced of God.

Thinking about various scientific discoveries that have changed the way faith is understood (e.g. that creation was not 7 x 24 hours) helped me realise that a change in perspective and understanding does *not* change the basis or facts of faith – God created and loves the world and everyone/everything in it. Jesus came to reveal this more fully and by his life, ministry, death and resurrection has brought knowledge of this to all people. Most especially God's power in the resurrection has conquered death!

I'm not going to attempt a full summary or review of the whole book, just one of its key arguments that God is not a cruel, vindictive being who sent his Son to endure a tortuous death in order to appease His supposed righteous anger for the sins of humanity. Instead, the God of the Jewish Scriptures and the God of the Christian Scriptures, can be shown very clearly to be one and the same God who reveals throughout the generations a God of mercy, forgiveness, salvation and love.

Beginning with Genesis 1, where we read at each stage of creation "*God saw that it was good*" and progressing through the prophets: "*There is no other god besides me, a righteous God and a Saviour, there is no other god besides me. Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God and there is no other.*" Isaiah 45:22-22 Sr Elizabeth demonstrates the ongoing love of God for, not just people, but for the whole of creation. "*The compassion of man is for his neighbour, but the compassion of the Lord is for all living beings*" (Sirach 18:13).

“God is not a cruel, vindictive being who sent his Son to endure a tortuous death to appease his supposed righteous anger for the sins of humanity. Instead, the God of the Jewish Scriptures and the God of the Christian Scriptures, can be shown very clearly to be one and the same God of mercy, forgiveness and love.”

Throughout history, the prophets in Scripture, and also very many righteous men and women working for justice, equality, an end to slavery, oppression, racism, corruption, exploitation of people or the planet, fidelity to the teachings of God – have faced persecution. Those who follow through with their commitment have frequently experienced torture and death. Sr. Elizabeth shows that the death of Jesus follows this same pattern. **The difference is that God raised him to life again, forever showing that death has been conquered - evil does not have the last word!** At the same time, the fidelity of Jesus to his calling and mission has him experiencing all that tortured humanity experiences and has God accompanying Jesus through all of this, just as He does for each one of us – even when we do not feel this presence. The teaching and example of Jesus give us the sure hope that we too will be vindicated and rise again. And not only humanity but of all the world, matter and spirit. As Pope Francis affirms in *Laudato Si*, [on care for our common home] Jesus demonstrated the unity of humanity and the world, matter and spirit.

Creation and the Cross – The mercy of God for a planet in peril

by theologian Sr Elizabeth A. Johnson obtainable online from Amazon or Fishpond.

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**PLEASE HELP KEEP
THE WORLD CLEAN:
OTHERS MAY WISH
TO USE IT.**



St Pius X School - by Christine MacDonald (Principal)



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



Kia ora, Talofa, malo and hello everyone. Term 3 has been interesting and exciting full of a range of learning opportunities as well as some fun.

Catholic Special Character

We were so pleased to return to Level 1 so we could gather together again in prayer. On Friday 7 August we invited our Grandparents to come along to a special Mass. They then joined the classes to spend time with their grandchildren. It was great to see so many grandparents come along to this special day. This was followed by a yummy morning tea.

In early August, Ryan, Kyani and Achilles made their First Reconciliation at St Pius X Church with other children from our parish.

Another special day for our school is our **St Pius X Feast Day**, 21 August. We started with Mass then the children participated in a range of fun games, followed by a sweet treat. The children learned about who St Pius was and why we celebrate his feast day. Thank you, Father Rico for celebrating both Masses with us.

Amanda Joe, who leads our **Young Vinnies**, regularly visits our school and works with our Year 6 students on community focused projects. On 25 August our Young Vinnies participated in a community planting project near the Titahi Bay Library. We are grateful, Amanda, for all your help and ideas for our school.

In early September Mrs McFarlane and I took a group of year 5 and 6 students to compete in the **Kapi-Mana Scripture Competition** held in the newly opened Te Whaea Tapu o Kāpiti - Our Lady of Kāpiti church. This was a great experience for our students and also a time where they could meet others from different Catholic schools around the area. I am very grateful to Mrs McFarlane and Miss Prior for their time preparing our students for this competition. Aмосa placed second in the Samoan reading and Alaska placed third in the Te Reo Māori reading.

This term our children have been learning about who the saints are, why they are important and why we remember them as holy people. Part of their learning was going to Mass on 30 October to celebrate All Saints Day (November 1) at Mass.



The Lord has truly blessed us this term – our application to the Ministry of Education for Urgent Response Funding was successful! This is providing us with funding for another part-time teacher aide, Kelly Sports and for Jellybeans Music, plus Dance in 2021. We were invited to join the Ministry of Education’s Free and Healthy Lunches programme for 2021 and we said yes! The other wonderful news is that we were accepted as a ‘*Kids Can*’ school so our students will benefit from additional food items, shoes and clothing. We were also recipients of wonderful knitted beanies and slippers from the Karori Catholic Women’s League – our children love these! We are so blessed - thank you, Lord!

School Learning and Activities



Ms Matla and Whaea Dee ran a series of Reading Together lessons for parents which helped them to understand the process of reading and how they could help their children at home. We plan to run this again next year.

In August Joshua and Georgia were awarded the Porirua Primary School Young Leaders Award for leadership in our school. They joined other students from around the Porirua area at this special award ceremony. Well done!

Our new **CREW certificates** have been designed to award our students for showing the CREW values of Care - Maa-

naki, Respect - Whakautea, Excellence -Kairangi and Wisdom –Whaakaro nui. When visiting our school, check out our special display to see who has been showing CREW. Towards the end of Term 3, our Teacher Aide/



Librarian Mrs Julie de Boer organised a book fair for our school – the theme was ‘the jungle’. We finished that week with a wonderful display of costumes at the Book Character Day. Thank you, Julie, for all you did for this special week.

In September, the children followed *Getwise* – a financial literacy programme to raise our children's awareness and knowledge of money and its value.

We are very grateful to Bishop Viard College Students who visited our school and demonstrated a range of science experiments for our students, which they all found to be a lot of fun.



The University of Victoria visited our school to share their Science Outreach programme our senior classes, Kereru and Weka, as well as some other schools. There were a range of interesting exhibits and experiments for the children to do.

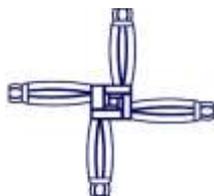
Georgia from Jellybeans Music has been teaching our children how to play a range of percussion instruments. They are really enjoying learning how to read and play music, especially playing with the glockenspiel.

Sports Our children have participated in a wide range of sports over the term: the **MoveMprove** programme each Thursday; year 3 and 4 students participated in the **Sports Festival** at Te Rauparaha Arena. We had 2 teams participate in Futsal and 3 teams for miniball (junior basketball). We are so grateful to the parents and whanau who coach and manage these teams and for the support from our families. Linda from **Project Energize** came to teach our students catching and throwing skills, and more latterly, athletics skills. Thank you, Linda, for all your hard mahi! Mark and Daniel, the coaches from **Kelly Sports** have been teaching our classes a range of sports skills during our lunch breaks. Some of these have included softball, dodgeball and team participation skills.

As you can see, a full and exciting term for St Pius X School.

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 this year 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 (04) 236 7006

St Francis Xavier School - by Joan Woods (Principal)



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

Mass Readers of the Future

St Francis Xavier School Tawa are extremely proud of the success of their students who represented them at the recent *Interschool Scripture Reading Competition*. Each year seven schools in the Kapi Mana area hold a Scripture Reading Competition for children in Years 5 and 6 reading in English and for reading in Māori and Samoan.



Congratulations to Meleane 1st in Māori, Deajah 1st in Samoan, Jethro 2nd in Year 6 English and Kenta 1st in Year 5 English.

Children are provided with a selection of Bible texts that they prepare to read as if reading in church. This year's competition was held at Our Lady of Kāpiti School in Paraparaumu. St Francis Xavier School Tawa came first in the Māori and Samoan sections, first in the Year 5 and second in the Year 6 English sections. It is an amazing success! Thank you to MC Peters, our Director of Religious Studies, and our teachers for preparing our students so well.

We celebrated the **Feast of the Assumption** with a school liturgy. Recently some of our students received the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** for the first time.

Congratulations to Fergus, Jeric, Alexandra, Liam, Gerard, Eleanor and Eriane. Due to Covid-19 there have been changes to the parish-led sacramental programme.

First Communion and Confirmation will now take place at a special Mass to be celebrated at 2pm on Sunday 29 November at Our Lady of Fatima church.



Friends of Tawa Bush came to school and brought trees that were planted at the back of Rata class. The children enjoyed the opportunity to help plant the trees and watch them grow.

Students have been involved in **swimming, tennis and squash lessons**.

We also had some students represent St Francis Xavier School at the **Interzone Cross Country**.

Our senior students enjoyed a mini **Rip-pa Rugby Tournament** against Redwood School. They enjoyed the day and learnt a lot about team sports and skills.

Our middle and senior students visited **Space Place** at the Carter Observatory as part of their Science studies about space. We were also lucky enough to have Te Papa's Space Dome in our school for the day. This was an amazing experience for the children.



This year **Māori Language Week** was moved to Term 3 due to Covid-19.

The children practised saying *God Bless* in Māori – *Manaakitia e te Atua*.

We had a **Five Next Term Party** for those 5 year olds who have started school this term. We plan another party this term for all those 5 year olds who will commence school in Term 1 2021. This is an opportunity for any children enrolled to come into school and meet their teacher and other class members.

Enrolments for 2021

If you have a child turning 5 years in 2021 please contact us to arrange to receive 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



Our school's **Young Vinnies** group has had a busy time learning and helping others in our community. This term they have been baking ginger nut biscuits, harvesting celery they have grown for the foodbank and upcycling T-shirts into reusable bags. These bags will be used by the Vinnies Foodbank and shop. Our Young Vinnies have also been assisting in the Vinnies' shop in Porirua.

This last term of 2020 has given us many exciting events to enjoy including Parents and Friends annual family disco, a week celebrating the different cultures in our school, a Mass and picnic for St Francis Xavier Feast Day, a Ki-O-Rahi tournament and a Kapa Haka festival.

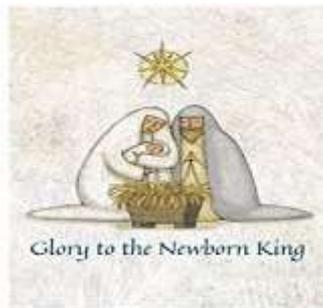
We are also looking forward to hosting our Year 6 Leavers' Dinner and our End of Year Liturgy where our Year 6 leavers are formally farewelled.

We look back on a year of many disruptions due to Covid-19. It was very pleasing to see how school life continued on calmly under sometimes challenging situations when operating in different 'levels'.

We continue to share with the children the importance of hand-washing. Tissues, soap, paper towels and hand sanitisers are available in all the classrooms and throughout the school. We have ensured we follow closely the Ministry of Education and Health guidelines ensuring our school is a safe environment for all our students and staff.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff,
I wish you all a Merry Christmas.

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Parish Notices - Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths

Baptisms

Name of child	Parents	Date
Divya Angelica Prasad	Divend Prasad & Anjileen Krishna,	16 July 2020
Alanah Felicity Tolentino Mabuti	Charo Tolentino & Allan Mabuti	8 August 2020
Aezekiel Xian Seno	Ariane & Adrian Ariola-Seno	24 October 2020

Deaths

Henrika Elizabeth Faber	8 July 2020
Kenneth James Williams	8 July 2020
Gerard James Bone	23 July 2020
Anthony Luis Apolonio Fernandes	6 August 2020
Annette Frances Nelson	15 August 2020
Edward Waclaw Juchnowicz	25 August 2020
Eric John Watson	2 September 2020
Dermot Patrick Greally	18 October 2020

Mass Times in Nearby Parishes

Our Lady of Hope parish times highlighted.

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

Christmas Crafts you can make (instead of buy)

There are lots of Christmas crafts you can make.

There are ideas and templates on lots of web sites or you can use your own ideas.

Here are two things you might like to try.



daniellesplace.com



housingaforest.com

You can also make and decorate your own Christmas cards.

There are pictures online that you can use to colour in or draw your own picture.

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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 ph. 04 232 5611 e. ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz

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 and Litea Meli.

Current Finance Committee Members

Fr Rico de la Torre - parish priest, Graeme Hansen - chair, Denise Dorman, Ted Gallen, Patrick McGill, Nicola O'Keeffe, Louis van Son, and Margaret Weaver.

Regular events

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

Joshua Catholic Fellowship for Men, Third Thurs. 7:30 pm, 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 pm,

Marian Mothers - 2nd Monday am each month - see weekly newsletter

Women of Faith - 2nd Friday am each month - see weekly newsletter

Xavier Youth Group - Years 9 to 13, alternate Fridays, 7:30 - 9:30pm OLF church foyer. Check with Paul 027 304 0712

Other events: check website calendar: <http://ourladyofhope.org.nz>

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

Catholic Funerals

One thing is sure and that is that all families will be well looked after during a time of bereavement and loss. You know only too well that when one member of the Body of Christ suffers, you all suffer and share the load of grief and pain. Ninness Funeral Home is totally committed to working with you and your parish priest to ensure that your loved one's and your wishes are carried out in a dignified and reverent way.

At Ninness, we are very sensitive to your Catholic tradition and will be able to guide you through the various parts of the *Order of Christian Funerals*, which is where we are guided in the ways of the Catholic community's rites of farewell.

At the time of death, the community enters into a time of accompanying you on this journey of leave taking. Our belief in the resurrection enables us to grieve with hope and it is this reality that forms the focus of the celebration of your loved one's life.

Throughout the celebration of a Requiem Mass (sometimes called the Funeral Mass) or Funeral Service, the focus is on praying for the soul of the departed and on the consolation of the family, in the certainty that Jesus is with us as we mourn the loss of a loved family and community member.

For further helpful information, visit the Ninness Funeral Home website:

<http://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 – 25 November

Wednesday – 27 January

The shuttle will collect you from your gate or local bus stop.

Reserved a seat by phoning (04) 237-4174 no later than 12 noon on the Tuesday prior to the shuttle leaving.



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