



# Stories of Hope

March 2018

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



## Notice to contributors

Deadline date for contributions for our next issue of *Stories of Hope* will be advertised in the weekly newsletter. 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 newsy 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: 13 July 2017**

## 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.

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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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### With Thanks to:

Our sponsor, to all volunteers who help distribute copies, and to all others whose contributions and efforts have made this issue possible.

## Contents for Spring Issue 2018

<a href="#">Magazine Policy Statements</a> .....	2
<a href="#">Editorial</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Holy Week Timetable</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Farewell and Welcome</a> .....	6
<a href="#">From the Parish Council</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Once a Priest ...</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Miracles do happen in Tawa</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Interview with Marie Andrewartha</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Pathway to Paradise</a> .....	16
<a href="#">A Farewell Reflection</a> .....	18
<a href="#">Bethlehem University</a> .....	20
<a href="#">Some thoughts for Lent</a> .....	23
<a href="#">St Francis Xavier School Report</a> .....	24
<a href="#">St Pius X School Report</a> .....	26
<a href="#">Parish Technology</a> .....	28
<a href="#">Parish records: Baptisms, Deaths, Marriages</a> .....	29
<a href="#">Notices, Coming Events</a> .....	30
<a href="#">Message from Ninness</a> .....	31

### **Editorial committee:**

Bernie Griffin, Fr Rico de la Torre, Jane Langham

### **Contributors this issue:**

Marie Andrewartha, Br Peter Bray, Yvonne Browning, Betty Durr, Bernie Griffin, Wade Hall, Jane Langham, Jane Lee, Christine MacDonald, Marie Prescott, Fr John van der Kaa, Joan Woods.

Cover picture: *The Risen Christ* by John Young

## From the Editor

by Jane Langham



During the years that Fr Chris Penders was parish priest here in Tawa, many of you will have had cause to visit him in his office. He was a very prayerful man. You may have noticed the lovely glass rainbow ornament hanging in the window with the words “*Expect a Miracle*” in the arc of the miracle.

In this edition you can read of a recent miracle in Tawa ([p. 12](#)) for which we can all praise and thank God. Whilst always remembering the Gethsemane words of Jesus “*Thy will, not mine, be done*”, we too can pray and expect a miracle. It would also be good to have more of your faith journey/miracle/testimony stories here!

On [page 6](#) there are several photos from the farewell event for Fr John and Fr Paul and also from the official installation by Cardinal John Dew of Fr Rico and Fr Marlon ([page 8](#)) All of us welcome them into our community of Our Lady of Hope parish.

There is also an inspiring and challenging story of the reality of life in Bethlehem from Br Peter Bray, who is vice chancellor of the university there. ([page 20](#))

**Special request for technology help! See [page 28](#)**

*I pray that you all have a blessed Easter, filled with thanksgiving for the many great gifts God has given us through Jesus.*



**Welcome to Fr Marlon and Fr Rico**

## Holy Week Ceremonies

Monday 26 March      9:00 am      Mass, Tawa  
                                 9:30 am      Reconciliation, Meeting Room

Tuesday 27 March      9:00 am      Liturgy of the Word, Tawa  
                                 7:30 pm      Chrism Mass, Cathedral

Wednesday, 28 March    9:00 am      Mass, Tawa  
                                 9.30am-9pm      Adoration, Tawa  
                                 7-8 pm      Reconciliation, Meeting Room,

Holy Thursday 29 March      NO MORNING MASS  
                                 7:30 pm      **Mass of the Lord's Supper, Tawa**  
                                 Followed by Adoration till midnight

Good Friday 30 March    9:30 am      Combined Churches Liturgy  
                                 Procession through Tawa, with hymns, readings and reflections at  
                                 churches along the Main Road, beginning at the Baptist Church, ending  
                                 **at St Christopher's Anglican Church with drinks and hot cross buns.**  
                                 (finishes about 11 am) This is a child-friendly event.

                                 11:30 am      Stations of the Cross, Tawa  
                                 3:00 pm      **Liturgy of the Lord's Passion, Tawa**

### Easter Masses

Tawa: Easter Vigil      Saturday 8:00 pm  
                                 Sunday 8:30 am and 10:30 am

Titahi Bay:              Sunday 9:00 am

## Farewell and Thank You Fr John and Fr Paul

by Jane Langham

Photos Bernie Griffin

**On Sunday 18 February 2018, Our Lady of Fatima Church was packed to capacity for a very special event at the 10:30 Mass.**

The parish was marking the end of an era - 25 years, a quarter of a century, of loving ministry to us, and the wider community, by Assumptionist priests. Several had come from Holland during the 1950's to minister to the large Dutch community here. In Porirua, they were to establish and teach at a secondary school for boys, alongside one for girls run by the Brigidine Sisters. These two schools, on the same site, opened

in 1968 and are now combined as Bishop Viard College.



Three of the Assumptionists (Frs Chris, John and Luke) came to our parish in 1993, joined a few years later by Fr Paul, who had been ordained in Holy Family Church, in our pastoral area, and also taught for many years at BVC.





Fr Luke and Fr Chris died in 2005 and 2014 respectively.

Fr John and Fr Paul are now allowed their long-overdue retirement from parish duties.

After the special Mass, all friends and parishioners were invited to Leo Connor Hall for a shared lunch and presentations.

These photos show Fr John and Fr Paul with some of the many people who came to thank and pay tribute to the long and dedicated service of these priests.



Musical appreciation was given by a song from a BVC group and another by a combined group from St Pius X and St Francis Xavier primary schools.



Marie Prescott, Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council, presented the priests with the financial gift from parishioners and Marie Andrewartha, DRS at St Francis Xavier, gave a speech of thanks.

See more photos on parish web site.

## Welcome to Fr Rico and Fr Marlon

*photos by Bernie Griffin*

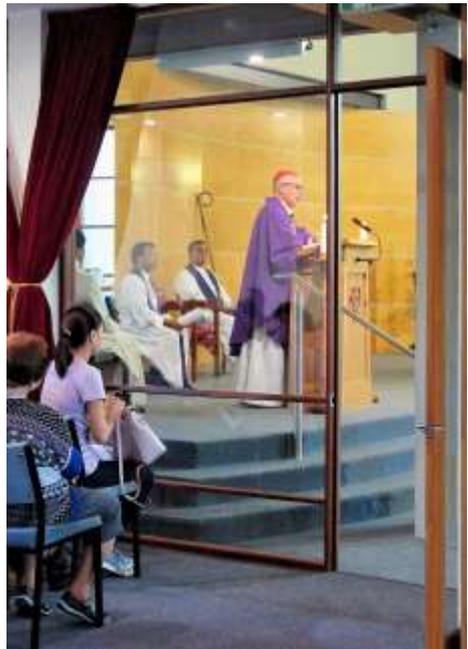


On Sunday 4th March, Our Lady of Fatima Church was again filled to capacity when John Cardinal Dew came to officially install Fr Rico de la Torre and Fr Marlon Tebelin as the new pastors of Our Lady of Hope parish. Fr Marlon is also diocesan chaplain to the Filipino community.

The Cardinal spends some quiet time in prayer before the ceremonies begin.

The Samoan choir led the congregation with music and singing at Mass, including one of the hymns in Samoan.

*All parishioners were the witnesses as the priests were officially given 'custody of the church' and authorized to be faithful ministers of the ministry of Baptism, of Reconciliation, the care of the sick, preaching and teaching, prayer and the Eucharist.*



*To each part, the priests replied: “With God’s help I will”*



The priests were then entrusted with the pastoral office for parish and Filipino chaplaincy.

After the Mass, there was morning tea so that everyone had the opportunity to spend time getting better acquainted with our new priests and each other.

Here are Fr Rico (left) and Fr Marlon (right) with Cardinal John after mass.



## A note from the Parish Pastoral Council

by Marie Prescott



This year, the Parish Pastoral Council is meeting with the Representatives who attended the Archdiocesan Synod held in September last year, to discuss what they gained from the Synod. The Council met with three Representatives at the March council meeting and will meet with the remaining Representatives at the April meeting.

There will be Parish meetings with a facilitator from the Archdiocese, probably in May/June to work on the Parish Pastoral Plan for implementing the Synod directives that were sent to all parishes.

Thank you to all parishioners who contributed to the farewell gifts for Father John and Father Paul. Thank you to Viard College, St Francis Xavier School and St Pius X School students who provided musical items at the Parish Farewell on 18 February.

Cardinal John presided at the concelebrated 10:30 Mass on 4 March for the Installation of our new priests. Fr Rico has initially been installed as the Parish Administrator and Fr Marlon has been installed as his assistant and also to work in the Filipino Chaplaincy.

Blessings

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

*"I, John A Dew, Archbishop of Wellington, having heard the members of the Synod and given due weight to their recommendations, hereby promulgate the documents of the Synod, vest with my Episcopal Authority all that is taught or obliged by them. ... By this... I establish and define the directions and priorities of this local Church of Wellington for the immediate future ... I invite all clergy, religious and laity to promote enthusiastically and act upon the renewed vision for our Local Church outlined in the Synodal Documents."*

*+John A Cardinal Dew November 2017*

You can find the full Synod Report on the Archdiocesan web site:

[www.wn.catholic.org.nz/](http://www.wn.catholic.org.nz/)

## Once a priest, always a priest

by Bernie Griffin



Do priests really retire? Not according to the old saying: *Once a priest, always a priest*. This sentiment is expressed in the Scriptures, as far back as Melchizedek, the priest introduced in Genesis 14:18. Hebrews 7:3 adds: *Without father, mother, or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever*. There is also a reference to this in psalm 111 (110) v.4

So it is too with our much-revered priests, Father John and Father Paul. They have 'retired' and have been farewelled by the parish at a special function. Everyone has wished them a happy retirement, knowing they deserve a rest, a break from parish duties and responsibilities. Their lives have been dedicated to God, the Church and to the people – us.

We are sorry to see them go, to leave the altar and leave the pulpit, to leave their official capacity as our priests of Our Lady of Hope Parish. But they are still priests.

Father John says he has made himself available to help out, to be 'on call' if required occasionally. He says he enjoys attending Mass with parishioners, in communion with others. He and Father Paul know that when they do this they are among friends.

Father John became our Parish Priest after Father Chris Penders retired. Fr Chris died in 2014 and the parish tribute to him is on the wall in the entrance way, alongside a similar one for Fr Luke van der Pal, who collapsed and died in 2005 during a concelebrated mass while on a stop-over in Singapore, on his way 'home' to retirement in Holland, after serving in Tawa for 12 years and at BVC for many years before that.

Father John is the only member of the Assumptionist priests to have served in our parish the whole time since 1993.

Now we have new priests, Fathers Rico and Marlon, from the Philippines. They have been warmly welcomed by us all, and especially by our growing Filipino community.

Father John and Father Paul, both also teachers, have followed their calling faithfully and obediently. They have led us and taught us well. We have benefited greatly from their faith, their knowledge and their intellect. They will be always in our hearts and prayers.

Potestas ordinis est incorruptibilis et immutabilis.

And we add: ***Once our priest, always our priest.***

## Miracles do Happen in Tawa!

*By Yvonne Browning*

During Labour Weekend in 2017, my husband, Fred, became sick and ended up in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Wellington Hospital. Over the next few days, his condition got much worse and he was put on life support. The specialists kept telling us to be “very worried”!

We mobilised the prayer teams - Tawa, Wellington, and several places around the world where we have friends! Slowly, over several days, he was able to come off the life support, but many of his organs had been damaged.

Word was again sent to the prayer teams and as each request was prayed, then that area was healed. For example, when his heart was prayed for, then Fred’s blood pressure became stable, and the same for each area. His kidneys were a real problem - Fred was having kidney dialysis every two days and one day he needed it twice! It was then that I realised we needed to be praying for his kidneys! The request went out, the prayers went up and he didn’t need dialysis after that.

**When Fred eventually left ICU for the medical ward, the doctor who had been on duty when Fred was admitted to hospital came to see him. He told us that he had never seen someone so unwell survive!**

As a result of his illness, Fred was left with many open skin wounds and we were told he would need to have several skin grafts during early 2018. Once again, with prayer, the wounds have been healing. At the consultation with the Plastic Surgeon in January, the doctor advised that skin grafts would not be needed.

God certainly does hear and answer our prayer. Miracles do happen!

***Both Fred and I would like to extend our thanks, firstly to God for these miracles, but also to all those who have prayed for Fred during his sickness and recovery. Thank You!***



## An Interview with Marie Andrewartha

by Jane Langham

**Marie, your family is local – can you tell me a bit about your family background and how you came to live in Tawa?**



Graham and Marie Andrewartha

I grew up in Newlands and Plimmer-ton. My parents had 11 children, of whom I am the eldest with my twin brother, Ian McClean, (who is also in this parish). We were very active Catholics. Prayer, Service and Social Justice were very much a part of our lives. We were part of everything our parents did and tagged along to various church events. They had the

knack of making us feel important in their ministries. It was as though they needed us there! They were active in prayer groups, St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Women's League, choirs and the pro-life movement, to name just a few! Graham, my husband, came from Linden and had lived here with his family since the early '50s. He had already bought a section here, so when we got married in 1977 we built our house, where we still live. So we have lived in Tawa for 40 years!

### *Good mentors played an important role in my faith journey.*

**I understand you and Graham were active in the parish before you had children and in different ways once they arrived. What was your involvement?**

Gosh that's a long time ago! I was teaching for a few years in the '70s at St Francis Xavier School and got to know some of our parish families but I do remember missing my home parish of St Teresa's in Plimmerton and to this day I still feel deeply connected to them. It was one of the Sisters of St Joseph who convinced me that I should be a teacher and walked the journey with me as I very tentatively began to teach CCD. I also began to help with the local youth group run by the Woottons. Good mentors played an important role in my faith journey. We did take a youth group in Tawa before we had our children and I vividly remember a disco with very loud music!

**How has involvement with Catholic Charismatic Renewal affected your faith life and how you live out your Catholic faith?**

For about 10 years, when my children were young, I suffered terrible headaches. They were difficult years and I yearned to see and find Jesus in the midst of the pain. My Dad encouraged me to attend the Plimmerton (charismatic) prayer group. I went along with absolute fear, not knowing what would happen! Well, I met amazing people with deep spiritual beliefs. Bernie Rae was our saintly leader. I was not healed at that point but I learned about the power of the Holy Spirit, the value of Christian community and the importance of using the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Jesus became a reality in my life. I just needed to know that he was there with me in the midst of everything. I began to see miracles, healing miracles and every day miracles! I guess I was trusting God with my life, walking on the water! The Bible was my constant companion and I devoured the Word of God. Life changed dramatically. I had always been a 'good little Catholic girl' but now my faith had deep meaning. I began to realise the preciousness of the gifts God has given us and the importance of using these gifts to build the kingdom. My involvement in Children's Liturgy came at this time and also my work with Alpha. I have always been part of a parish prayer group and also lead an inter-denominational group called LINK. The Children's Ministry leaders from the Tawa Christian churches meet once a month to pray for our children and their families. We have been meeting for 14 years!

***I began to realise the preciousness of the gifts God has given us and the importance of using these gifts to build the Kingdom***

**Care for children from pre-birth onwards has always been a passion of yours – how has this been expressed in your life?** Passion and Vocation are meaningful words and that's how I would describe my work. I think if I am passionate about my work and if I see it as a vocation then it is my life's work. I love teaching and being the Director of Religious Studies at St Francis Xavier school. The link between home, parish and school is so important and I hope I am able to bridge gaps. We are so blessed to have many of our children attend Mass each Sunday. I love co-ordinating Children's Liturgy and breaking open the Word of God for our children. I've always believed that you can't do God's work on your own and we have always had amazing teams. ***Its 30 years since we first began this ministry in our parish and God has provided generously for this important ministry.***

I have also worked in many areas of the Pro-Life movement: SPUC, ProLife Action and Pregnancy Counselling. Pro-Life work is hard and this beatitude comes to mind: *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right you will be satisfied."*

### **Do you have any plans for future initiatives?**

Graham and I are now at the grandparent stage of our life! We have 6 grandchildren and another one on the way. We will continue to pray for and with them and speak the words of Jesus into their lives and of course visit them as often as possible!

Last year, the Anglican and Catholic Churches in Tawa joined together to again offer the Alpha Course. I'd love to do that again. Alpha has the most amazing online resources. I've been involved with Alpha for many years and the new programme is fantastic. Alpha is for everyone, Christian or Non-Christian plus you have great company and food!

### **Do you have a favourite Bible passage?**

Yes I do, it is highlighted in my Bible and next to it I have written "my favourite reading forever!"

There is a story that is too long to share here, but just ask me when you see me and I'll tell you why this reading is so special!

*Ephesians 3:14-20 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.*

There is so much more...

*Marie leads the children from St Francis Xavier and St Pius X schools in their song for Fr. John & Fr. Paul at their farewell event on 18 February.*



New Zealand is currently in the throes of a construction bonanza. Every day the media reminds us of the number of new homes we need to build. Throughout the land, dwellings are squeezed onto seemingly impossible sites, reducing the art of gardening to planting in pots - glazed and terracotta - old boots and other gimmicky receptacles, placed in tasteful groups near mini-lawns or strips of soil covered in pebbles, compost emitting an aroma of something indefinable, or good old bark chips.

Tawa is playing its part, where may be seen apartment blocks rising like mushrooms from the ground, a railway station make-over sporting suitable artworks, designated parking areas, a fine war memorial and ongoing titivation of roads and roundabouts, decorated liberally with red and white traffic cones, which seem to be in unlimited supply and then fetch up in gardens of homes housing teenagers with a bent for collecting.

Now one gentleman of this parish, Bernard William Griffin, journalist, and word-smith, together with wife, Liz, of antique-dealer fame, lives in a charming cottage on the corner of Oxford and Surrey Streets. This most attractive dwelling is set in an appealing cottage garden incorporating New Zealand native plants and featuring a lovely gum tree and a prolifically-fruited crab-apple tree. One sunny day, whilst visiting the area, I stopped to speak to Bernie at the front gate. As we chatted, I discovered that the house has quite an historic background. Then, after complimenting my friend, I moved on to the stark architecture of New World to do the weekly forage for food!

Bernie decided the garden needed a path, one that would be functional and easy on the eye. He would construct his path with cobbles that would complement the low stone wall surrounding the property, which, in turn, was flanked by a high hedge. During a spell of gorgeous Tawa weather, Bernie swapped his journalist's hat for a builder's beanie and set to work.

A trip to Mitre 10 netted a haul of gravel/sand mix, cement and other raw materials. All-in-all, three trailer-loads, which needed to be set down near the building site by wheel barrow. He had borrowed a mould to fashion the 'stones' and his creation was completed in a little over a week - a great feat for a novice at building, more used to literary activities. But wait, there's more! One day, when perched up a ladder trimming the high hedge, Bernie heard a car screeching to a halt and out jumped Brian Mexted (of the renowned Mexted family) who regaled our hero with a potted history of 'Griffin House'.

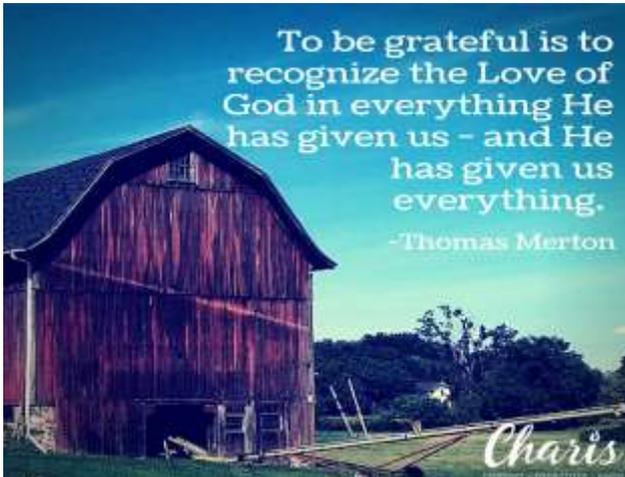


*Finished pathway with crab-apple tree at right  
Now, fruit-laden branches hang over the path.*

It seems it was built by the father of Brian and Graham Mexted and was one of the first houses in Oxford Street. They had planted the hedge round the garden, which featured the lovely crab-apple tree, long admired by Brian. Later, Brian's wife, June, was thrilled to have access to the fruit to make jelly. Brian used to call occasionally to check the progress of his much-admired tree. Even now, years later, folk will knock at the front door asking if they, too, could have some of the bumper crop. (I doubt they are ever refused.)

So now Bernie's construction vision has materialised to his satisfaction and he should be very proud of his achievement.

China has its Great Wall, England has her Hadrian's Wall, Coronation Street its much-filmed cobbles and Disney has immortalised the fictional 'Yellow-Brick Road'. Now Tawa, too, has its own local landmark, lovingly planned and built by an amateur, but dedicated, 'artisan'. Bene Factum, Congratulation, Bernie Griffin!



## A Farewell Reflection ... *by Fr John van der Kaa*



Dear fellow parishioners,

Retirement ... I suppose for most people retirement means a set of irreversible changes, including the termination of 'working for the boss'. The Assumptionist Fathers have been working in the Parish from 1 February 1993 till 31 January 2018 under a renewable contract with the Archbishop.

*Financially* we were supported directly by the Parish, until the last couple of years when we had to submit an invoice to the Archdiocesan Financial Services, which then paid us quite generously every month from the levies that came from the Parish.

*Spiritually*, and in many other ways, we were supported by the kindness, love and prayers of so many good people in TAWA FLAT (as Fr Leo Connor used to call it), THE BAY and the diaspora.

***Spiritually, and in many other ways, we were supported by the kindness, love and prayers of so many good people ...***

A few weeks ago, you expressed your genuine thanks with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. That in itself was important, because it is **God** who provides. I take this opportunity to thank all of you, parishioners of Our Lady of Hope, for that memorable Sunday and for the willing and spontaneous contributions each of you made to the beginning of our 'retirement'.

Now everyone is asking: *What are you going to do from now on?* I cannot answer that question for Fr Paul, but as far as I am concerned, there is plenty to be done; such as uncluttering the garage and rumpus room, preparing my financial report to our Assumptionist Superior in Paris, followed by the Tier 3 Report to the Charities Commission, packing my suitcase for a visit to my family in the Netherlands (away 30 April – 5 July), and helping out in the Parish when Frs. Rico and Marlon go on retreat next month.

Long-term plans? Well, I have been living in this beautiful country for just over 50 years. Why go back to the country where I was born?! One of my classmates spent

most of his priestly life in Brazil. He returned to Boxtel, where most of the remaining community now live in a retirement village. My classmate is on Skype every day talking to his friends in Brazil. That's not for me. Churches in Holland are being closed on a regular basis. The church where my parents got married and where we were baptized, that church will be permanently closed on 1 July of this year, unless a small group of protesters can convince the Bishop to change his mind. I am – I hope – still fit to travel, but a time may come, when the doctor says: no more! I might as well get used to the idea and remain on familiar Aotearoa NZ ground.

One of our priests, many years ago, told me, how he went home once for a short holiday during the time he was studying for the priesthood. An elderly lady in his home parish suggested that by now – after so many years of study – he would have “got to the Consecration”. The poor soul was thinking that most of our study time was occupied by ‘learning the Mass’. Along similar lines, many Catholics also think that a priest has to say Mass *every day*. In the Code of Canon Law (1983), canon 528 §2 it says: The parish priest is to “take care that the blessed Eucharist is the centre of the parish assembly of the faithful. He is to strive to ensure that the faithful are nourished by the devout celebration of the sacraments and, in particular, that they *frequently* approach the sacraments of the blessed Eucharist and penance.” I was told once that the obligation to say Mass is a direct consequence of the obligation of the faithful to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

I conclude with a line from the Assumptionist Fathers Rule of Life: The religious shall foresee on a *daily* basis: participation in the Eucharist, celebration of the Divine Office, at least 30 minutes of meditation, and a period of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

In conclusion: I have shared with you what we are expected to do as priests and as religious. Please, continue to pray for us that we may be able to live close to the ideal set before us. Maybe, in our retirement there will be more time for prayer. Thank you, once again, for accepting us as we are for twenty-five years.

Fr John

Support your priests with love and prayers,  
that they may always be shepherds after  
**Christ's heart.**

Pope Francis

## Bethlehem University in the Holy Land

by *Br. Peter Bray FSC, EdD*



Biographical note taken from Bethlehem University web site:

*“Brother Peter assumed leadership of Bethlehem University in February 2009 and brings more than 30 years of Catholic education experience as a teacher, consultant, administrator, and expert in leadership and educational systems. Immediately prior to his appointment to Bethlehem, Brother Peter was the Director and CEO of the Wellington Catholic Education Centre in New Zealand. Brother Peter Bray, FSC, EdD is the 8th Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University.”* ([www.bethlehem.edu](http://www.bethlehem.edu))

During his time at the Catholic Centre, he lived in the presbytery in Tawa, with Fr Chris Penders. Br Peter has continued to visit Tawa and the Assumptionist priests whenever he visits NZ.

### ***Greetings from this beautiful, holy place of Bethlehem.***

I have just returned to Bethlehem after a visit to New Zealand and Australia, through February, to catch up with family and also connect with friends and supporters of Bethlehem University. It was an uplifting experience and a source of hope for our students at Bethlehem University.

I am well into my tenth year here now, having come from Wellington towards the end of 2008. After spending eleven years in the Catholic Education Centre in Wellington, I was asked to be Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University. The environment I stepped into was very different from what I had been used to in Wellington. I was faced with a situation where I was engaging with students who had to contend with military occupation and hosts of restrictions on what they could do. This made me very aware of how fortunate we are in New Zealand to be able to live in a place of such freedom and beauty. As one famous New Zealander sang: *“We don’t know how lucky we are!”*

It has been a challenging experience, but a deeply rewarding one. I was fortunate enough to be appointed to this position in the only Catholic / Christian University in the Holy Land. Bethlehem University began in 1973 with 112 students and now has some 3200 enrolled with 76% of these being Muslims and 24% being Christian. This in a country where now less than 2% of the population of Palestine are Christians. This means we are reaching out to support Christians in a significant way.

I am often asked what we are trying to do here, with so few Christians in the country. We are certainly not trying to convert the other 98% of the population in the country to become Christian! My response to the question is to reflect that, if we go back 2000 years to when Jesus began his ministry in this land, there were NO Christians

here at all then - so what was Jesus doing? In St. John's Gospel, Chapter 10, he makes it very clear: *"I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness."* That is what Jesus was seeking to do and it is what Bethlehem University is seeking to do. Whether the students be Christians, Muslims or no faith at all, what we are seeking to do is create an atmosphere, develop an environment, provide an opportunity for our students to acquire the knowledge, gain the skills, develop the attitudes and values that will enable them to live life as fully as they possibly can, despite the occupation and restrictions.

At Bethlehem University, we are seeking to have the faculty and staff think of one another as brothers and sisters and relate as older brothers and sisters to the students who are entrusted to them. So, we invite Christians and Muslims, male and female, young and the not so young, to find ways to support one another in seeking to live life to the full.



The nature of those relationships is crucial; and in seeing their students as younger brothers and sisters, the faculty and staff are saying, by the ways they relate, that these young people are precious, are loved beyond their wildest dreams, by a God who is suffering with them, by a God who is walking with them, by a God who is calling them to live life as fully as they possibly can despite the occupation, despite the restrictions that envelop them.

These restrictions create a situation in which our students are limited in so many ways. My experience with them has made me very aware of the challenges they face.

Waleed, a twenty-two-year-old student, was part of the university's Ambassador Programme. When speaking with

a group of pilgrims who were visiting, he happened to mention in passing that he had never seen the sea, even though it is only about thirty kilometres away. The people were a little shocked by this; but he went on to say he can stand on the steps of Bethlehem Hall, the Faculty of Nursing building, and look over the Wall into Jerusalem, but he had never been allowed to go there! His whole life had been restricted to the West Bank and particularly Hebron.



Another of our students, Al-Muataz, was from Walajeh, a village near Bethlehem. His family home had been demolished by the Israeli military, but his family and friends had rebuilt the house. I was speaking to him shortly after his house had been demolished for the second time. He said to me: *“They have taken my house, they have taken my land, they have taken my freedom, but they cannot take my education!”*

Another student, Rosan, told me about how very conscious she is of the restrictions and the impact they have on her life. But, she mentioned, these are

‘out there’ and while everything in her life is compromised by the occupation, the restrictions are not eating away at her and she is not going to sit around and blame the occupation for everything and stop living! As she says, she is a twenty-year-old girl and she is going to do what she wants to do and live life as fully as she can. I find this determination, resilience, and courage inspiring. In this context, Bethlehem University is seeking to help create a quality of life that respects individuals, promotes dialogue, and engenders hope.

One of our biggest challenges is to keep hope alive. I believe hope is different from optimism and emerges from an awareness among the people who are suffering, that there are people outside the situation who have some understanding of what the people are suffering and who are standing in solidarity with them. That awareness of their suffering is part of what keeps hope alive. I am grateful to people in New Zealand and other countries in the world, for standing in solidarity with our students and helping us keep hope alive.

I am involved at Bethlehem University in serving the Palestinian people through education. We do this by focusing on three things. We want our students to know that when they walk onto this campus that they are safe, that there are people here who

really care about them. We want them to experience this place as an oasis of peace in the midst of the difficulties and conflict that exists outside. We also want them to experience this place as a beacon of hope.

However, we are an educational institution, so we want to be a provider of quality higher education. With help from people around the world we are able to do these three things in a very significant way for our wonderful students. Please keep us in your prayers and support us if you can.

Brother Peter Bray, FSC, EdD, Vice Chancellor

See University web site: [www.bethlehem.edu](http://www.bethlehem.edu)

[Back](#)

## Some thoughts for Lent

*by Jane Langham*

It is said that the best way to learn is to teach someone else.

I recently had that experience when a 4-year-old was visiting our home. He sat at the table drinking his cup of milk and I then came in to join him with my cup of tea. On the table was my February edition of the Marist Messenger that had a picture of the crucifixion scene on the cover. As I sat down, he didn't say a word but pointed to the figure of Jesus on the cross, and looked at me enquiringly.

What to say? He has no faith background at home and is also young, so wouldn't understand anything complicated. I didn't want to say anything that his parents would hear later and think I had been trying to undermine them or betray their trust.



Above:  
image from Marist Messenger

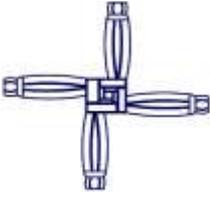
Then I thought "this is about historical facts, not myth or legend" so I began to explain as simply as I could the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Inside the magazine was an illustrated Stations of the Cross, so I used this to help tell the story.

Later, I showed him the crucifix in our house, there to remind us to thank Jesus for his love for us.

This experience of explaining gave me an unexpected insight and understanding of these events and helped in my Lenten journey towards Easter.

You may not have someone you can do this with, but you could do it just in your mind. What would you say?

## St Francis Xavier School - by Joan Woods (Principal)



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

### Term 1 News

It is always wonderful to start the new school year by welcoming New Entrants and other children who have transferred into the area. We were also delighted to welcome two new teachers onto our staff.



On the first day of the school term we had a **school liturgy** to welcome everyone back to school. This gave us the opportunity to formally welcome all our new pupils and our two new teachers.

A very popular tradition at St Francis Xavier School on **Shrove Tuesday** is for the children to make pancakes, followed by pancake races. Parents joined us for this and were a great help in making lots of pancakes.

On **Ash Wednesday** Father Rico and Father Marlon celebrated Mass in the school hall where each child received the ashes. It was wonderful to have our new priests join us for this Mass.

Father Rico and Father Marlon were also able to join our staff recently at Sacred Heart Cathedral for the **Commissioning Mass**. This Mass is an opportunity for staff from all the Catholic schools in the archdiocese to be together. Cardinal John celebrated the Mass with ten priests from the archdiocese, including Father Rico and Father Marlon.

A **'Meet the Teacher Evening'** was held where parents were invited to bring along fish and chips for tea. This evening was an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teacher and other families in the school, particularly our new families.

Our school motto is *Strength and Gentleness, tu Māia tu Aroha* and through our learning programmes we look to build strength and gentleness in our learners. This term, all teachers are using the **Kia Kaha** programme, setting expectations to build safe, happy classrooms. We were fortunate to have Constable Andi to assist in delivering this programme.



Constable Andi also helps train our road patrollers for our busy Main Road crossing. Along with other Tawa schools, we are involved in working with **Pest Free Tawa and Zealandia\*** in an effort to free Tawa of mice and rats. Traps have been set up in the bush areas around the school and children in our Environment Team regularly check these.

Recently our school hosted the Tawa Schools' Year 1 and 2 Sports Day. All the Year 1 and 2 students in Tawa came to St Francis Xavier School and took part in fun sports activities led by our Year 5 and 6 students.

We also took part in **Movin' March Day** where children were encouraged to walk/bike/scoot to school, along with their parents. They were encouraged to wear 'fancy feet' and were met at the school gate on arriving safely at school.

A **mufti day** was held to raise funds for Tonga following the recent cyclone damage, and we were delighted to be able to pass on \$310 to Caritas.

This year we are fortunate to have a **Mandarin Language Assistant (MLA)** working in our school twice a week. During this time, each class has a Mandarin language lesson. Children are enjoying this opportunity to learn about Chinese culture and language.

Our **Board of Trustees** met in February for their first meeting of the year, where a new Chair and Treasurer were elected for 2018.

Our **Parents and Friends** committee continue to raise funds for the school. At present they are running an Easter Raffle with all funds going towards our new playground. We are always very grateful to Parents and Friends for the work they do for our school. Their main fundraiser for the year will be our **school fair** in November, so watch this space.

On Holy Thursday there will be an **Easter Liturgy** held at school before finishing up for the Easter break.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the staff, of wishing you all a very **Happy Easter** and if you are travelling, wish you safe travels.

*This is also an opportunity to wish Father John and Father Paul all the very best for their retirement. Thank you to Father John for the way you so tirelessly supported our school, both as Parish Priest and representing the Proprietor on our Board of Trustees. It has always been a pleasure to have both Father John and Father Paul call into school on numerous occasions. We wish them both all the very best for a long and happy retirement. Our grateful thanks go to you both for your continued wonderful support over so many years. St Francis Xavier School staff and pupils will miss you.*

\* If you wish to know more about Pest Free Tawa, email [pftawa@gmail.com](mailto:pftawa@gmail.com)

Or you can phone 232 7206

**St Pius X School - by Christine MacDonald (Principal)**

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



Kia ora, ngā whanau.

This term our students and their teachers have been fully engaged in a wide range of activities at St Pius X School. The school year started with a prayer liturgy and blessing, which was attended by many families. After prayer assembly, teachers led their students to their classrooms.

The theme or focus for term 1 has been “All about me” as well as “Looking after ourselves – haurora”. Students have been learning about how to look after them-



*Kiwi Class with Constable Andi*

selves in everyday life and Constable Andi, our School Community Officer, visited classes to talk about cyber safety (being safe when on-line).

On Wednesday 14 February, both the school and parish

celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass together. This was a special occasion when we all received the ashes to remind us of the significance of the season of Lent.

After Cyclone Gita struck, Amanda Joe, our Vinnies co-ordinator, worked with our students and baked some food for the people who were helping fix the Titahi Bay boatsheds. This was a good example of our students showing aroha towards our community.

In the first week of March our school held the first of two parent-teacher-child conferences. Feedback was given to



*Young Vinnies who baked for Titahi Bay boatshed owners struck by Cyclone Gita*

parents on student progress and goals were set for term 2. This was well attended by over 95% of our families.

The senior students are participating in *Ko wai au*. This programme helps students learn about respect of self and others, as well as self-control.

Our junior students have been swimming this term at Cannons' Creek Pool. They have been learning about floating and kicking and thoroughly enjoying the water, especially during the hot summer days.

For the last two weeks of March, all of our students will be participating in dance with Mark from *Dances For School*. We hope to present our dances at our Twilight Food Fair on Friday 23 March.

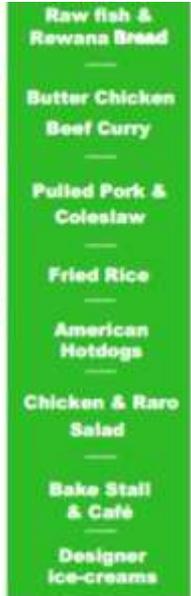
We have had a few teaching staff changes. Mrs Kaye Gillies left St Pius X School at the end of 2017 after 8 years of loyal service to our school. Our new staff members include: Mrs Metua Parr, Tui Class teacher and Mr Lawrence Hobbs, Weka Class teacher. Ms Ana Kawenga is now Acting Deputy Principal and continues as Reading Recovery teacher and Kiwi Class teacher, along with Mrs Angela McFarlane.

Ms Emma Stothart continues to be Kereru Class teacher.

Staff have been receiving professional development in Mathematics and Statistics, as well as professional development in Religious Education and practicing these new ideas with their students in their classrooms.

It has been another exciting and fruitful term.

**We hope to see you all at our Twilight Food Fair on Friday 23 March at 6pm here at St Pius X School.**



**TWILIGHT  
FOOD FAIR**  
**FRIDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 5PM**  
**St Pius X School, Tuki St,  
Titahi Bay**  
Come along for an evening of  
great food and entertainment

## How does our Parish Use Technology ?

by Tony Barkley

Do you know that our parish has a web site with all the information about our parish?

Please note new address: [ourladyofhope.org.nz](http://ourladyofhope.org.nz)



It also features photos from the latest events (have a look for all the photos from the leaving event for Fr John and Fr Paul and also the welcoming and commissioning mass for Fr Rico and Fr Marlon - more than in this magazine edition), parish newsletters and rosters and not only the current edition of Stories of Hope, but also all the archived copies so you can re-read anything you wish.

We also have a Facebook page. (Our Lady of Hope Parish)

*So how do you keep up with what is happening within our Parish?*

'Liking' our Facebook page for events and stories?

Attending Mass and taking a weekly newsletter home?

Logging onto the parish website to learn about our various groups, or looking up past newsletters and magazines?



I was involved in the initial set up and ongoing maintenance of our web site and Facebook page. I am no longer based in Wellington and will soon be moving overseas so my continuation in this role is no longer practical.

***To keep our Facebook going we need someone who is keen on the media and has the time to upload interesting articles, quotes and pictures onto the page.***

**URGENT REQUEST:** If you are interested in this unique ministry please send me an email for more information: [website@ourladyofhope.org.nz](mailto:website@ourladyofhope.org.nz)

**There is also the option to set up parish specific email addresses for your group.**

The advantage in having one is that when group leaders change the email address can stay the same. Examples are:

[sp@ourladyofhope.org.nz](mailto:sp@ourladyofhope.org.nz) for the sacramental programme

[lg@ourladyofhope.org.nz](mailto:lg@ourladyofhope.org.nz) for the liturgy group

If you are interested in having an address for your group, email me:

(Tony Barkley) [website@ourladyofhope.org.nz](mailto:website@ourladyofhope.org.nz)



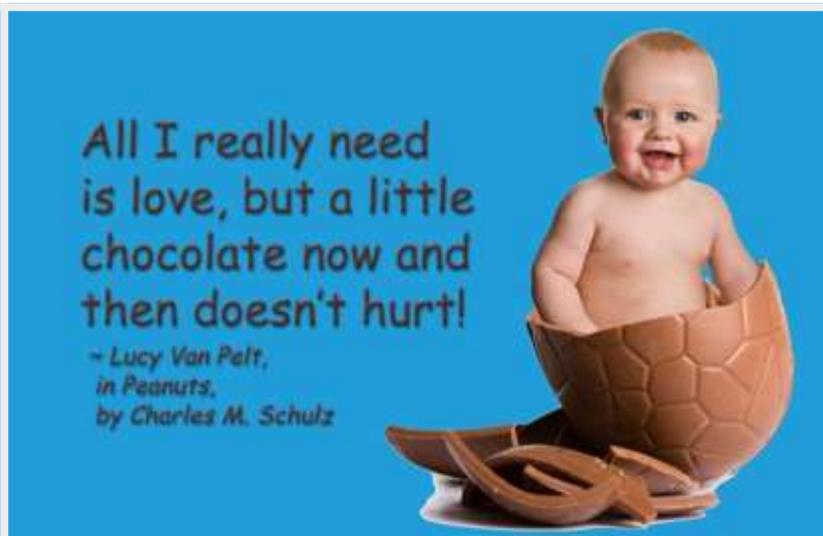
## Parish Notices - Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths

### Baptisms

Name of child	Baptised	Parents
Raymond Zachary Ball	14.1.18	Emalinda & Michael Ball
Isabelle Louise Ataahua Morizono Zabala	14.1.18	Reia Morizono & Friedrich Zabala
Anasetasia Elizabeth Roberts	2.2.18	Julia Tualima-Roberts & David Roberts
Emilia Rose Matos	17.2.18	Jennifer Hutchison & Manoel Filho

### Deaths

Name	Died
Daniel Gerard Greally	15.11.17
Colin Evans	3.12.17
Ivy Edith Fernando	26.02.18



## 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, Jane Bolton, Dorothy Jansen, John Lafaele, Ray Lindsay, Rupī Mapusua and Andrew Oliver

## Regular events

**Ecumenical Men's Group**, study, prayer, reflection in Tawa church meeting room.  
4th Tuesday each month 7:30 –9 pm.

**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 Tuesday each month - see weekly newsletter

**Youth Group**, College Years 9 to 13, Fridays, 8:00 - 9:30pm

Leo Connor Hall, during school term;

**Other events:** check website calendar: [www.ourladyofhope.org.nz](http://www.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

## Papal Funerals

By Wade Hall, Funeral Director

***On 2 April, we celebrate 13 years since the last Papal Funeral, that of Pope Saint John Paul II.*** The process when the Holy Father dies is carefully managed encompassing several centuries of tradition and ceremony. When a pope passes away, the prefect of the papal household immediately informs the camerlengo (chamberlain/Church administrator) of the pope's death. Temporary authority then passes into the



hands of the camerlengo and the College of Cardinals.

Next, the camerlengo directs the issuance of a death certificate and removes the pope's ceremonial ring - the Ring of the Fisherman. Worn by all popes in the last 800 years, the Fisherman's Ring is a gold ring bearing an image of St. Peter

casting his net from a boat, encircled by the current pope's name. It is a symbol of the pope's authority and will be destroyed later at a meeting of the cardinals.

One of the first duties of the College of Cardinals after the pope's death is to make funeral arrangements and begin the nine days (Novemdiales) of mourning and prayer for the deceased pope. During this nine-day period, the Swiss Guards outside St. Peter's Basilica lower their swords in mourning.

There is an official document governing The Order of Service for the Burial of a Pontiff. In the past, popes were always embalmed. Indeed, to this day, you can visit Pope Saint John XXIII at St Peter's Basilica. John Paul II was not embalmed.

After being dressed in the papal vestments, two layers of white silk are placed over the pope's head and hands. The pope's body is placed inside a cypress coffin, which is then placed in a lead coffin engraved with the pope's name and the dates of his pontificate. The lead coffin is then placed in a third, unadorned coffin of elm.

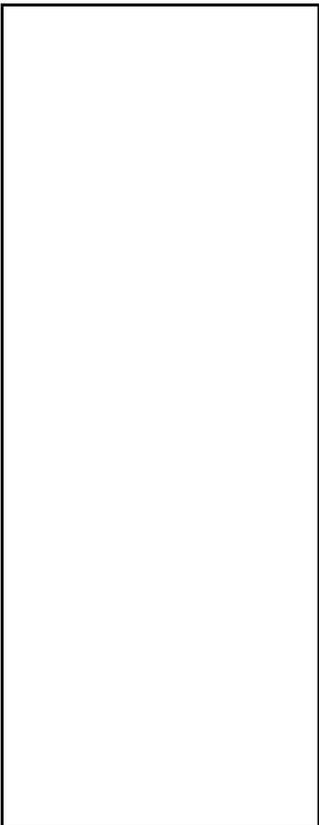
The coffin is then closed and placed near the entrance of St. Peter's Basilica so the faithful can come to pay their respects and pray for the repose of his soul.

Although the funeral rites last for nine days, the pontiff lies in state for just a few days before being buried in the crypt beneath St. Peter's Basilica, which can be visited by the public.

**For further helpful information,** visit the Ninness Funeral Home website: [www.ninness.co.nz](http://www.ninness.co.nz).

Go to 'Community Traditions' and then 'Catholic community'.





**If undelivered return to: P.O. BOX 51-029, TAWA, 5249**

or email: [ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz) to remove your name from the mailing list



Brenden Jacobsen



Wade Hall



Larry Greco

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