



# Stories of HOPE

Autumn 2019

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



*PRAYER FOCUS at World Day of Prayer at St Pius X*

*Also in this edition: Miracles today; Missionary in Peru;*

*Our Parish Woodworkers*

## 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 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: 12 July** The date will also be advertised in the weekly newsletter nearer the time and may vary from the one shown.

## Disclaimer

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

## Stories of Hope - Mission Statement

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

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

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

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### With Thanks to:

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

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## From the Editor

by Jane Langham



There's an old proverb that says "you never miss the water till the well runs dry". I've been thinking that the same can be said about our faith, in some ways. We may take it for granted that God hears and answers our prayers, gives us all the graces we need for every day (our spiritual 'water from the tap')- but at the same time we may neglect to care for the source of all those blessings - our relationship with God. Holy Week and the Easter season is almost upon us once again, when we remember the greatest miracle of all, the resurrection. As St Paul says, *And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.* 1 Corinthians 15:17

I ask myself *"how often do I thank God for the resurrection? How often do I remember to thank him for each and every gift and blessing and answer to prayer?"* We each are blessed in so many ways with daily blessings and miracles - and it is so important that they are acknowledged and appreciated so that our personal 'well' does not dry up!

You may remember that in the previous two editions of Stories of Hope we had joyful accounts of the healings for Fred Browning and baby Sebastian and the special blessings of help for Josephine and her family. I'm sure that many more of our parishioners have 'miracle stories' or person testimonies that would bless our whole community to hear about them.

### **Please be open to God's promptings if you feel called to share your story.**

In this edition there are a number of such miracles recounted (P.9 & 14) also the story of God's great providence for a missionary priest working in Peru.(P.18) Wonders abound at every World Youth Day and Teresa shares the story of her meeting with 'Saint Mary the Ancient' in Panamá City. (P.6)(additional WYD reports in the next edition).

Some of the material in this edition may prompt you to share your thoughts on the topic written about. 'Conversations' about issues are welcome, but there is no guarantee that any or all of submitted material will be published in any edition of Stories of Hope and be aware that we focus mainly on parish, family and personal events, activities and faith journeys.

As always, send any material or ideas you have to:

magazine@ourladyofhope.org.nz

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## Holy Week Timetable 2019

Monday 15 April	9:00 am	Mass, Tawa
Tuesday 16 April	9:00 am	Mass, Tawa
	7:00 pm	<b>Chrism Mass, St Teresa's Karori</b>
Wednesday, 17 April	9:00 am	Mass, Tawa
	9.30am-9pm	Adoration, Tawa
	7-8 pm	Reconciliation, Crying Room

Holy Thursday 18 April                      NO MORNING MASS  
7:30 pm        **Mass of the Lord's Supper, Tawa**  
Followed by Adoration till 11pm

Good Friday 19 April    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, Our Lady of Fatima

3:00 pm    **Liturgy of the Lord's Passion,**  
Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa

### Easter Masses

Holy Saturday 20 April	8pm	Easter Vigil , St Pius X, Titahi Bay
Easter Sunday 21 April	8:30 am	Family Mass, Our Lady of Fatima
	10:30 am	Easter Mass, Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa

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## Santa María la Antigua (St Mary the Ancient)

by Teresa Rayner



**Patron Saint:** Panama City

**Feast Day:** September 9



The statue presented to the Parish

At 8:30am mass on Sunday, 10th February, I presented a statue of *Santa María la Antigua* to the parish, as a small thank you for all your prayers, donations and support, towards getting me to World Youth Day! It should be on display soon somewhere in the church or side chapel.

This particular statue was bought at a Catholic shop in Panama City, and blessed by Fr Alister, our NZ pilgrimage chaplain, in the Cathedral Basilica Santa María la Antigua, where a larger statue of her is displayed.

Not much is known about her, but I have compiled some information I found online. Every site says something different so I don't know how accurate it all is!

There was a much-revered image of Our Lady in the church of Santa Maria la Antigua at Valladolid in north-central Spain. When the Moors invaded Spain in the 8th century, the image was hidden in a wall of the church, to keep the Moors from defacing it.

This undoubtedly saved the painting since the church was soon turned into a mosque, and eventually knowledge of the image was lost.

Later, in 1248, Our Lady appeared to King Saint Ferdinand III to assure him of victory in a battle that drove the Moors from Seville.

He was kneeling in prayer before a statue of Virgin of Kings, and Our Lady spoke to



The Cathedral Basilica Santa María la Antigua,  
Panama City

him through the statue, saying *“You have a constant in my image of the Antigua that you love so much and which is in Seville.”* St. Fernando was instantly overwhelmed with a holy desire to venerate the image of the Virgen de la Antigua, and he was miraculously guided through the city and into the mosque where the image lay hidden behind a wall. Upon his arrival, the blank wall faded from sight, becoming as transparent as the finest pane of glass, allowing Fernando to gaze upon what no-one had beheld for many centuries. There, untouched, its secret hidden by the solid wall, was the painted image of the Queen of Heaven holding her Infant Son in her arms.



Image of Santa Maria la Antigua, like the one discovered in the mosque

Fernando was completely unaware of the passage of time as he prayed before the heavenly portrait. It had always been his intention to make Mary the Mistress and Queen of Seville, and when he conquered the city he shattered the obstructing wall and brought this glorious masterpiece to light for all of Christendom.

After the victory, which the King attributed to Santa Maria de la Antigua, this devotion quickly spread, especially among Spanish explorers, who frequently asked for St. Mary's help in *“threatening and dangerous situations.”*

When the Spanish conquered Panama, they brought this devotion with them. In 1510, two men founded a town called La Guardia, and a few months later the name was changed to ‘Santa María la Antigua,’ fulfilling a vow they had made to the Virgin if they emerged alive from the confrontation with the natives. A Christian community developed there composed of native converts and Spaniards.

I'll finish off with a brief timeline from then till now;

**9th September 1513:** Pope Leo X created Panama's first diocese there

**1524:** The main diocese was moved to Panama City

**4th April 1796:** The Cathedral was dedicated to Santa María la Antigua

**1925:** Panama City became an archdiocese

**9th September 1999:** Santa Maria la Antigua declared patroness of the archdiocese

**9th September 2000:** Santa Maria proclaimed patroness of all of Panama

**January 2019:** Cathedral Basilica Santa María la Antigua restoration completed in time for World Youth Day, and Pope Francis consecrated the Cathedral's altar

Right: The statue of Santa Maria la Antigua in her Cathedral in Panama.

There are always long lines of people waiting to go behind the rail and pray at her feet.

The Spanish people often asked Santa Maria for help in threatening and dangerous situations. And as these stories show, through her intercession, amazing things, even miracles have occurred!

Something that has only occurred to me as I write - (I am writing this the day after the Christchurch terrorist attacks), as I have been researching, I can't help but notice how Santa Maria was discovered hidden in a Muslim mosque, and she helped deliver many people from those who were oppressing and attacking them.

Maybe this is the reason (or perhaps not), I felt called to bring her statue home to New Zealand. But especially now, in this frightening and dangerous time in our country, let us pray to Santa Maria la Antigua for her intercession, guidance and protection.

We pray that she may bring us peace, and justice for those who have suffered from this horrific attack.

Santa Maria la Antigua, PRAY FOR US.

*(Note: Thank you to all those who came to my WYD report-back and information night in February. For those who were unable to attend, I will have an article on my World Youth Day experiences in the next edition of Stories of Hope.)*

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## God can grow legs ...!

by Simon Rayner

When I was 19, I was hit by a car when I was riding my motorcycle on the open road. I broke all my limbs but thanks be to God received no internal, spine or head injuries. The worst of it was my right leg, which was badly smashed below the knee and also a section of my thigh bone was broken and destroyed. After 2 months in hospital and a further 7 months in plaster I emerged with a right thigh which was 2 centimetres shorter than my left. This wasn't a major obstacle in the years to follow, and mostly went unnoticed. However, by 2011 my right ankle had developed bone spurs and arthritis as a result of the missing 2 centimetres, and I had some minor surgery.

***Over the years I had heard of stories of God lengthening legs, and had prayed to be healed in this way myself, but had seen no improvement.*** In February 2017 I went to a healing service with Fr John Rea and once again asked God for healing for my leg, but left with no sign of any change.

One month later, I attended a meeting of Wellington Joshua Catholic Men's Fellowship. Michael Powell had spoken and was finishing with a time of prayer for healing. I went up for prayer for my ankle, which was playing up again.

While I was waiting for my turn, one of the men beside me turned and said: *"Simon what are you standing here for, the Lord has just told me He has healed you already."* I wriggled my ankle and found the discomfort I had been experiencing that evening had eased, so I went and sat down and began thanking God. As I did so, my attention was somehow drawn to my knees, which were sitting neatly together. Normal enough you might think, but not for me: sitting down like that made my shorter thigh very obvious. I slid back in my seat a little, unable to believe my eyes, then ***I went and sat on the floor hard up against the wall - but no matter what I did, my right leg was now the same length as my left.*** For the next few days I felt like Peter walking on the water, thinking that if I stopped believing my leg might return to how it was before. But it did not!



**I have always believed that God works miracles in the world today, but never expected that He would work something so tangible for me.**

**In the words of a song that resonates with me:**

***"He loves us, O how He loves us!"***

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## An Interview with Jacob Misitea

by Jane Langham

**Jacob, you live in Ascot Park, yet for many years St Pius X in Titahi Bay and Our Lady of Fatima in Tawa have been the parishes you have chosen to worship and serve in. Can you please tell us a bit about your life and faith journey?**

I was born in Samoa, the 3rd of 4 children. The influence of my mother on my faith was very great. When they married, my mother was a Catholic, but my father was not.

Her faith and life soon convinced my father to also become a Catholic.



When I was born, for 4 or 5 days I did not open my eyes or mouth. The rural village community were convinced this was a punishment from God and meant that my father had been unfaithful, even though this was not the case. There was no local doctor or priest and the nearest catechist was about 20km away and the only way to get to him was to walk. My mother took me to see this catechist. His immediate response was “I’m not a doctor”. But he did have some ‘water from Mother Mary’ (*perhaps Lourdes water?*) which he put onto my eyes and into my mouth. Immediately my eyes opened and I let out a clear “I’m hungry” cry! I don’t remember all this, but my mother and aunt told me about it – I have never missed any Mass or benediction since then in all my life.

My mother decided that I would benefit from secondary school education, but we could not afford the fees. So she just took me to the Marist Brothers school and left me there! I don’t know what she said, but they accepted me as a weekly boarder for no fees and my mother gave what she could when she could. Another miracle! I did well at school and was appointed banker for the school scout group and also to beat time on the drum each morning as the pupils filed into class.

I didn’t know until years later, when I met some old classmates in Newtown, Wellington, that the other boys were envious of these ‘special privileges’

that I had been given.

I left school at the end of 1961. I had been an altar server all my school days and wanted to become a priest. But family needs meant that I was sent in March 1962 to join my older brother and sister in New Zealand. That meant a boat trip to Fiji then a flight to Auckland. We lived in Newtown and I joined Marist St Pat's rugby team. My parish was Holy Family, Webb Street, where I started a Legion of Mary group. I met my wife Miimetua and we were married at Holy Family in 1963. We went to live in Porirua and had our family there, but because of Miimetua's health, we moved to Titahi Bay to be on higher ground. When we were able to buy our own house, we found one in Ascot Park, but continued to be parishioners at St Pius X. We were very involved there – I was a Eucharist Minister and also Sacristan. Sadly, Miimetua died of cancer in 2001.

**Why did you begin to attend Our Lady of Fatima church and how did this help your faith journey?**

My grandson, Elijah, was musically very talented. Filifili Malii offered to teach him to play the organ so that he could play at Mass, but this would only be if he was part of Our Lady of Fatima parish. (This was well before the parish amalgamation.) So in 2003 Elijah and I began attending Our Lady of Fatima whilst the rest of the family remained at St Pius X. I wanted to be fully involved in the parish so I became a Eucharist Minister for Our Lady of Fatima. Fr Chris Penders was a great spiritual help to me during this time and he always thanked and encouraged me in every way. Once Elijah was fully trained, we went back to St Pius X parish in 2008 – he later studied music at Massey, Victoria and then Melbourne Universities.

**What are you currently involved with in the parish and community?**

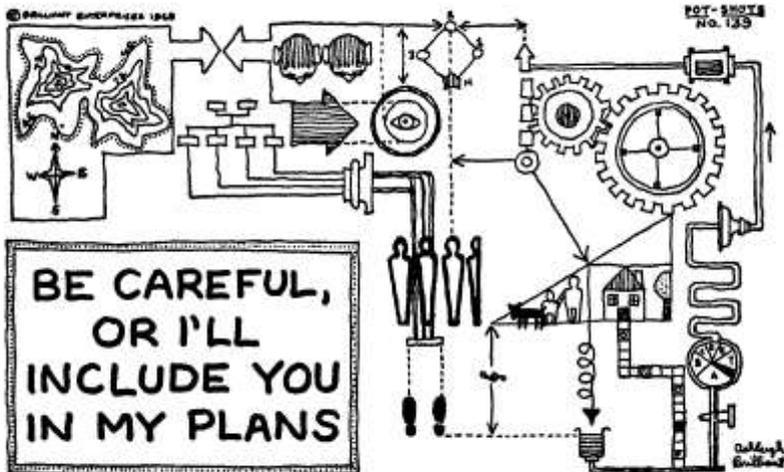
Once back in St Pius X, I continued my earlier jobs of sacristan and Eucharist Minister. When Miimetua was having treatment for cancer, volunteers from the Cancer Society would drive her to her treatment sessions. Before she died, she said to me *"Never forget the Cancer Society"*. The family assumed she meant to give them a donation. I went to their headquarters with a donation and asked them if there was any other help they needed.

They said that they always needed volunteer drivers. So I did their training course and have been one of their volunteer drivers ever since. When I pick them up, I tell each person that they have become one of my family. We were told not to push our faith onto anyone, but I always have my rosary visible and pray it as I drive. If anyone asks about this, I can tell them I am praying for them.

Looking back over my life, my greatest joy is that my children and grandchildren are open to the Spirit and are themselves now doing community work in New Zealand and Australia. I asked my daughter how come she is able to do so much. She replied *“we just followed you Dad”*.

God is faithful and still blesses me with miracles all the time. Most recently, I was given a car to use full-time as ‘God’s Car’ when my old car was beyond economic repair. Also, my grandson responded to promptings of the Spirit and sent me (unasked) \$200 after I had prayed to God when I needed \$45 that I couldn’t afford for prayer books to give to people.

I am passionate about all I do for the church and community. I pray all the time that I can: thanking God; asking him to use me for his work; praying for the world, the Pope and all priests, my family, my cancer patients, our schools and parish, for peace in the world – anything and everything.



## World Day of Prayer

by Denise Dorman

World Day of Prayer is celebrated all around the world on the first Friday of March. Material is prepared by Women's Groups in a different country each year to foster ecumenism, an understanding of other cultures and to highlight and pray for the needs of the designated country.



This year, St Pius X were hosts to the five Titahi Bay churches for this Ecumenical Service on 1st March. About thirty people gathered, with Angela McFarlane leading the prayers and worship. Also present to assist were Fr Ricco and leaders from the Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist and Community Church communities in Titahi Bay.

This year's country was **Slovenia**, with the theme:

***"Come - Everything is Ready"***. The event always focuses on women from one country. This year, the woman of Slovenia told how the Christian faith was able to flourish after suffering persecution under fascism and then communism, before the country became a democratic parliamentary republic in 1991.

The items of the 'focus' centrepiece symbolise the food of Slovenia:

- rustic bread and water are God-given to us all
- grapes produce the wine
- salt from the coastal plains of Slovenia
- red carnations and rosemary that grow in abundance there.

## Miracles in my Life

by Marie Munro

***I can testify to the amazing power of God's love shown through undeniable miracles when we give Our Lord permission to open our eyes and minds to His infinite love and choose to accept that His will be done.***

I have been blessed to see many miracles and I would like to share some of them: **I believe my home is one such miracle.** When we came to Wellington several years ago, it was on secondment for two years. We rented in Tawa and loved it so much we decided to stay. That meant selling our Dunedin house before settling here permanently. We planned to build, so toured the newer suburbs for ideas about available materials. When we drove past the house we now own, I said, *"ooh, I could live in that."*



It transpired that, at that exact moment, the real estate agent was inside signing it up for sale. That night, I had an unexpected call from a real estate friend in Dunedin. We prayed for guidance, and three days later, simultaneously negotiated the sale of our Dunedin house and the purchase of our new home.

***When we let Our Lord take charge things can move very fast.***



**Shearing the top off my tibia (shin bone) in a fall in November 2015, reinforced my belief in modern-day healing miracles.**

My injury required surgery, to be followed by three months 100% non-weight-bearing, and the need for crutches for a further six weeks after splint removal.

Just 12 weeks after the operation, the orthopaedic surgeon viewed my X-ray and could find no evidence of the break! *"the only indication that you ever had a broken leg is the metal plate they inserted..."* He was also impressed by my ability to immediately walk unaided, and to be walking without a limp within two weeks.

However, a bit of stress on the knee revealed an injury that had been masked by the original trauma. It required further surgery, so they decided to also remove the metal plate. The expectation was that I would be on crutches for at least 6 weeks.



I was anxious, so I went for prayer ministry after mass at Our Lady of Fatima two days before the operation. Two days after the operation I was walking and kneeling normally, and without pain or any need for crutches.



***A story that is even more miraculous is of a young man who was diagnosed with myxofibrosarcoma in 2017.***

This rare and aggressive cancer had produced a tumour 12cm long and 19cm in circumference in his arm. Surgeons said the only way to slow its spread was to amputate the arm.

He sought advice from friends who had been on the cancer journey and, as it happened, these friends were going to attend a healing service that evening, led by Fr. John Rea. With the young man's permission, they took an object from him, to be blessed by Fr Rea. The friends returned with hankies that had been prayed over and which he still keeps with him, along with his personal item that was blessed.

***The miracle is that this young man still has a fully functioning arm, thanks to prayer and a surgical team assisted via video-conferencing with specialists from various parts of the world.***

In a 16 1/2 hour operation, *"they took everything, except bone, from inside my arm - muscles, veins, nerves, etc., and replaced it all from other parts of my body. I even have a hairy diamond in the crook of my arm where they used skin from my leg"*.

The surgeons predicted a 4-week hospital stay, and a further 16 weeks of recuperation. This young man returned to his home-town on a commercial flight 10 days after surgery and was back at work, initially part-time, then full-time, which included driving a car, within six weeks. *"I went into hospital with a life-threatening tumour and came out with scars the full length of both my left arm and my right leg, and down half of my left leg. I have a left arm that looks normal and three fingers and a thumb that are making fair progress."*



***The gift of miracles didn't end 2000 years ago! The amazing power of God's love remains available through faith, the intercession of prayer ministers, the prayers of friends, and the gifts and skills of those Our Lord has called to heal through the medical profession.***

## My God I hope in You ....

by *A Parishioner Hanging in There ...*

Our parish is well-named Our Lady of Hope - our world is in such need of hope these days!

I, like many others, have been struggling with the current scandals in the church - what, or whom do I believe in? Who can be trusted? Is 'the Church' necessary for my faith? Is 'the Church' falling apart and beyond hope of recovery?

My hope was greatly restored by reading the latest copy of *Wel-Com* (March edition, page 14) and a feature on an article by Daniel Horan OFM. In this, he points out that the church has never been perfect nor had a time of 'greatness'. Well worth reading.

***the church has never been 'perfect'  
nor had a time of 'greatness'***

I realised, once again, that the People of God have always been saints and sinners, that each of us are also part saint and part sinner. As I write, today's Gospel reading reminds me that *Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.* Matt 5:43-46.

The God we believe in, the Father that Jesus revealed to us, the teachings Jesus gave us, teachings proven by the resurrection of Jesus and continuing to be proven by the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the world - all this is the foundation and content of our faith.

Since the time Jesus was on earth we read of him warning his disciples to follow the teaching of the scribes and pharisees, not the actions of some of them. The letters of St Paul and the ongoing history of the church show us the continuing failures of some individuals or groups. None of this can undermine the fact that Jesus established his church and put its future in the hands of the broken individuals he had chosen to be his closest friends.

The power of evil in the world, evidenced through individuals or groups or spiritual attacks is a fact. The letter of James reminds us to *"resist the devil and he will run away from you"*. James 4:7. This is the way to combat the evil in ourselves and in the world.

The recent atrocities in Christchurch and the subsequent outpouring of support and sympathy, along with anger that this could happen, are evidence of the evil around in the world, not just in the church. They are also evidence of the goodness in the world and our communities.

Without in any way condoning evil, nor suggesting that criminal acts should not be prosecuted, we can still pray for and forgive individuals and institutions that sin. After any offence, trust needs to be rebuilt. That is where the power of the Holy Spirit comes in. The Spirit has upheld and restored the Church over the years. The Spirit will continue to do this. *"And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time"*. Matthew 28:20. *Our Lady of Hope, pray for us.*

**Act of Hope:**

*O my God I hope in you for grace and for glory  
because of your promises,  
your mercy and your power. Amen.*

A sick man turned to his doctor as he was leaving the room after paying a visit and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side."

Very quietly the doctor said, "I don't know."

"You don't know? You, a Christian man, do not know what is on the other side?"

The doctor was holding the handle of the door, on the other side of which came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing: I know my Master is there, and that is enough. And when the door opens, I shall pass through with no fear, but with gladness."

**Arrows of Love** by *Fr Carmel Adami* (Missionary Society of St Paul)

*I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me. Matt. 25:40-45.*

I am going to tell you some of my experiences in Peru.

Years ago, when I was a parish priest in one of the poorest shanty towns, I used to see so many mentally retarded children roaming the streets. I decided, with the help of the Diocesan Caritas Arequipa, to build a three-classroom school, kitchen and a dining room for them. From here came the idea of an orphanage. Unfortunately, they were driven out from this school when I was called to leave Peru. It was a sorrowful heartache for me. Caritas Arequipa, however, provided them with a small house which can take a limited small number of such kids. I go to visit them regularly. I try to speak with the children and they learn a lot.



In your name I give them sweets and they love it. ***Dear parents please thank God that your children are born healthy.***

The house is growing to become an orphanage. With the help of a number of benefactors, we have completed the first floor of a new separate building for the senior children. This consists of a chapel, workshop and two classrooms. For the second floor, God has to provide, after all it is His orphanage and they are His children. The chapel will have the Blessed Eucharist exposed 24 hours every day, so that the staff and children will bombard God's Providence. We all have faith that for God there is nothing impossible and are convinced that He will continue sending 'arrows of love' into the hearts of our benefactors to continue supporting this shelter for His such special children.



On my last visit to the orphanage, I was met by a cute white female baby alpaca, very friendly, donated by Indian farmers from the Andes mountains. They are going to bring us a male one too.

Gloria - big mill factory of Arequipa is donating two milk cows. Mauricio the veterinarian who is a great help in the running of the house, is bringing along two 'del pascu' Peruvian horses who walk and dance differently from other horses, for people to come and watch, perhaps leaving a donation.



The vegetable garden is going well and we will soon have chickens for meat and eggs. An American family who live nearby give a big hand. When I think of all this, and of you, and God's love, I become emotional and move apart so that nobody can see me. At one moment I looked at heaven above and said: *"Father, if you are going to keep going like that, we will not hesitate to accept and bring in more children."* I counted 33 children. Children with such disabilities are either left to die or simply killed.

One Sunday I was invited by a family I knew years ago to have lunch with them in the mountains. When we got there, I could hardly breathe - the area consisted of rocks and dust. How they live in such a desolate place I can't describe. Then we went to visit their grandmother who sells alfalfa to survive. *"When you do not sell alfalfa, what do you do?" "I kill a guinea pig and we eat it."* In such far and desolate places people are forgotten. The priests are busy with their masses, processions, meetings, administration, etc. So these poor people remain 'Mr Nobody' (Don Nadie, as they say here) all their life.

Many young girls look for a job. Sometimes they get one 'with conditions' and then abortion follows. Fifteen, sixteen years old, poor, easy to deceive.

Peru has made lot of progress regarding roads, houses, shopping centres, etc. a lot of poverty still persists. They have schools, but half of the students have anaemia. One little girl, I thought she was a four-year-old, came to sell me water. I was curious and asked her age. *"I am six, caballero"* she said. She was so frail, thin and pale. In your name I gave her a few cents. So, please, ***when you see your children growing healthy, thank God. He will appreciate your prayer.***

I see school children going home carrying a piece of cake in their hands - their share from a school function - to share it with their family.

A little girl touched my heart. I gave her a banana. Did she eat it? No. She took it home to share it with her sisters. So **parents when you go to the supermarket to buy bananas, tell your children to thank God for them, for so many children are deprived of them. And God will be pleased with you because He wants us to thank Him.**

*With my blessing from Peru and of course God's.*



*Editor's Note: Article abridged. Fr Carmel is the uncle of Our Lady of Hope parishioner Emilia Micallef. He is a member of the Missionary Society of St Paul, a Maltese missionary community that has spread to many countries around the world. He gets support from Caritas Arequipa and some families in Australia where he was chaplain for the Maltese, Italian and Spanish communities. He also gets support from his family.*

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When all other means of communication fail,  
... try words.

Ashley Brilliant. 'Potshots' 870

## Work of Human Hands ...

*by Jane Langham*

Tawa grew from a very small community into a strong, independent and vibrant centre in the 1950's and 60's. The Tawa community worked together to build and develop many of the facilities still in place today and it was the same for the parish community. It was during this time that Our Lady of Fatima church - replacing the small wooden one on Rewa Terrace, built almost entirely by parishioners - and later, St Pius X church, and the parish schools were built. The Assumptionist priests were teaching at what was then Viard College, with Brigidine Sisters also at Viard College and St Francis Xavier school. From when Our Lady of Fatima Church was first built, the Assumptionist priests were involved in the parish in many ways, helping and encouraging the parish priests and the laity. A new church needs many fittings and, as with so much else in Tawa, it was the locals who set to and made them.

There is a comprehensive history of the parish written by Fr John van der Kaa as part of the year 2000 celebrations for the whole diocese\* This piece is a sort of 'supplement' to that to acknowledge and celebrate the many



people who lovingly crafted all the church fittings that are made from wood (kauri and rimu) that we may now take for granted. It does not include everything else that has been contributed, nor every person who has helped create our church so please do not be offended if you, or one of your friends or relations, is not mentioned here ... their reward will be great in heaven!



The most significant item in a church is always the altar - these were made by Fr Chris Penders, who also made the stands for the statues, the lectern where the Word is proclaimed, the table by the altar in the

## Stories of Hope

side chapel, the stand in the foyer for the holy water container, the wooden communion bowls and a long-used wooden paschal candle that held an oil container. Fr John van der Kaa painted this to look like a wax candle. After some years, the holy water stand had to be repaired because of borer. Fr Chris had used a lot of plywood that came from the Orphanage in Upper Hutt. The borer was already there when he re-used the plywood. With their never-ending appetite for the soft bits in the wood, they also attacked the trays that were part of the kitchen trolley, made by Fr Chris for morning teas, so these had to be replaced. Fr Chris also added the ART (Adveniat Regnum Tuum) to the lecterns in the main church and side chapel (this is the motto of the Assumptionist Order: Thy Kingdom Come).

Fr Chris Penders died in March 2014 – see the tribute in the church entrance way.



The original tabernacle (the one in the side chapel) was made by Frank Knipping.

When major church renovations were carried out several years ago (extending the foyer and side chapel area, lowering the ceiling and adding earthquake strengthening) Frank refitted the tabernacle into its current location, discovering a note written by his wife, Dorothy, tucked into the satin lining that she had fitted so many years earlier.

Frank also made the lectern used by the prayer leader. His artistic skills were used after the renovations when he cleaned, then varnished the stations of the cross, the main crucifix and the statues of Mary and Joseph.





Frank died in December 2015. The house he and wife Dorothy (died June 2017) lived in at 1 Nathan Street is still called 'Dofra' and it is still a Christian family home.

The tabernacle now fitted into the main body of the church was donated to us by the parish of Paraparaumu and was set into the wall next to the statue of Our Lady by Paddy Doyle, after the internal linings were changed and the doors were repainted by Kevin and Eileen Mackey.

Ray de Veld was also a significant woodworker for the parish, making the tall candle holders and the holder for the original paschal candle, the wooden frame for the baptismal font, the wooden cross standard and base and the flagpole in the wall near the chapel.

As well as these new items, Ray has also done much repair work, including the small wooden crosses with the Stations of the Cross, several pews, banner poles and a lot of work for Fr John Heijnen AA when he was at Sacred Heart/Te Ngakau Tapu church. Ray is still an active member of our parish.

There are many more who have contributed in various ways to our church. Let us thank them all. This is just a small attempt to let new parishioners know part of our parish history.

**Acknowledgement and thanks to Fr John van der Kaa and Ray de Veld who provided the information for this article.**

\* *'One in Mind and Heart' Our Lady of Fatima Parish 1951-2006*, by Fr John van der Kaa. Copies are available for purchase from the parish office, or a loan copy in the parish library at Our Lady of Fatima church.

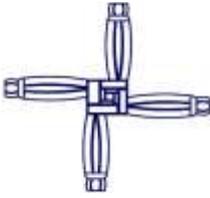
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David and Dorothy Belz wish to thank all parishioners and very many others who provided help and support to their family following the untimely death of their daughter Christine Belz-Ietri. In particular we wish to thank those who contributed monetary donations at her funeral. Consequently, the sum of \$265 has been sent to the **Mental Health Foundation**.

Please accept this as a personal acknowledgement.

*See Obituary Notice on page 29*

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



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

**Term 1: Over the school holidays the main block in our school had an upgrade.**

Our main corridor is now, not only carpeted, but has also been painted. Some of our classrooms have also been painted and had new autex wall coverings. These changes are providing our learners with a more comfortable learning environment. Our playground area outside the school office has now been re-asphalted removing the uneven surface. As a result of these changes, we had a wonderful start to the new school year.



At the beginning of the school year we **welcomed 10 new students** to our school. These students were formally welcomed during our first school assembly where they wore a school korowai as a symbol of their belonging to the St Francis Xavier School community.

Learning opportunities for Term 1 range from a focus on ourselves and our families, Keeping Ourselves Safe, Digital Citizenship, Project Energise, Our Cultures, to gymnastics.

Our classes regularly visit the local library and Pohutukawa class had a wonderful on the spot learning experience recently as on their visit a beautiful llama and alpaca came to visit while they were there! It was a great surprise for the class.

This year the overarching theme for learning is 'discover' and we are looking forward to the new learning areas that include discovering.

As part of our **Arts** programme Our Kapa Haka tutors come into the school each Monday. Children enjoy learning new waiata and dance.

Children enjoy taking part in a range of **music activities** which include: the ukulele group, which meets every Friday lunch-hour and private guitar lessons that take place on Tuesday.

Our Religious Education focus for the term will include Lent and Easter.

For **Shrove Tuesday** we all enjoyed a fun afternoon with pancake making and having fun races tossing pancakes.

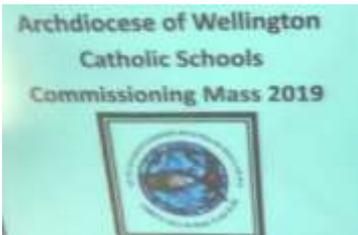
On **Ash Wednesday** the whole school attended Mass to celebrate Ash Wednesday.

During the Mass everyone present had the sign of the cross with ashes made on their forehead as a reminder to follow Jesus more closely.

The school staff joined other staff from Catholic schools around the

Wellington region at St Peter and Paul's church in Lower Hutt for the annual **Commissioning Mass**.

Cardinal John Dew and fellow priests, including Father Rico and Father Marlon helped to celebrate the Mass.



On the sporting front, we hosted a **Sports Day** for Year 1 and 2 Tawa students and our Year 5 and 6 students led the children in a range of fun sports activities.

At present we are taking part in **Movin' March** where the children are encouraged to walk or wheel to school.

Recently we welcomed our **Mandarin Language Assistant** for 2019.

Each week every class will have a Mandarin lesson where the children will have the opportunity to learn Mandarin and about Chinese culture.

Our **Board of Trustees** met in February for their first meeting of the year where our Chairperson was re-elected for the year. Board of Trustees general elections will be held mid-year.

Our **Parents and Friends** committee continue to raise funds for the school. The goal for the group this year is to raise the remaining funds required to replace the aging playground we currently have. 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 and the work they do for our school.



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



### 'WHANAU-ATUA-KURA-AROH A Together we Shine'



Kia ora, nga whanau. We have started the year on a positive note with new enrolments bringing our roll up to 84. We welcome more enrolments so email [office@saintpius.school.nz](mailto:office@saintpius.school.nz) if you know of anyone in our area who needs to enrol a child at school.

Welcome to new staff members: Mrs Dee Tingle (Whaea Dee), Mrs Nenah Kelemete, Helen Hawkins, and Fiona Canvin, teacher aide. Along with existing staff, I am fortunate to have such a great team at St Pius X School.

**Beginning of Year School Mass:** This was celebrated by Father Marlon on 14 February. Our theme was *"to love one another as Christ has loved us"*.

**Shrove Tuesday:** On 4 March the whole school was involved in making and eating pancakes. Teachers taught their students about Shrove Tuesday and why people eat their leftovers before Lent. We ran a series of pancake races which were a lot of fun! That same evening our staff attended the Commissioning Mass with other schools and priests in Lower Hutt at St Peter's and Paul's Church.

**Ash Wednesday:** Our school, with the Parish community, celebrated Ash Wednesday Mass and received the ashes. It was so good to see so many parishioners at the Mass praying and singing with our students.

**Michael Mangan Concert:** Recently we welcomed Michael Mangan, an Australian Catholic singer and songwriter, to our school. He performed a range of his own religious songs. The children thoroughly enjoyed singing along with his songs and adding in actions. We hope to learn more of his songs from his latest CD.

**Young Vinnies:** Amanda Joe has a new group of Vinnies this year. Amanda enables our students to show aroha in the community through visiting Kemp Home, helping at the St Vincent de Paul Shop, growing and sharing vegetables and many other things. Thanks Amanda for all your help.



**What lies beneath! Fitness, Health and Well-being:** This is our overall theme for the year. Patrick, from Project Energize (sponsored by the Heart Foundation) visited our school, teaching a range of lessons based on exercise and healthy food and drinks. The teachers have been reinforcing these messages through classroom activities. Also, Byron has run softball skills for each class over the past few weeks.

Juniors have had swimming lessons and we had 4 teams in the girls' futsal event at the Arena. We are very grateful to all the teachers and parent helpers, especially when our students participate in events away from school – thank you!

We joined in **Movin' March** and the students are keen to participate in many activities and get their passports stamped.

**Maths and Writing:** For 2019, our teaching and learning focus in this area is for specific priority learners. For this, teachers and teacher aides have received professional learning and development as well as hands-on practical help.

**Board of Trustees – Election Year:** There will be the triennial election later this year. Please encourage potential new trustees to chat with the Principal or recently elected Board chair, Joel de Boer. I acknowledge and thank our previous Chairperson, Rebecca Fayen for her leadership, dedication and involvement in our school community.

**Camp and Fundraising:** 24 of our year 5 and 6 students are going to camp this term. Students, their families and the school community, have been working hard to fundraise for this camp. I am very grateful for the generous donations received from our Parish community as well as community grants, and would like to thank the Knights of the Southern Cross for their grant for our camp.

**Visit from Kris Fa'aoi:** We were very fortunate to have a visit on 15 March from Kris Fa'aoi, our Member of Parliament, and his personal assistant, Geoff Heyward. He answered a range of interesting and sometimes challenging questions from our students. Kris is a very positive role model in our community. We are very grateful to Kris for visiting us and learning more about his life as an MP.



**Community Consultation:** Meet the Teachers evening - it was good to meet parents and whanau. Parent-Teacher-Child Conferences and a parent consultation hui were held. This will be followed up soon with a questionnaire.

## Obituary - Georgina Boyle

7 August 1922 to 9 December 2018

Compiled from the eulogies at Georgina's funeral and her own biographical notes.

*"Georgina Boyle, you will be remembered as a Tawa Treasure, beloved Mother, Grandmother, Mother-in-law".*

Georgina was the third daughter of her parents and the only one who survived infancy. Her parents came to New Zealand from the UK.

Georgina was born with musical talent. During school years she won several singing and piano competitions. After her time at St Mary's College in Wellington, she went to teacher training college during WW2 and spent her holidays helping at Wellington Hospital. She then taught at Titahi Bay School and Tawa School, with classes of 50 or 60 plus children.



*"Georgie was a trail blazer in her own way: she was dux at school, got a loan to buy her house in Sussex Street (no small task for a single woman at that time) and helped Frank build their house in Rewa Terrace. She raised a family of three strong men who became productive citizens, loving husbands and great fathers."*



She met her husband, Frank, when dancing to the song 'Some Enchanted Evening' – she knew immediately she saw him *"He's going to be the father of my children"*. Married soon after, they found a section in Tawa and began to build the house they lived in for the rest of their lives.

There was no Catholic school in Tawa at that time so Georgie gave her time helping teach catechism to the children of the parish and also joined a Bible study group with other young mothers. Georgie was a gifted reader and, once English became used in the mass and lay readers were introduced, she read in church, and also organised the readers' roster and helped train new readers.

By this time, Fr Chris Penders was running the parish choir. Georgie joined the choir and was a member for many years. All these activities went on hold once Frank became ill and Georgie devoted her time to caring for him. Later, Georgie again began reading at weekday masses and this continued for many more years.

All the while, her boys were growing up and got married and Georgie was much loved by her daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

*“As we live in Tokyo, we couldn’t see Mum as often as we wanted but came here every year in August when the children were in the school holidays. She welcomed us to her house with open arms and we had 2- 3 weeks of good times together, and celebrated her birthday.... After Dad died, we brought her to Tokyo during cherry blossom season. She also went to my children’s primary school to do a presentation on NZ and read English stories to the children. I was teaching English at a kindergarten and she helped with several classes as well. Of course, she was a good children’s teacher, she did such a wonderful job. All the Japanese children loved her!*

*Some of my friends complain about their mother-in-law and I understand that this is the worldwide problem. But I am very lucky that I had a good relationship with my mother-in-law as Mum was such a lovely person and always treat me nicely.”*

*“Georgie, I am going to miss you... your kind words and encouragement. You never, ever, criticize ... rest in peace Georgie, you earned it!”*

**And all of us in Tawa agree.**

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## **Obituary - Christine Belz-Ietri**    7 May 1963 to 17 February 2019

*Compiled from the eulogies at Christine’s funeral.*

Christine Ietri was the oldest daughter of long-time Tawa parishioners, David and Dorothy Belz.

Christine was born at Papakura Nursing Home on the birthday of her recently-deceased maternal grandmother and was baptised in St Anne’s, Manurewa. The family moved to Whanganui, then in 1970 to Tawa.



Christine and Fred in 2000

Christine, and her younger siblings

Anthony, Margaret and Andrew, all attended St. Francis Xavier school. They received their first Communion and were confirmed in Our Lady of Fatima church.

Despite leaving Auckland, Christine maintained a special relationship with her paternal grandmother in Auckland, up until her grandma’s death in 2002.

During her time at Bishop Viard College, Christine developed health problems, suffering from asthma, then was later diagnosed with bi-polar disorder.

Having done well academically, when she left school Christine started work in office administration, but her health problems, which sometimes needed hospitalisation, meant that she could not maintain that position.

Christine went to live in Mt Cook and eventually found her spiritual home in the Lifepoint Church community, where Kirsty and Jo and their congregation gave enduring friendship, support and assistance to Christine throughout the remainder of her life



Back: Dorothy, Margaret, Dave  
Front: Fred, Andrew

It was at Lifepoint that she met Fred Ietri in 1999. Christine and Fred were married at the Belz family home in Linden on 3 March 2001. They brought much happiness into each of their lives, sharing many common interests. The whole family are grateful for the twelve years of happiness that Fred brought into Christine's life, before he was diagnosed with a serious illness and died in 2013.

His ashes were placed in the casket with Christine, so they were both buried together and prayers at the funeral service were offered for both Christine and Fred. Christine's grief at losing Fred may have contributed to her deteriorating health and she died peacefully at home in her armchair on 17 February.

In his eulogy, Christine's youngest brother Andrew spoke of the way Christine always had time for him when he was young, reading him stories and giving him books that became firm favourites. She was able to help him when he later suffered mental health problems, as she had *"been there before him"*. He added that support from Church communities played a very important role in Christine's life – too many people to individually name and thank. In Andrew's opinion, Christine had one of the strongest faiths of anyone he knew. *"I would almost say it was indomitable to the point of stubbornness."*

Christine's father David's closing remarks in his eulogy were: *"There is so much more I could say about Christine: her love of gardening, her love of reading, her always smiling face in her photos, her friendships and her deep spirituality. We shall miss her terribly, especially the frequent phone calls."*

*Rest in peace my daughter, my Christine. I am confident that you now lie in the arms of Jesus with your beloved Fred."*

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## Obituary - Paul Mears

25 August 1939 to 26 February 2019

Paul Joseph Mears was born in August 1939 and six months later his father died, leaving his mother to bring up the family. He spent some years as a boarder at St Patrick's College in Wellington and went on to test a vocation with the Marist Brothers. A few years later he left and joined the NZ Police Force. Family life was very important to Paul - Gabrielle, their 3 daughters, 1 son and 8 grandchildren were always a significant part of his life.



Paul contributed greatly to community life also. He was a member, and for a time President, of Lions, Rotary, Probus, and various Police organisations. The family lived in Johnsonville, Newlands, and, for the last 20 years, in Tawa. Paul was a reader and prayer leader at Our Lady of Fatima church for most of those years.

There was a feature in *Tawa Catholic News* Dec. 2009 when Paul received a prestigious Rotary award. Follow the link below to read the article on pages 12-14.

[http://ourladyofhope.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/TCN\\_dec\\_2009.pdf](http://ourladyofhope.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/TCN_dec_2009.pdf)

### **Following is the tribute from the Police Newsletter, Ten One, as submitted to us by Paul's family.**

Paul had a distinguished career with Police, joining as a 19-year-old cadet in 1948, retiring 40 years later with rank of Superintendent. He started out working at Newtown and Taranaki Street Police Stations and was promoted to Sergeant in the Wellington Prosecutions Office. He obtained a law degree and was admitted as a barrister and solicitor.

In the mid-1980's he became a Chief Inspector in the legal section in National Headquarters and later became responsible for the management and coordination of the NZ Police training programme in the Pacific region.

Other highlights include: being a UN peacekeeper in Cyprus (for which he received one of the first new operational medals – the NZOM); representing Police at many conferences in the Northern Hemisphere and Pacific Island countries; developing prosecution training and improving standards of Police prosecutions, managing the implementation of the Police Complaints Authority Act, and researching, drafting and presenting to Royal Commissions and parliamentary committees.

Following his retirement, Paul was actively involved in coordinating open days for

the public at the Police College, including the significant 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RNZPC.

A keen sportsman and administrator, he won representative rugby league honours with Wellington, the North Island and Police. After his playing days, he managed the NZ Police league team on their four-week tour of England in 1998.

Interestingly, Paul played in the first rugby league game to be televised. He scored a try that day but was concussed during the match.

Paul was actively involved with the Newlands Lions for 10 years, and then the Tawa Rotary club, where he held a range of roles on their Board. In 2009, on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, Governor-General, Sir Anand Satyanand, and Lady Susan Satyanand presented Paul with the prestigious Rotary Paul Harris fellowship award in recognition of his many contributions in community service. During his time with Rotary, he also coordinated a project with Police that sent 15,000 books to Bougainville.

Paul's son Brendan is a former Wellington Detective Sergeant, his son-in-law is Wellington-based Sergeant John Lewis and his grandson is Wellington PST Constable Sam Lewis.

Acknowledgements of Paul included the following comments:

*"Paul was a wonderful person to have as a boss, a work colleague and as a friend. I learned a lot from Paul that I used later in my career and life."*

*"One of my first Senior Sergeants when I began work in Wellington. I consider myself to have been very lucky to have had Paul as a mentor in those early days. A very caring, quiet and unassuming man who had great mana."*

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Paul Mears (left) with his grandson, Sam Lewis (middle) and son-in-law John Lewis after Sam's graduation in September 2018

## Parish Notices - Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths

### Baptisms

Name of child	Parents	Date
Pippen Angela Marie McFarlane	Leah Doesburg & Michael McFarlane	24 November 2018
Juan Constantine R Bernal	Ferriza & Vann Bernal	29 December 2018
Declan Simon Caulfield McCarthy	Tandi McCarthy & Simon Strombom	10 February 2019



### Marriages

Imeleta Victoria Alosio Logotulu to Motusia Savaiki Kirifi 23 November 2018  
at Our Lady of Fatima Church

### Deaths

Elizabeth Carmel Cheshire	22 November 2018
Georgina Boyle	9 December 2018
Eileen Helen Houston	23 December 2018
Christine Mary Belz-Ietri	18 February 2018
Paul Joseph Mears	26 February 2019
Margaret Josephine Gallen	4 March 2019

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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 . 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, Rupi Mapusua and Andrew Oliver

## 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 Tuesday eve. 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)

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**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  
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17 Kenepuru Drive, Porirua ph.: 04 237 4174 fax: 04 237 4172  
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**Thank you to Ninness Funeral Home**

Ever since *Tawa Catholic News* became *Stories of Hope* (to reflect our new enlarged parish) in 2015, Ninness have generously covered all the printing costs. Our Lady of Hope Parish greatly appreciates this support that enables us to produce three editions per year and to have the cover in colour.

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[www.ninness.co.nz](http://www.ninness.co.nz).

Go to [‘Reflections on Grief’/‘Community Traditions’/‘Catholic community’](#).

**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. Phone to book.

**Whenua Tapu Shuttle - dates for the coming months**

Wednesday – 29 March

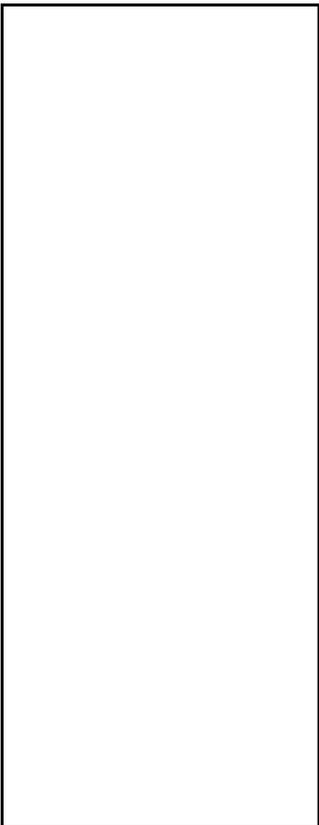
Wednesday – 26 April

Wednesday – 31 May

Wednesday - 26 June

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