



# Stories of HOPE

March 2024

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



*Youth Mass - First Sunday of every  
month at Our Lady of Fatima Church*

*See Story Inside*

## Notice to contributors

We always like to hear about your group or parish organization. We generally prefer content relating to specific events and persons - as a guideline, 500 words, with no pictures, will fill one page of this magazine. Short news articles, anecdotes, reflections, poems, family events and page fillers are also welcome.

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

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

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Deadline for next edition: 5 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.

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## Stories of Hope - Mission Statement

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

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

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

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## From the Editor

by Jane Langham



We hear so much bad news from locally and all around the world! It's easy to 'switch off' and live in our own little bubble, caring for our own family and immediate community. That is important, but we cannot ignore the rest of humanity.

Whilst acknowledging that we are "not the Saviour", we can always hand over our small 'fish' for the Lord to multiply in ways we could not imagine. This edition there is much to challenge us in how we do this. Ian's reflection is about the future of our fragile world. [\(p.6\)](#) Congratulations are due to

Ian as he has been invited to join the Integral Ecology Committee of the Archdiocesan Commission for Ecology, Justice and Peace. Fr Paul's insightful reflection on *Fiducia Supplicans* may also be a challenge for some in its reminder for 'pastoral sensitivity' within biblical teaching [\(p.16\)](#)

Closer to home, it's that time of year for Annual Reports.

Please take time to read the parish annual financial report [\(p.23\)](#) and the information about our parish insurance [\(p.26\)](#).

There are important decisions to be made about what we can afford, what may need to go, and questions for you about how we might increase parish income so that the parish can continue to operate well and be a witness to the whole community. Your ideas and involvement are needed!

Most important of all, we always remember that after Good Friday comes Resurrection Sunday. Different cultures mark this season of Lent and Easter in many different ways. We have stories from three families sharing family holiday experiences and the different traditions they experienced in the UK, Italy and the Philippines. [\(p.12\)](#)

A very special event in February was the taking of first promises by Teresa Rayner. You may remember that she shared her vocation journey with us a year ago. She has now completed the first stage. Photos and story on [p.11](#)



## Holy Week Timetable 2024

Monday 25 March      9:00 am      Mass, Tawa  
Tuesday 26 March      9:00 am      Mass, Tawa  
Wednesday 27 March      9:00 am      Mass, Tawa

9.30am-9pm      Adoration, Tawa

Holy Thursday 28 March      NO MORNING MASSES

7:30 pm      **Mass of the Lord's Supper,**

Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa followed by Adoration till 11pm

Good Friday 29 March      9:30 am      Procession of all the churches of Tawa  
begins at the Baptist Church, Main Road.

**Concludes with a Liturgy at 10 am at St Christopher's Anglican Church**  
(finishes about 11 am). Followed by drinks and hot cross buns.

11:30 am      Stations of the Cross, Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa

3:00 pm      **Liturgy of the Lord's Passion, OLoF, Tawa**

3:00 pm      Stations of the Cross, St Pius X, Titahi Bay

### Easter Masses

Holy Saturday 30 March      8:00 pm      Easter Vigil, St Pius X, Titahi Bay

Easter Sunday 31 March      6:30 am      Sunrise - Ecumenical Gathering at  
Tawa Lookout, Kilkelly Close

8:30 am      Easter Mass, Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa

10:30 am      Easter Mass, Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa



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## Becoming our own Worst Enemy *by Ian Munro*



Early last year I was honoured to be invited to join the Integral Ecology Committee of the Archdiocesan Commission for Ecology, Justice and Peace.



As a result, I've found myself more focused than ever on the climate crisis facing our planet, our common home.

The more I've read, the more I've become aware that the balance inherent in Earth's complex systems is becoming increasingly shaky and any natural rebalancing of Earth's systems is unlikely to be advantageous to human life as we know it. The systems have already lost a certain amount of the stability that's existed since the last ice age - this stable period that gave rise to civilisation as we know it. In the past, collapses of Earth's systems have led to five mass extinctions that we are aware of. Are we headed for a sixth mass extinction? One that includes us?

Three years ago I wrote a piece for Stories of Hope ([\*The Cry of the Earth, Nov '21\*](#)) centred around Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical letter, [\*Laudato si'\*](#), and the views of other religious leaders. In October last year, Francis felt compelled to follow up with an apostolic exhortation, [\*Laudate Deum\*](#), as a result of the inadequate response to the climate crisis since 2015.

*Laudate Deum* is a very readable, comprehensive summary of where we're at, what's coming our way if we don't adequately respond and what that response might look like. Since it is so readable, I won't spend much time on the detail of the content, however I will mention his strongly held view that:

*whatever the effects of climate change, they will be felt first and most dramatically by the most vulnerable people, both here and around the world.*

*It is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons. We will feel its effects in the areas of healthcare, sources of employment, access to resources, housing, forced migrations, etc. [LD2]*



**It concerns me that one of the cruellest outcomes will be that those who've done the least to cause climate change are likely to be the first and worst hit. The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are inextricably linked.**

Not of interest to economic powers

While not every individual climate-related disaster can be attributed to climate change, and this fact is used by many to deny the reality of what's happening, there is solid evidence that we are experiencing a warming that won't take thousands of years to imperceptibly occur, like previous climate variations. It's happening before our very eyes.

**Yet, as Francis points out, this isn't a matter that interests the great economic powers whose concern is with the greatest profit possible at minimal cost and in the shortest amount of time. [LD 13]**

I also find it worrying that, as global conflicts escalate almost on a monthly basis, world leaders, including our own, are becoming more and more preoccupied with **throwing missiles at each other's countries rather than throwing everything possible to avoid an increasingly inevitable climate breakdown.** So not only is it in **the interests of fossil fuel producers to limit climate action, it's also in the interests of the armament industry to have war as a prime focus for budget expenditure.**

Leadership

UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, holds the view that, as we move from global warming into what he calls the "era of global boiling", we can still "avoid the very worst of climate change. But only with dramatic, immediate climate action. "... Leaders must lead. No more hesitancy, no more excuses, no more waiting for others to move first. There is simply no more time for that".<sup>2</sup>

These comments echo those Pope Francis made in 2015 about the lack of **leadership being a significant problem.**<sup>3</sup> In his address to last December's COP 28 he reminded the leaders present that **it's their responsibility to craft appropriate concrete and cohesive responses that reflect the nobility and the dignity of their role as leaders.**

*In the end the purpose of power is to serve. It is useless to cling to an authority that will one day be remembered for its inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so.*<sup>4</sup>

**Recent actions by the leadership of our new government aren't all that encouraging in this respect. There have been a number of actions taken in their first 100 days that could be said to be less than climate-friendly, so let's pray that the government has some more radical, climate-friendly policies up its sleeve. However, the**

placement of the environment and climate ministers outside of cabinet, and therefore outside the key decision-making process, doesn't give me great confidence that this is the case. Time will tell how that will play out. Unfortunately, I don't think time is on our side.

*Nonetheless, every little bit helps, and avoiding an increase of a tenth of a degree in the global temperature would already suffice to alleviate some suffering for many people. Yet what is important is something less quantitative: the need to realize that there are no lasting changes without cultural changes, without a maturing of lifestyles and convictions within societies, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes.* [LD70]

People power

Therefore, if change is to occur, it's people power that will make it happen.

*The demands that rise up from below throughout the world, where activists from very different countries help and support one another, can end up pressuring the sources of power. It is to be hoped that this will happen with respect to the climate crisis. For this reason, I reiterate that "unless citizens control political power – national, regional and municipal – it will not be possible to control damage to the environment."* [LD38]

So here's something to ponder: there are 1.375 billion members of the Roman Catholic church<sup>5</sup> and 2.6 billion people in total identifying as Christian.<sup>6</sup> That's an awful lot of people power that could be mobilised; people of faith who, more than anyone else, should be working tirelessly to protect God's creation.

What's stopping this happening? While there's the obvious economic interest factor and the lack of effective leadership factor, I would hold that there's another significant factor also at play that is little talked about – the interests of the 'comfortable classes'. Why change when life is okay? Why make sacrifices beyond a bit of recycling and reusable shopping bags when personally I feel no need to? That, I'd argue, is where people power has currently stalled.

So, could homo sapiens become the first species to wilfully manage its own extinction? Possibly, if we don't bear in mind Pope Francis's comment after the release of *Laudato si'*. While God always forgives, he said, and we sometimes forgive, nature never forgives. If you give her a slap, she'll give you one right back.<sup>7</sup> In his COP 28 address, he said that the





climate is **calling out for us to halt our obsessive drive to produce and possess that's** led to our unbridled exploitation of the environment and the illusion of omnipotence that we have. We need to recognise our limits with humility and courage because, as we're warned in the final words of *Laudate Deum*,

***“when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies”.***

References:

1. Pope Francis, *Laudate Deum*, 4 October 2023;
2. Antonio Guterres, UN Press Conference, 27 July 2023;
3. **Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, 24 May 2015, 53;**
4. Pope Francis, Address to COP 28, Dubai, 2 December 2023;
5. Vatican News, 20 October 2023;
6. Status of Global Christianity 2024, Center for the Study of Global Christianity, [gordonconwell.edu](http://gordonconwell.edu)
7. Pope Francis, Press conference on flight from Sri Lanka to the Philippines, 15 January 2015



*Prayer inspired by Psalm 51(50)*

*Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

*Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;*

*in the greatness of your compassion*

*wipe out my offenses against the gift of your Creation.*

*Thoroughly wash me from my guilt*

*and cleanse me of my ecological sins.*

*For I acknowledge my offense against you, Creator God,*

*my ecological sins stand now before me:*

*In my broken relationship with your Earth and my fellow creatures,*

*against You and your divine will have I sinned.*

*Create a clean heart in me, O God, through your Creator Spirit,*

*and renew my Christian vocation to care for your Creation.*

*Help me hear and see your message of love in Creation,*

*and sustain in me a willing spirit of ecological conversion.*

*By the grace of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ,*

*Redeemer of the whole cosmos,*

*Amen.*

Prayer from Wellington Archdiocesan Lent Resources

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## 'Cardinal Tom'

by The Editor

You will very likely have heard about the death last December of Cardinal Thomas Williams, Archbishop Emeritus of Wellington. What you may not have heard about **was his continuing keen interest in all the parishes of 'his flock'.**

Cardinal Tom retired as Archbishop almost 20 years ago and went to live in a retirement village in Waikanae. He followed news from all the parishes, including receiving and reading copies of our own *Tawa Catholic News*, which became *Stories of Hope* after our new parish was formed by amalgamation with Titahi Bay.

Not only did he read our magazine, he occasionally wrote to the parish to express his appreciation, his last letter arriving after he read the November 2023 edition. **Here are a few extracts from the last 6 years:** *"Stories of Hope is far and away the best of many parish quarterlies"; "If there was a competition for the best parish publication, Stories of Hope would win the gold medal"; "It consistently reflects a 'get-up-and-go' community of faith"; "so many inspirational articles"; "May God continue to bless those who edit and contribute to Stories of Hope".*

When I read each of the letters that arrived, I always felt greatly encouraged - a reminder to all of us to always show appreciation to others and acknowledge their efforts. This is why I also wanted to share these letters with all of the parish, because they all reflect the faith and commitment, as shown in the contributions made by *you*, the parish family, that make our magazine what it is, an inspirational part of our parish.

I hope this will also encourage many more of you to send in your own stories: special family celebrations; group reports; coming events; personal faith journey or insights; poems, artwork or appropriate jokes/page fillers.

Whether you have been in the parish for 50 years or 50 days, you are part of our faith family and it is only the ongoing contributions of our parishioners that makes *Stories of Hope* possible.

Rest in Peace Cardinal Tom, and thank you!

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## First Promises

*by the Rayner Family*

We were delighted to join Teresa on Sunday 18th February when she made her promises to mark the beginning of her novitiate with the *Missionaries of Gods Love Sisters*. This is following her pre-novitiate year.



She was joined by Sister Stephanie, who made her initial vows after three years. Six more to go before her final vows!

Most of the sisters from Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney and many of the MGL priests and brothers and lay members of the Disciples of Jesus community joined for the celebration in Canberra.

If you wish to watch the ceremony:

<https://youtube.com/live/qFYrJjUsd8g?si=Or8-3fa44zcaimGI>

Or to follow the activities of the Sisters on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/MgISisters?mibextid=rS40aB7S9Ucbxw6v>



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## Easter Around the World

*by Genevra Veitch, Monique Lopez & Mary Rayner*

The key articles of our faith are found in the Creed and more details are in the Gospels and church teaching. However, various traditions and ways of marking and celebrating significant events in the liturgical calendar are based around the culture and climate of the different regions of the world. These can be very different in each country without changing the truth at the heart of them.

As we now approach the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, let us enjoy the experience of three of our parish families who spent Easter 2023 in different parts of the world. We can compare them to what we do here in New Zealand and what you may know from your own country of origin. New insights and understanding can be gained from looking at an event through different eyes.

### Easter in the UK - Veitch Family

Easter in the UK is in Spring. We last visited at Easter time 2023. There are lambs being born, spring bulbs tentatively coming up from cold ground and moving to a change in season is whole-heartedly welcomed. It makes sense to celebrate Easter in Spring there. When I was a child, my mother encouraged us to wear yellow or green, as colours of Spring/New Life marking Easter. This makes more sense to me **now ... for those who live in England. Yet my husband's UK family didn't wear yellow or green clothes at Easter in their upbringing.**

**When we visit my husband, Angus's, family in the UK, I attend services at the Cathedral in Lichfield, Staffordshire** which follows an Anglican doctrine. It is a very old and beautiful building. Some parts of it are over 800 years old.

**Angus's family have a long association with the Cathedral; Angus was a boy chorister at the school for 4 years.** My father-in-law was a Cathedral Steward for a number of years and is buried in The Close, the grounds of the Cathedral. My



mother-in-law lives about 150m from the Cathedral. Unusually, it has three spires, it is in the skyline of every trip into town and prominent visually from afar when driving around the county.

Mostly, I attend services by myself. I have taken both my children James and Lauren, to **the cathedral but it's difficult to lure them away from very special family time they're having with their British family.**

James was baptised in the Cathedral, with two pairs of Catholic Godparents attending. It was a wonderful day, supported by family and friends from various Christian denominations.

**Although I am Catholic, I enjoy attending a Cathedral service when I'm there.** I never met my-father-in law - **I've made my attending into a small connection to him.** I love the building, know it has a richness of history, and know that people have been coming to share Mass for hundreds of years. I love when the Cathedral Choir is singing and imagine my husband as a boy doing the same. I feel very welcomed in the Cathedral and know that I am able to take communion when attending services. (I wish this to be in our church.)

The church uses old English church music in many services including psalms and hymns set to music and other pieces specifically written for communion, e.g. Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. By comparison, when my husband has joined us at church in New Zealand, he finds the music modern and unfamiliar. Due to the size, grandness and age of the Cathedral, it appears very solemn and invokes for me quiet, calm reflection.

### A visit to the Philippines - Lopez Family

**At Easter last year we witnessed 'Salubong'.** This is a re-enactment of the meeting between the Risen Jesus and His mourning Mother Mary. *Salubong* roughly **translates as 'a welcome' or 'an encounter'.** It is one of the unique Catholic Easter traditions in the Philippines. It was originally introduced by Spanish Franciscan missionaries as a way of teaching and enculturating the faith and encouraging the local people to attend the Easter ceremonies.

Before dawn on Easter Sunday, the women gather from one direction with a statue of the Blessed Mother wearing a black veil (or a statue of the *Mater Dolorosa*) on a '*carroza*' (a cart or a huge float). **At the same time, from the opposite direction, the men gather with another '*carroza*' with a statue of the Resurrected Jesus.**

The two *Salubong* processions then converge in front of the church at an outdoor stage with a large arch. Here, a child dressed like an angel is suspended by a harness from the arch.

The child is lowered and **removes Mary's black veil of mourning.** Other '*angels*' then



shower the two statues with flower petals, as the choir leads the exultation of the faithful in singing the Alleluia, the Regina Coeli, etc. accompanied by fireworks. Afterwards, everyone processes into the church for an Easter dawn Mass.

Growing up, *Salubong* taught me that the first thing Jesus did after His Resurrection was to meet His Mother. But should we believe it, even if it is not mentioned in the Scriptures? St. John Paul II once said: *"Indeed, it is legitimate to think that the Blessed Mother was probably the first person to whom the Risen Jesus appeared. Could not Mary's absence from the group of women who went to the tomb at dawn (Mk 16:1; Mt 28:1) indicate that she had already met Jesus? This inference would also be confirmed by the fact that the first witnesses of the Resurrection, by Jesus' will, were the women who had remained faithful at the foot of the Cross and therefore were more steadfast in faith."* (General Audience 21 May 1997)

*Salubong* is a pious devotional tradition that is neither affirmed nor condemned by the Church. It may not be Biblical but it is also not anti-Biblical. It may not be a dogma, but a devotional tradition like this, which has nothing contradictory to Church teachings, is promoted by the Catholic Churches especially in the Philippines, for the good of the faithful.

#### The Rayner Family Trip to Italy

During March and April 2023, our family had the privilege of being on holiday in Italy where we experienced the celebration of Easter. We got to visit and attend a lot of lovely churches in Italy.

#### **We celebrated Palm Sunday (Domenica delle Palme) in Sant'Agnello near Sorrento.**

We followed a crowd who were carrying olive branches to Terazza Marinella, a local square. In Italy, and particularly around Naples and Salerno, where we were, they have a tradition of decorating olive branches with ribbons and hanging candies and little cheeses from them. The cheeses are called, *caciocavallo*.



The priest blessed the branches, and we processed to the Franciscan church, Chiesa di San Francesco dei Frati Cappuccini. Later they give away the blessed branches as gifts to friends or family. We were able to follow the long Passion reading in the parish newsletter, and on our phones in English, which was also useful for following the whole mass.



We were in Lucca, Tuscany, for Holy Thursday, (Giovedì Santo cena del Signore). Anna and I went to the evening mass at Parrocchia S. Bartolomeo Apostolo, which was followed by Adoration (Reposizione del Santissimo Sacramento)



The photo shows an altar decorated with 'i sepolcri di grano', (the wheat sepulchres) an Easter tradition still alive in some Italian regions. Wheat seeds are put on wet cotton balls and kept in the dark from Ash Wednesday or the first Friday of Lent - **the dark represents Jesus' death.** While in the dark, the wheat seeds germinate, representing new life, the

Resurrection. They prepare and offer *i Sepolcri di grano* in the church on Holy Thursday. The wheat is later used to make altar breads.

On Good Friday (Venerdì Santo) we went to the same church. When it came to venerating the cross, the priest walked from the back of the church and paused three times, pointing to the large cross above the altar. He was singing (my rough translation) "Look at the cross; on which hung the Saviour of the world", (awakening memories for me of Fr. Chris Penders). The congregation replied "Come let us worship". Then we all processed up and bowed to the cross or some knelt and prayed, and we returned to our seats.

On Easter Saturday evening, we heard the church bells ringing at around 11:15pm and again about 12:30am to welcome the 'Resurrection of Jesus'.

On Easter Sunday (Domenica di Pasqua) we walked into the medieval walled city of Lucca, (as there was no public transport due to the feast day), to attend the **celebration of Jesus' Resurrection. We attended a 10 am mass at Chiesa Santa Maria Corteorlandini** (rebuilt in 1188!). There were a lot of older people, a dog and no younger families. However, it turned out quite a few young families went to the Cattedrale di San Martino.

At the beginning of mass, people brought in Easter baskets and placed them on the altar rail to be blessed. They were left there during mass, I assume to be taken away to their families. The priest looked to be a very robust 80 year old (Italians live longer?) and gave a stirring sermon which we did not understand much of.

After mass we had a lovely traditional Italian dinner including lasagna, cheese and spaghetti, tagliatelle with boar sauce, and tortellini at *Trattoria Da Nonna Clara*, at the Piazza Santa Maria Forisportam. This was our very blessed Easter of 2023.

May you all enjoy the celebrations with your families and remember what the season is all about.

## A Seeking Faith – *Fiducia Supplicans*

by Fr Paul O'Connor AA

As a priest I have often listened to disappointed and frustrated Catholic parents and grand-parents. They are saddened because their children and grand-children seem indifferent to what we hold precious – our Catholic faith and worship. Recently I came across a document that can, indirectly, help us as parents, grand-parents and priests as we struggle with this tension.

In December 2023 the Vatican Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith published a declaration, [\*Fiducia Supplicans\*](#), permitting the blessing of persons in irregular or same-sex relationships. Why did this happen and what does the document say?



Image: Magnet UK - used with permission

Pope Francis urges us to meet people just as they are, wherever they are. Whatever their life-  
**styles may be, they are God's** children, redeemed by Christ and sustained by the presence of the Holy Spirit in hearts.

Often, they will not be aware of this. Each of us, St Paul reminds us, is a treasure in an earthen vessel (2 Cor 4:7). Negative perceptions of our church and a limited or distorted understanding of what we believe mean that, before we explain and evangelize, we must welcome. We are living, Pope Francis realizes, in a world where traditional moral norms and boundaries have collapsed. He is adapting our pastoral approach to this post-modern world.

If people in irregular or same-sex relationships ask for a blessing, we can do this. The document is addressed to priests but there is no reason why a deacon, pastoral minister or baptized Catholic could not do this if asked. We are blessing the person, asking God to move their hearts and minds to give them what they most need. A short, simple blessing is like gentle rain preparing the ground to bear fruit.



A simple blessing is not an endorsement of irregular relationships. It cannot be construed as official Catholic approval. We are blessing individuals that they might **become aware of God's presence within them and around them. Only the sacramental marriage of man and woman is God's revealed plan for human flourishing and is biblically and theologically normative.** The blessing of persons in irregular relationships is to be informal, simple and heart-felt: it is to avoid anything that could suggest a parallel to the formal liturgical blessing prayed during a sacramental wedding service.

For some – Catholics included – this is not enough: They want same-sex couples to be formally and liturgically blessed in a church service. They want Catholics who have divorced and remarried, without first seeking an annulment of their first marriage, to be welcomed to Holy Communion. *A Seeking Faith* does not permit either of these demands.

For others – again, Catholics included - even a simple blessing of such persons is too much. They argue that a simple blessing will inevitably cause confusion. If the guidelines are explained and followed, I cannot see the inevitability of confusion. We are challenged to balance evangelical zeal, pastoral sensitivity and obedience to the Bible, Church tradition and teaching. Pope Francis is aware of this and other criticisms. On 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024, addressing the members of the Vatican Dicastery of the Faith he reiterated that *“... the intention of pastoral and spontaneous blessings is to tangibly demonstrate the closeness of the Lord and of the Church to all those who, finding themselves in various situations, ask for help to continue – sometimes to begin – a journey to faith.”* (Catholic News World)

The declaration, *Fiducia Supplicans*, should be read, understood, and implemented in the light of these words.

A final word of gentle caution. We Catholics are often accused of being judgmental, condemnatory. This is a very restrictive interpretation of the word *judgment*. When we judge – and we do – we are determining worth, truth and goodness. Post-modern fellow citizens believe in *their* truth. We believe in **God's** truth, revealed in the Bible and proclaimed by our Catholic tradition. The saints bear witness to this. **We stand under and live within the realm of God's truth.**

How we help others to acknowledge and respond to **God's** presence in their lives is the starting point of *Fiducia Supplicans*.



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## Parish Youth Mass

by Sophia Lopez

Hi it's me again. This time I want to tell you about the youth mass! This is held on the first Sunday of every month at the 8:30 am Mass.

What is a youth mass? A youth mass is a one that is for all parishioners to attend, **but is mostly led by younger parishioners.** I don't mean what the priest does, but all the ministries and other jobs, like the prayer leader, readers, data projector, offertory, etc. and also a cuppa after mass (served by the kids too). Things like cookies, yummy bread and other snacks are brought by us. Then the kids also do the cleaning up afterwards.

**You've probably seen my stories before, but let me tell you more.** I have now also started helping with the collection and offertory procession (we recently had a **training session on this**), singing with 'Joyful Noise' (the musicians/choir led by Simon), and serving the cuppa, which I also enjoy!

As helpers in the youth mass, we become friends and do fun activities together.

For example, last year, near Christmas, we had a youth picnic. Although it was sadly raining, we were allowed to use the Saint Francis Xavier school hall and had some games, ate food and talked to each other. The young readers and the altar servers **were also invited. It's a nice time to socialise because everyone is nice, and you get to know and meet different types of people!**

Now we want to invite you (or your child) to help in the youth mass.

To get involved, talk to Simon Rayner or Veronica Rayner (for the youth mass), Kingsley Ihejerika (for young readers), or Lee Ledesma (for altar serving).

*(Editor's note: If you don't know these people, send a message to the parish office and it can be forwarded. Adult mentors e.g a choir leader, also welcome. You can also approach any of the other music groups to suit your singing or playing style)*

A good thing about this too, is that anyone can join! There are no auditions! And **don't worry if you don't know what to do, we (and our adult helpers) will teach you.** If you are old enough that you no longer go to Children's Liturgy, you might want to help in Children's Liturgy, or younger ones to be a Bible carrier - just talk to one of the Leaders.

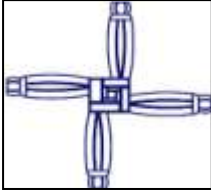
**If you don't go to the 8:30 mass, maybe you could start a youth mass, (or just get involved), at the 10:30 or 5:30 mass.!** The kids can start by joining the choir or helping with the collection or hosting a cuppa after mass. 'Cuppas' are fun, we eat together while making friends! I hope to see you in one of our youth masses soon!

The young parishioners are involved with every part of the Sunday celebration: Shown here are technical, musical, altar serving, hospitality and cleaning ministries, along with reader and Bible carrier.



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



### Term 1 News

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

It has been wonderful to come back to school in 2024 with no building works and no road works! Children settled quickly back to



school and their new classes. We have been delighted to welcome a number of new students during Term 1 including a large group of five year-olds. These new students were **formally welcomed to our school during our pōwhiri, where they wear a school korowai for the first time.**

**We were also delighted to welcome Lisa Hansen, who is teaching Nīkau Class.**

### Religious Education

The religious theme for all classes this term will be *Our Story, Tō Tātou Whakapapa*. **‘Our story’ is the story of the Church, and who we are and how we got here.** Our stories as individuals can only be told in the context of whenua, tupuna and whakapapa — the bigger story of our families, our cultures, our faith and our lands.

On Ash Wednesday the whole school attended a liturgy led by Fr Rico. It was wonderful to be able to have parish and family members join us.

### Commissioning Mass

In February teachers, support staff and Board members from St Francis Xavier joined others from Catholic Schools around the Wellington region at St Mary of the Angels for the Commissioning Mass. The Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Paul Martin. *Commissioning Masses* for Catholic school teachers and staff are held annually to celebrate and begin the new teaching year together.

### Enrolments for 2024 and 2025

We will have our Five Next Term party on 7 March for children starting school in Term 2 this year. This is an opportunity for pre-schoolers to meet children who will also be starting school in the next term and for parents and caregivers to meet each other. Everyone also enjoys the opportunity to meet with Mrs Hunt, our New Entrant teacher. If you have a child who will turn five between now and the start of Term 2 2024 please ring the school office, phone 232 8927 for an Enrolment Pack or visit [our website](#) for more information regarding enrolment forms and procedures. I am very happy to meet with any new prospective parents.

A Meet the Teacher Evening was held in the second week of school. This evening was an opportunity for parents/caregivers to meet one-on-one **with their child's** teacher to discuss their child. Teachers find these meetings a valuable way to connect with families and get to know more about the children.

Our Parents and Friends group continue to support our school by ongoing fundraising. They organise our pizza lunches every second Friday, where children can order a slice of pizza if they wish. They will also have an Easter Raffle happening within the next few weeks. We continue to be very grateful for their ongoing fundraising efforts which benefits our school greatly.

#### School Picnic

This year we once again visited Willowbank Park for our school picnic. The children enjoyed the opportunity to play on the playground, share games on the grass area and to explore the stream, looking for eels.







### Sporting Opportunities

This term our three junior classes are enjoying swimming lessons at Tawa School Pool. The children attend lessons each Friday where instructors from the pool take the lessons. We have been very fortunate to have a number of parents who help the children get ready for their lessons.

Our Year 3-6 children have all had the opportunity to take part in Rippa Rugby tournaments organised by the Tawa Rugby Club. The children walked down to Lyndhurst Park where they competed in a tournament against children from other Tawa schools. The children enjoyed the opportunity to participate and to show their sportsmanship.

Our Board of Trustees had their first meeting of the school year. Peter Mallon was elected as our new Presiding Member.



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# Parish Annual Financial Report

*by Nicola O'Keeffe*

The Finance Committee is pleased to present the annual accounts for the Parish for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

As a registered charity, we file an annual financial report to the Charities Commission in May/June each year outlining similar information.

We thank everyone who contributes to the parish, either financially or by offering their time and expertise.

## **Key highlights from this year's report include:**

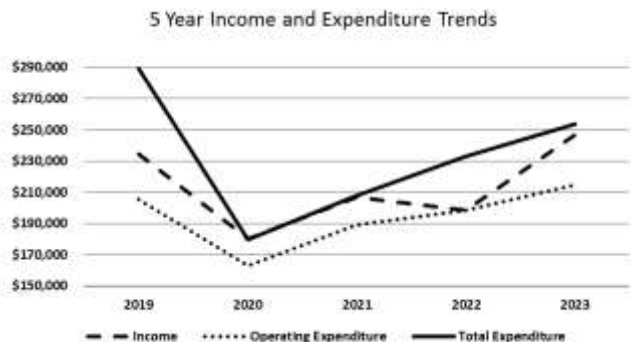
- \* Parish income has risen slightly this year, both through additional collection and interest earned on the funds from the sale of the Titahi Bay Presbytery.
- \* Costs continue to grow, particularly in relation to power, office expenses and insurance. These, along with Rates, are expected to continue to increase in the coming year.
- \* In recent years the Parish has not made any reserves for significant maintenance costs. This will become necessary in the coming years, along with replacement of some of our larger assets (curtains, appliances etc).
- \* Some of the funds from the sale of the Titahi Bay Presbytery will be used to cover the replacement of the Tawa church roof.

Our income and expenses trends for the last five years are shown in the graph below.

The finance committee has welcomed some new members this year. However, we are expecting another two retirements this year, so continue to seek new members to join in supporting Father and our Parish to manage our finances and building maintenance. We ask you to please consider giving a small amount of your time to join us in our work. If you would like to discuss donating to the parish, planned giving, these expenses or joining the committee please make contact with a member of the Finance Committee.

Father Rico de la Torre (PP),  
Graeme Hansen (Chair), Nicola  
O'Keeffe (Treasurer),

Denise Dorman, Tea Teofilo,  
Ramesh Ganesan, Jonathan  
Curr, Hans Wirawan, Lily Smith



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## Stories of Hope

| Income   | 2021       | 2022       | 2023       |
|--|------------|------------|------------|
| Parish Collection  | \$ 81,229  | \$ 69,025  | \$ 91,313  |
| Direct Credit payments   | \$ 110,715 | \$ 121,378 | \$ 125,147 |
| Total Parish Collections   | \$ 191,944 | \$ 190,403 | \$ 216,460 |
|  |            |            |            |
|  |            |            |            |
|  |            |            |            |
|  |            |            |            |
|  |            |            |            |
| Interest on Savings (leviable)   |            |            | \$ 20,349  |
|  |            |            |            |
| NZ Catholic & Columban Calendar sales  | \$ 778     | \$ 1,112   | \$ 558     |
|  |            |            |            |
| Donations & Bequests (including Mass Stipends, Roof Appeal, Painting Appeal) | \$ 13,131  | \$ 6,274   | \$ 8,520   |
|  |            |            |            |
| Other Revenue (eg Sacramental Programme)                                     | \$ 764     | \$ 478     | \$ 804     |
|  |            |            |            |
| Total Income   | \$ 206,617 | \$ 198,267 | \$ 246,691 |
|  |            |            |            |
| Income over Expenditure over Income  | -\$ 1,358  | -\$ 34,586 | -\$ 7,189  |
|  | Loss       | Loss       | Loss       |

\*\*Archdiocesan Levies is 45% of leviable income and is made up of:

|  |           |           |            |
|--|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 4.5% - Bishops support                     | \$ 3,812  | \$ 3,746  | \$ 4,907   |
| 13.4% - Lay Ministry support               | \$ 11,436 | \$ 11,239 | \$ 14,720  |
| 71% - Support of clergy                    | \$ 60,995 | \$ 59,940 | \$ 78,505  |
| 11.1% - Cost of Seminarians, Chaplaincies, | \$ 9,530  | \$ 9,366  | \$ 12,266  |
| NZ Bishops Conference etc                  |           |           |            |
| Total                                      | \$ 85,774 | \$ 84,291 | \$ 110,398 |



| Expenditure   | 2021         | 2022         | 2023         |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Archdiocesan Levies **                                    | \$ 85,774    | \$ 84,291    | \$ 110,398   |
| Donations   | \$ 2,725     | \$ 5,742     | \$ -         |
| General Expenses  | \$ 8,738     | \$ 6,062     | \$ 5,650     |
| Over 60's Lunch   | \$ -         | \$ 239       | \$ 260       |
| Light, Power, Heating                                     | \$ 5,040     | \$ 6,548     | \$ 9,689     |
| Liturgical Material                                       | \$ 5,239     | \$ 3,280     | \$ 2,789     |
| Sacramental Programme                                     | \$ 500       | \$ 1,320     | \$ 1,487     |
| Flower Arrangements                                       | \$ 250       | \$ 313       | \$ 104       |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses                                    | \$ 11,882    | \$ 10,520    | \$ 3,491     |
| Planned Giving - envelopes                                | \$ 912       | \$ 960       | \$ 848       |
| Photo-copying   | \$ 1,402     | \$ 1,217     | \$ 1,433     |
| Rates   | \$ 6,485     | \$ 7,256     | \$ 4,808     |
| Rates - water   | \$ 1,288     | \$ 1,200     | \$ 1,352     |
| Office Expenses (Including wages, stationery and postage) | \$ 30,012    | \$ 36,982    | \$ 38,484    |
| Fire Alarm System   | \$ 4,524     | \$ 3,817     | \$ 3,023     |
| NZ Catholic & Columban Calendar sales                     | \$ 1,309     | \$ 983       | \$ 985       |
| Telephone & Internet                                      | \$ 2,790     | \$ 2,956     | \$ 1,729     |
| Website   | \$ 440       | \$ -         | \$ -         |
| Insurance   | \$ 19,583    | \$ 24,924    | \$ 28,352    |
| Operating Expenditure                                     | \$ 188,893   | \$ 198,371   | \$ 214,882   |
|   |              |              |              |
| Projector Purchase - St Pius X                            |              | \$ 4,251     |              |
| Heaters Our Lady of Fatima                                |              | \$ 8,875     |              |
| Presbytery Sale and Renovation                            | \$ 15,622    | \$ 15,891    | \$ 25,549    |
| Repairs and Maintenance                                   | \$ 3,460     | \$ 5,464     | \$ 13,449    |
| Capital Expenditure                                       | \$ 19,082    | \$ 34,481    | \$ 38,998    |
|   |              |              |              |
| Total Expenditure   | \$207,974.59 | \$232,853.00 | \$253,880.00 |

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## Parish Insurance

*by Graeme Hansen*

### PARISH COMMUNITY INPUT REQUIRED – NATURAL DISASTER INSURANCE

Over the last 4 years our parish has spent more than we have received. This has meant that each year we have had to dip into our financial reserves to cover our expenses.

**Our Parish's two biggest expenses are wages and insurance. Staff are crucial to the effective running of our Parish, and this is something we can't really reduce.** However, we need your input to decide whether we should reduce our insurance costs to keep us financially stable - and there is no easy answer.

Our Parish belongs to a nationwide Catholic Insurance Scheme. Several years ago, the Parish Finance Committee made the decision to discontinue insurance of the Titahi Bay church against Natural Disaster Damage (earthquakes) due to the cost. This means that if Titahi Bay church is destroyed or substantially damaged by a Natural Disaster we will not be able to repair or rebuild it.

We now face a similar cost decision with our church in Tawa, where increasing insurance premiums have put pressure on our finances. We need to decide whether to continue insuring the Tawa building against natural disaster or not.

Outlined below is a breakdown of our annual insurance commitment in 2023, which came to \$28,351.50 plus GST:

|                                       |                            |    |                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----|------------------|
| Tawa Buildings                        | Other Insurance            | \$ | 4,047.34         |
|                                       | Natural Disaster Insurance | \$ | <u>20,192.44</u> |
|                                       |                            | \$ | 24,239.78        |
| Titahi Bay Church                     | Other Insurance            | \$ | 1,504.70         |
|                                       | Natural Disaster Insurance | \$ | <u>0.00</u>      |
|                                       |                            | \$ | 1,504.70         |
| Tawa & Titahi Bay Contents gen. cover |                            | \$ | 443.92           |
|                                       | Natural Disaster Insurance | \$ | <u>1,998.64</u>  |
|                                       |                            | \$ | 2,442.56         |
| Liability Package                     |                            | \$ | 164.48           |

At this stage we are unsure what the premiums will be in 2024. However, expectations are that it will probably be closer to \$36,000 plus GST with the Natural Disaster premium being approximately \$27,000 plus GST of that total amount.

There are three potential options for us to consider  
and we would like your thoughts on these:

1. Continue the status quo and pay for all insurance coverage whatever it costs.
2. Not insure against Natural Disaster (Earthquakes) for the Tawa assets and save close to \$27,000 plus GST per year. Please bear in mind that in the event of an earthquake destroying, or substantially damaging the Tawa buildings there will be no funds to carry out repairs or rebuild. Self-insurance is not feasible. It is not practical to put away sufficient funds to rebuild a complex with a rebuild cost more than \$4,000,000 plus GST.
3. Insure the Tawa buildings for a value substantially less than its replacement cost. At this stage we are not sure if we can get cover on this basis and what the savings might be. If we can get cover on this basis, the sum covered, along with the sale of the land at either Tawa or Titahi Bay (or both) may provide sufficient money to build a simple building for worship, should there be a disaster.

The Parish Finance Committee are very keen to hear *your* views.

Please send your thoughts, ideas or questions to:

Graeme Hansen [g1957@xtra.co.nz](mailto:g1957@xtra.co.nz)

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## Parish Sacramental Programme 2024 - Time to Enrol your Child

Each year, our children are invited to continue their faith journey through joining the Parish Sacramental programme. This includes making their First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

For each Sacrament, children and their parents or guardians join others for learning sessions which begin in March. You are warmly invited to register your child/children. There will be sign-up forms in both our churches and also our St Francis Xavier and St Pius X Catholic Schools

Please enrol your child/children as soon as possible. Enrolment packs are also available from the Parish Office. [ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz) phone (04) 232 5611

You can also email Marie Andrewartha: [m.g.andrewartha@gmail.com](mailto:m.g.andrewartha@gmail.com)

Please include:

**Your child's name and age**

Your name

Your contact phone number



Children must be 8 years of age or over and have been baptised.

Sessions will be on Sundays at 4pm, at Our Lady of Fatima Church Tawa.

The programme begins with:

### Introduction to the Sacramental Programme

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 1pm - 4.30pm

at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Tawa.

This introductory day is a special part of the programme and it is important that you and your child attend. Please bring some photos or special things from your **child's Baptism** *e.g. candle, gown etc*

NOTE: If you are unable to attend this session, please do still get in touch about joining the programme for this year.

Enrolment Mass: Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March, 8.30am, Our Lady of Fatima Church

First Reconciliation: Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April, 3.00pm, Our Lady of Fatima Church

Sacrament of Confirmation Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2pm Our Lady of Fatima Church

1<sup>st</sup> Communion: Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2pm Our Lady of Fatima Church

Please contact me if you have any questions. 021 476153

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Thanks Marie Andrewartha

## Parish Notices - Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths

### Baptisms

| Name of child                   | Parents                     | Date             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Heidi Lee Soronio BARAMIDA      | Diolie-Ann & Pablo Baramida | 11 November 2023 |
| Isaac Reid Umali LAMORENA       | Kris & Daniel Lamorena      | 25 November 2023 |
| Theodore Josef CARONONGAN       | Jovy & Ryan Caronongan      | 16 December 2023 |
| Oni Dibau Joy VATULAWA          | Luisa & Sakeasi Vatulawa    | 17 December 2023 |
| Daniel Xander Santiago WINE     | Patricia & Richard Wine     | 5 January 2024   |
| Jia Madison Bering LUNA         | Merry & Jonathan Luna       | 14 January 2024  |
| Miles Jamil LAURELES            | Pamela & Jamil Laureles     | 3 February 2024  |
| Tiffany Eliana Valdez GAMALINDA | Connie & Alvin Gamalinda    | 17 February 2024 |
| ZoeY Eve MEO                    | Dailyn & Patrick Meo        | 17 February 2024 |

### Deaths

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| Dorothy Belz | 2 January 2024 |
| Jean London  | 5 January 2024 |

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## Mass Times in Nearby Parishes

Our Lady of Hope parish times highlighted.

|                |         |   |
|----------------|---------|---|
| Saturday vigil | 5:00pm  | St Francis of Assisi, Johnsonville                        |
|                | 5:30pm  | St Pius X, Titahi Bay                                     |
|                | 6:00pm  | <b>St Teresa's, Plimmerton &amp; Holy Family, Porirua</b> |
| Sunday         | 8:30am  | Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa                                  |
|                | 9:30am  | <b>St Teresa's, Plimmerton &amp; Holy Family, Porirua</b> |
|                | 10:00am | <b>Te Ngākau Tapu (Māori Mass)</b>                        |
|                | 10:00am | St Francis of Assisi, Johnsonville                        |
|                | 10:30am | Our Lady of Fatima, Tawa                                  |
|                | 5:15pm  | <b>Te Ngākau Tapu (English Mass)</b>                      |

## New Parishioners

If you are new to the parish, Welcome!

Please introduce yourself to the celebrant, another parishioner,  
or call/visit the parish office 9:30am -12:00pm Tuesday-Friday: (04) 232 5611  
or email: [ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz)

## Current Parish Pastoral Council Members

Fr Rico de la Torre - parish priest, Marie Prescott - chair; Telesia Alaimoana, Jane Bolton; Dorothy Jansen; Ray Lindsay; and Rupi Mapusua.

## Current Finance Committee Members

Fr Rico de la Torre - parish priest, Graeme Hansen - chair, Jonathan Curr, Denise Dorman, Lily Smith, Ramesh Ganesan, Nicola O'Keeffe – treasurer, Tea Teofilo, Hans Wirawan.

## Regular events

Joshua Catholic Fellowship for Men, Third Thurs. 7:30 pm, at Loaves & Fishes  
**Over 60's luncheon** in Tawa church foyer, First Tuesday of each month 12 noon  
**St Joseph's Dad's Group** 1st Monday of month 7:30pm - see weekly newsletter  
Marian Mothers - 2nd Monday am each month - see weekly newsletter  
Women of Faith - 2nd Tuesday am each month - see weekly newsletter

Other events: check website calendar or newsletter: [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](mailto:info@ninness.co.nz) web site: <http://ninness.co.nz>.

### Funeral Costs

A funeral can be a very expensive time - but it does not have to be. There are basic casket options available as well as the more elaborate ones. You may be eligible for WINZ or ACC funeral grants. We are able to give advice and help you with filling in forms and lodging the application for these.

You may wish to consider a Funeral Trust plan. This allows you to set money aside, in trust, for your own final farewell or for that of a loved one.

Prepaying towards a funeral means, when the time comes, loved ones can gather together, support one another, and remember and celebrate a life, without the responsibility of making difficult choices in very emotional circumstances.

For more information visit The Funeral Trust website ([thefuneraltrust.co.nz](http://thefuneraltrust.co.nz))  
or contact us here at Ninness Funeral Home.

If you just want to have some idea in advance of what it might cost for the sort of funeral you would like, we can always offer a realistic cost estimate.

For further helpful information, visit the Ninness Funeral Home website

### Shuttle Service to Whenua Tapu Cemetery

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

Whenua Tapu Shuttle - dates for the coming months

Wednesday - 27 March

Wednesday - 24 April

Wednesday - 29 May

Wednesday - 26 June

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

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

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or phone 04 232 5611

Or mail P.O. BOX 51-029, TAWA, 5249



Brenden Jacobsen



Larry Greco

Ninness Funeral Home -

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