TŪMANAKO
United in Hope • *I te Tūmanako o te Kotahitanga*
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Ngāti Kahungunu Pilgrimage: Mēri Hōhepa 1926-2026

The Hawke's Bay Māori Apostolate undertook a four-day pilgrimage marking the 100th anniversary of the death of Mēri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. It began on October 1 with the lighting of a pilgrim candle at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Pakipaki, before the group travelled to Te Rākatō Marae, Te Māhia, for a pōwhiri and Miha Māori celebrated by Pā Arthur Toothill SM and assisted by Br Denis O'Brien SM.

The welcome united the Pakipaki and Te Wairoa Māori Missions on the Feast of St Thérèse de Lisieux. At Whangawehi, where Bishop Pompallier and Fr Claude Baty SM arrived in 1841 after being invited to establish a mission in Ngāti Kahungunu, the candle was lit and prayers of remembrance were offered.

At Taihoa Marae and St Peter's Parish Hall, pilgrims heard stories of Mēri Hōhepa in Te Wairoa and the work of her Sisters of Compassion, and made kawakawa lip balms during a rongoā demonstration. The following morning they visited St Therese's Church and cyclone-affected Tawhiti a Maru Marae, hearing about Pā



Wiremu Te Awhitu, the first Māori priest. After Miha Māori, the group returned to Pakipaki and ended the day with the Rosary and the history of Houngarea Marae.

Saturday's whare korero brought together parishioners, historians and religious education teachers. Speakers recalled Peata Hokimate, the first Māori nun with Suzanne Aubert and the Congregation of the Holy Family; archival items connected baptismal names with portraits in the meeting house; and letters, photographs and whānau stories illuminated Mother Aubert's Hawke's Bay years.

Revd Zhane Tiopira-Tāhau also spoke of Ōmāhu chief Renata Kawepō, who called Mother Aubert "the Doctor of Doctors". A Vigil Mass and evening Rosary connected Mēri Hōhepa's life with the mysteries of the great Marian prayer.

On Sunday, the pilgrims travelled via the Cathedral at Te Papaioea to Wellington, praying at Mother Aubert's creche before being welcomed by the Sisters at the Home of Compassion. Bishop John Adams and Bishop Richard Laurenson of Hamilton joined the pōwhiri and the laying down of mauri stones from Ngāti Kahungunu.

More than 500 people then gathered at St Mary of the Angels for Mass in te reo Māori, French and English, with chants and waiata led by St Joseph's Māori Girls' College. Final prayers and poroporoaki brought the pilgrimage to a close.



Hawke's Bay Māori Apostolate pilgrims with Bishop John at St Mary of the Angels. Photographer: Natalie McPherson.

Education leader shares varied experiences in podcast

Catholic schools offer young people hope – a commodity that is increasingly needed in a secular society – and are among the most important places of evangelisation, National Centre for Religious Studies director Colin Macleod has said.

Speaking on the *Catholic Kiwi Podcast*, Dr Macleod reflected on a faith journey that began in a vibrant Catholic family in Carterton, continued through service in the Air Force and seminary formation, and eventually led to a career in Catholic education.

Although he discerned that ordained ministry was not his vocation, he believes the call to priesthood continues through the baptismal vocation of all Catholics.

Teaching became the avenue through which he lived that calling, spending more than two decades in Catholic schools, including as director of religious studies at what is now Trinity Catholic College in Dunedin.

A recurring theme throughout the conversation with host Joanna Kearney was the importance of connecting faith to real life. Drawing on his family's experience after his wife suffered a life-changing stroke shortly after the birth of their son, Dr Macleod said young people need authentic faith rather than simplistic answers about suffering.

In one of the darkest periods of his life, he recalled sensing God's presence in the simple assurance: "I'm here."

"Now I wanted much more than that," he recalls. "I wanted, 'I'm gonna fix it', 'I'm gonna make Jan completely healed' and everything, but all I got was, 'I'm here'.

"And what more do we need?"

Today, Dr Macleod supports the implementation of *Tō Tātou Whakapono: Our Faith*, the New Zealand Catholic bishops' religious education curriculum.

He said the curriculum is designed to meet students wherever they are on their faith journey – from those with strong Catholic backgrounds to those with little or no religious knowledge.

He argues that Catholic schools play a crucial role in helping young people understand faith, meaning and human flourishing. Rather than simply teaching doctrine, they provide frameworks for understanding concepts such as brokenness, healing, hope and relationships with God and others.

Drawing on his doctorate research that explored parish-school relationships, Dr Macleod said Catholic communities thrive when they share a clear sense of mission and create genuinely welcoming environments.

He believes schools and parishes must work together to help people encounter Christ and grow in faith.

Find the podcast by searching "Catholic Kiwi Podcast" on YouTube or Spotify.

"Catholic communities thrive when they share a clear sense of mission and create genuinely welcoming environments."





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Content on this spread provided by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

Bishops Hope 'Gospel Lens' Will Guide People's Votes

New Zealand's Catholic bishops have used their 2026 election statement to promote voting as a moral and civic responsibility, not simply an expression of personal preference.

In *Discerning our nation's future through a Gospel lens*, the bishops note that the Church does not endorse any political party or candidate. Instead, they encourage voters to carefully examine parties, candidates and policies through the lens of the Gospel and Catholic social teaching.

In the document, the bishops call on voters to think seriously about the kind of society New Zealand is building and to consider how their electoral choices can contribute to the good of the broader community.

"Voting should amount to something more than simply a personal preference," the bishops write.

"It is a moral and civic responsibility; it is a concrete way that we can pursue the common good."

That goal can be pursued, the bishops write, by looking beyond short-term concerns and individual self-interest and instead reflecting on the struggles many are facing.

"We invite you to consider the lived experience of families and communities, and to consider how proposed policies affect the marginalised and most vulnerable," the statement explains.

The bishops' document highlights five key areas for voters to consider as they assess political parties and local candidates:

- The dignity of the human person, including respect for every person from conception until natural death;
- Solidarity with one's brothers and sisters, including economic and social support for people in need, immigration and refugee policies, and New Zealand's responsibilities towards its Pacific neighbours;
- Rights of religious freedom and conscience, including the ability of individuals and Catholic organisations to live and serve according to sincerely held beliefs;
- Preserving human faces and voices, particularly safeguarding human autonomy and the dignity of work in a society increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence and automation;
- Care for our common home, including the wellbeing of New Zealand's land, skies and waterways, as well as support for communities affected by changing climate patterns.

The bishops express concern about significant challenges facing the country, pointing to abortion, homelessness, euthanasia, unemployment, inadequate support for people with disabilities and entrenched poverty as examples.

Concern is also raised about the way political discourse is undertaken, as part of building – or undermining – New Zealand's "social fabric".

"A key indicator of any society's maturity is its citizens' ability to speak truthfully, listen respectfully and promote the dignity of every person," the bishops write.

The bishops conclude their statement by expressing the hope that voters' discernment will be grounded in truth and respect and directed towards the common good.

"May this election be an opportunity to renew our commitment to one another, so that our communities become places where every person can belong and flourish."

The bishops also propose a prayer for people to use in the weeks leading up to the election on November 7.

Read the full election statement at:
https://bit.ly/NZCBCElection26

A Prayer for Aotearoa New Zealand

God of mercy and justice, source of all life and giver of every good gift, we place before you our nation, Aotearoa New Zealand, as we prepare to choose those who will serve in public office.

Send your Holy Spirit upon us, that we may discern well. Form in us hearts that seek to build a society where every person can belong and flourish. Guide our political leaders, candidates and voters with wisdom, humility and courage.

Lord Jesus, you drew near to the forgotten and lifted up the lowly. Open our eyes to the needs of all. May our votes, our voices and our actions help shape our nation as a people of compassion, hope and shared responsibility.

We make this prayer in your name, ***Amen***.

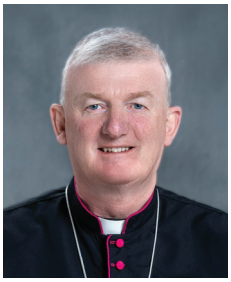
Mary, Mother of the Church, ***pray for us***.

St Joseph, protector of families and workers, ***pray for us***.

St Thomas More, patron saint of politicians, ***pray for us***.

Holy men and women of God who have walked this land in faith and service, ***pray for us***.





From Bishop John's Desk: The Wedding Feast is Ready

I have been thinking about what I hope to have achieved by the time I finish my years as Bishop of Palmerston North. One hope that keeps returning is a closer relationship between our Catholic schools and parishes.

Around 7,000 people attend Mass across the Diocese, while almost 8,000 children belong to our Catholic school network. These are two great pillars of light. I would love our parishes to be more involved in the tremendous work of our schools, and school families to participate more fully in parish life.

Jesus' parable of the wedding feast comes to mind. The master prepares something wonderful and persistently invites people to experience it – not through coercion, but through encouragement born of love. We need something similar when it comes to Catholic schools and Sunday Mass.

I would like Sunday Mass to become a natural and expected part of enrolling a child in a Catholic school. Choosing Catholic education means entering the life of the Catholic community, including the Mass and sacraments. Yet I want to be reasonable and pastoral. Families get sick, go on holiday and face complicated lives. I am not proposing a stringent rule, but recovering an expectation – and, more importantly, a sense of what is being offered.

Imagine a parish genuinely welcoming 15 or 20 families from a new school entrance class, with children's liturgy, opportunities to meet and a community helping them find their place. This could transform both families and parishes. Young families bring new energy and challenge us to support parents, marriage and family life, different cultures and the social needs around us.

Sunday now competes with sport, shopping and countless other activities, so practising our faith requires deliberate choices. I would love us to recover a spirit in which Mass is a normal and joyful part of being Catholic. After three years here, I increasingly think of Palmerston North and this Diocese as home, and I am encouraged by parishes asking how the Sunday experience can become more connected and hopeful.

UPCOMING Events

SAT NOV 21 @ 11AM

DIACONATE ORDINATION OF PETER DUNG PHAN

Cathedral of the Holy Spirit. Conferred by Bishop John Adams. Everyone is welcome.

SAT DEC 12 @ 10.30AM

THANKSGIVING MASS FOR THE CLOSURE OF ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, PATEA

St Patrick's Church, 27 Egmont St, Patea. Followed by a light lunch at St Joseph's School. All welcome.

FRI-SUN JAN 22-24 2027

DIVINE INTIMACY IN MARRIAGE RETREAT

Married couples are warmly invited to a special weekend retreat with Dan and Stephanie Burke. Register at https://divineintimacy2027.netlify.app/

Carrying the Cross from Hastings to Napier



Four students from St John's College, Hastings – Max Jewell, Levi Donnelly, Max Palmer and Leo Allan – carried a three-metre wooden cross made by Max Palmer from Hastings to Napier on Saturday, September 5. Setting out at 7am from Sacred Heart Church after Fr Vijay Dungdung prayed for their journey, they walked past their college, through Clive and along Marine Parade, reaching St Patrick's Church in Napier at 2pm.

The boys began the walk to show that faith is alive among young people, but soon realised how many people in their community desire to know Christ. They received only encouragement: horns honking, people waving and cheering, and one man leaning from his car calling, "Praise be to God!"

This gave them a new purpose: to pray for Christ to intercede for Hawke's Bay and for more young people to know the love and peace of Jesus. Fr Hemi Ropata SM met them on the way and welcomed them at St Patrick's, where they placed the cross at the altar.

The boys hope to walk again, this time from Napier to Hastings, to raise greater awareness of Christ among young people in both communities. They are grateful for every prayer and word of support, especially from Fr Hemi and Fr Vijay. Carrying the cross became more than a physical journey; it encouraged them to keep sharing their faith and to carry Christ wherever they go.

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