



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

Last Sunday many people gathered at St Mary of the Angels to renew the dedication of Aotearoa New Zealand to Mary, the Mother of God, under the title of “*Mary, Assumed into Heaven,*” which was first done by Bishop Pompallier in 1838. Pompallier actually dedicated his *mission* in New Zealand to Mary. I think last Sunday many people were thinking mostly about dedicating the country to her especially at this time of pandemic, and it is right that we did that and asked for her prayers to keep everyone safe.

I believe we also need to dedicate **our mission** as the baptised to Mary.

We are all being given a chance to have our say about the direction the Church should be going in the future. Pope Francis wants to consult everyone on the topic, “*For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, mission*”. He wants us all to have a say because we all have the right to have a say because we are baptised. We are divided, however, over the direction change should take.

The Pope does not subscribe to the theory that God's gifts of grace and guidance for his Church flow exclusively through the top management team. He wants the Church to be a synodal Church, characterized by ongoing open discussion and a "listening process conducted at every level of the Church's life".

I was present in Saint Peter's in Rome the evening before the Synod of Bishops on the Family began in 2014. In his homily Pope Francis said “*The Lord asks of us a renewed openness, He asks us not to close off dialogue and encounter but to gather everything that is valid and positive...*”.

We have a chance to do as Bishop Pompallier did and dedicate our *mission* to Mary Assumed into Heaven, not just our country. We all have a mission, we all ARE a mission. In the next few months there will be an opportunity for all of us to have a say in how we will live out our mission. Francis has also called on all the of the world to develop synodality at "every level" as a normal feature which permeates Catholic life, and which includes all clergy and the laity at "every level".

I invite everyone to personally renew your mission as a baptised Catholic, dedicate your mission to Mary as Bishop Pompallier did, and remember that the word "synod" comes originally from the Greek and means walking together. This is a metaphor for talking together and for the great value of what we can learn from one another on life's pilgrimage. We walk together and talk together as we pick up our mission and make a new start every day.

Nāku noa. Nā

John

- A reminder of the **Covid19 pandemic**

- Stay within your bubble.
- If you need to go out, wear a mask and remember 2 metre social distance rule.
- If you are unwell, seek advice from your medical centre or the Ministry of Health Covid19 Healthline 0800 358 5453
- Sneeze into your elbow
- Wash and sanitize your hands and work spaces constantly
- Use the Tracer App

NOTICES

- Please keep in your prayers all our clergy. The frail and those who are experiencing ill health at present are Frs Colin Durning, and Peter O'Connell.
Fr Don Morrison priest of the diocese for 64 years died on Sunday 15 August. His Requiem was to be on Friday 20 August in Featherston but due to the current COVID19 lockdown the family have postponed this. Please pray for Don and his family at this time. May he rest in peace.
On Monday an email was received from Fr Tom O'Brien who returned to Ireland about ten years ago. This was to tell me that his brother, Father Christy O'Brien, had died on Saturday 14th August. I have sent our prayerful sympathy to Tom, but if anyone of you who knew Tom wish to contact him his email address is tobrien25@gmail.com
- A reminder that the annual Clergy Retreat will be held at Tatum Park from the evening of Monday 27th September to Friday 1st October. Please make sure this is your diaries. In due course more information will be sent.
- **Ministry Formation Day**
Thanks to all who were able to come to the Ministry Formation Day last Tuesday and thank you to the Church Mission Team. A very helpful discussion and reflection on Synodality was held, and excellent information given out and discussed about SYNODALITY. Please remember (information will be sent out about this) that Sunday 17th October will be the Day every diocese in the world will be asked to host a Mass for the Opening of the Synod. Pope Francis will celebrate this on Sunday 10th October. Our Archdiocesan Mass will be at St Teresa's pro-Cathedral.

The following is part of the prayer used last Sunday at St Mary of the Angels when we renewed the Dedication of Aotearoa New Zealand to ***“Mary, Mother of God Assumed into Heaven.”***

O God, under the patronage of Mary

The mother of your son, and our mother

We join with those gathered in the Hokianga in January 1838

With the leadership of Jean-Baptiste Pompallier

The first Catholic Bishop of this place

To dedicate our land of Aotearoa New Zealand

To the care of Mary, Mother of God , Assumed into heaven.

“To come out of this crisis better, we have to recover the knowledge that as a people we have a shared destination.

The pandemic has reminded us that no one is saved alone. What ties us to one another is what we commonly call solidarity.

Solidarity is more than acts of generosity, important as they are; it is the call to embrace the reality that we are bound by bonds of reciprocity. On this solid foundation we can build a better, different, human future.”

Pope Francis November 2020.