



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

I have been surprised lately at how many people have been writing to me asking why we still do not have holy water in the fonts in our churches, why they are not able to receive Communion from the chalice or on the tongue, and why they cannot exchange the Sign of Peace by shaking hands or a hug.

We are in the midst of a world-wide pandemic; we know it is dangerous and deadly. In New Zealand we are relatively lucky, and I think very blessed not to suffer in the same way as many other countries are suffering. However, there is still the risk of the virus spreading and I believe we are obliged to take every precaution we can to keep others safe. Some have written to me saying that I have given in to a Marxist Government and that the pandemic is all a hoax. My response to them is always the same, we are obliged to keep everyone safe.

The coronavirus has dramatically changed our world and has altered the way we worship, but we are still able to go Mass and we are still able to receive Holy Communion. Because we cannot receive the Precious Blood at the moment does not mean that we are not receiving the Risen Lord in the Eucharist. Even if we were to receive only a tiny part of the host, we are actually receiving the whole Christ. It might help to remember the words of Pope St Leo the Great who, writing about the Eucharist, said, ***“Our sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ has no other purpose than to transform us into that which we receive.”***

We are transformed into Christ himself. Remembering that and giving thanks for the gift we receive may help us to look for ways to keep others safe. The delta variant of the virus is rampant, not here in New Zealand, but it is easy to see that it would not take much for it to spread rapidly as it is in Australia and out of control in other parts of the world.

Please be assured that the measures we are taking have been recommended to us by the Ministry of Health and we have asked everyone to do this specifically to keep one another safe.

Remember too the words of St Teresa of Avila: “Let nothing trouble you. Let nothing frighten you. Everything passes. God never changes. Patience obtains all. Whoever has God wants for nothing. God alone is enough”.

Nāku noa. Nā

John

• A reminder to all as we are still in **Alert Level 1** of the **Covid19 pandemic**

- If you are unwell, stay home and 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

“I believe that morally everyone must take the vaccine,” said Pope Francis in an interview on 10 January this year on Italy’s TG5 news programme. **“It is the moral choice because it is about your life but also the lives of others:**

Golda Meir

“Trust yourself. Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all you life.”

Golda Meir

NOTICES

- Please keep in your prayers all our clergy. The frail and those who are experiencing ill health at present are Frs Colin Durning, Don Morrison, and Peter O'Connell.
- The people of **Westport and Marlborough** are facing a difficult future cleaning up after the floods of last weekend. The damage to homes in Westport is heart-breaking, especially as it is an area with economic difficulties and many families who now need alternative accommodation. If you wish to donate money to help people in Westport you can do so to the Buller Mayoral Relief Fund bank account number 03-1354-0583471-00, or to the Archdiocese of Wellington bank account number 02-0536-0003306-13 with code "Westport". We will make sure that donations made through the Archdiocese get to people in need. Please email adw.accounts@wn.catholic.org.nz if you would like a receipt.
- Sr Catherine Jones smsm has been appointed Safeguarding Advisor for the Archdiocese of Wellington. Starting 1 September 2021. We welcome Catherine back after 5 years away.
- A reminder that the annual Clergy Retreat will be held at Tatum Park from the evening of Monday 27th September to Friday 1st October. More information to come.

Te Ara a Maria : Mary's Way

Rededication of Aotearoa New Zealand to Mary Mother of God Assumed into Heaven

On Sunday 15th August, the Solemnity of the Assumption there will be a special Mass at St Mary of the Angels when Aotearoa New Zealand will be rededicated to Mary, Mother of God, Assumed into Heaven. The country was first dedicated to Mary under that title in 1838.

This will be a National celebration with representatives from the six Dioceses of New Zealand present with the Apostolic Nuncio and the New Zealand Bishops.

A new artwork honouring this occasion has been commissioned and will be presented that day. The next day the artwork will begin a Hikoī of the country to significant places (with especially Marian connections). The artwork will be brought back to St Mary of the Angels on the Feast of the Annunciation next year. The hikoī will also coincide with the Centenary of the Opening of St Mary of the Angels Church.

The **National Liturgy Office** has prepared two YouTube videos (links below) to help Catholics across the country to sing the himene Mō Maria, which was composed by Bishop Pompallier.

Over the years the versions, pronunciations and melodies of the hymn have varied from Pompallier's original. This has made it more difficult for us to sing the hymn harmoniously.

The August 15 rededication of the country to Mary gives us an opportunity to promote Mō Maria as a national Catholic anthem.

Mō Maria – An Introduction: click [here](#)

Mō Maria – A Hymn click [here](#)

These videos return to the source, the Hokianga, to learn the original text and melody from the locals. The first is a documentary style introduction to the hymn, the second has the words onscreen to sing along with.

All are welcome at St Mary of the Angels on **Sunday 15th August at 1.30pm.**