



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

It has been six weeks since my last newsletter, that has been because of the time I needed to recuperate from spinal surgery. Thanks be to God I have made a good recovery. Thank you for your prayerful support.

This newsletter is also my last. Yesterday Pope Francis accepted my resignation as Archbishop of Wellington. Canon law requires that bishops offer their resignation to the Holy Father when they reach 75 years of age, and today I reached that age.

It is with sadness that I say goodbye, and an enormous THANK YOU to you all. I will still be about and look forward to being involved in the life of the Archdiocese in other ways. Archbishop Paul Martin has now succeeded me and has become the 8th Archbishop of Wellington. I wish Paul every blessing and ask that you support him in the same way as you have supported me.

Many years ago, when the New Zealand Bishops met Pope St John Paul II during an ad limina visit to Rome, one of our bishops said to him, ***“Holy Father, I would not have your job for all the money in the world.”*** The Pope looked up and said, ***“It is a privilege”***. I can honestly say that this has been a privilege for me. There have been many challenges and some difficulties and like Jesus at times I have also had to be resolute about “taking the road to Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51). I have always loved this part of Luke’s Gospel which follows straight after the experience of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is a reminder that when we have encountered Jesus in prayer we can be resolute in dealing with challenges and difficulties.

Never forget that we are all the chosen and beloved daughters and sons of God. We are privileged to walk together in our Church, our family of faith.

Thank you for your prayers, love and support. Your constant support, your commitment to the Church, your willingness to walk the way of Jesus, tell the truth of Jesus and live the life of Jesus have been inspiring.

Every time you go to Mass and hear Archbishop Paul’s name in the Eucharistic Prayer, please make that a sincere prayer for him. Paul will be installed as Archbishop of Wellington on Saturday 17th June at St Teresa’s Pro-Cathedral; he will take the Shepherd’s crook from me and walk with you as you accompany one another in prayer and mutual support.

Thank you for everything, please keep me in prayer and I will you.

With love and blessings

Nāku noa. Nā

+ John