



inform

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Newsletter of the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch

We Have A New Coadjutor Bishop

PRAISE THE LORD

The Most Rev Barry Phillip Jones DD was ordained on Wednesday 4th October in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament.

Extract from the 'Prayer of Consecration'
'So pour out upon this chosen one that power which is from you, the governing Spirit whom you gave to your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the Spirit given by him to the Apostles, who founded the Church in every place to be your temple for the unceasing glory and praise of your name'.

1 General view of all involved.

2 The Book of Scriptures is placed above his head. The prayer said is "Receive the Gospels and preach the Word of God with patience and sound teaching."

3 Waiting with his Assistant Priests.

4 Bishop Cunneen welcomes the new Bishop who was called forward with the Sign of Peace.



Letter from Bishop John

Bishop John was unable to present a letter for this edition due to a particularly busy time over the last few weeks.

He would like to share with you all his great joy at being able to celebrate the ordination of his Coadjutor Bishop Barry Jones. Already Bishop Barry has been able to assist in so many ways, making it possible to tackle areas of concern that are very pressing. He is pleased that some photos of the ordination are on the front page of Inform.

He also expressed his gratefulness for the dedication and commitment of the four priests who have died in the last month. Monsignor Matt Duggan and Fr. Kevin O'Grady were members of the diocesan clergy and both Fr Hub Hayward and Fr. John Vaughan were Columban Fathers who worked with us in the

Diocese after retiring from mission work. They are greatly missed but it is a joy to know they will be enjoying the fullness of life with the Lord they faithfully served.

Finally the Bishop extends to everyone, his blessing and wish that this Christmas will be a truly blessed one for each person.

John Cunneen

John Cunneen
Bishop of Christchurch

*I wish you all a
Happy and Holy
Christmas*



FAITH AND LIGHT International Meeting

In July, 270 Faith and Light delegates gathered to pitch their tents in Escorial (Madrid). Mary de Leijer, National Coordinator, Marie Rita McLean RSM, National Chaplain and Elaine Swain, Zone Coordinator, attended this meeting. We all gathered under a Bedouin tent, which was a visible sign of the theme of our meeting "Enlarge the Space of your Tent."

The International Meeting was a time to deepen our calling and to gain renewed energy for our mission. It was also a time for us to look at the Charter and Constitution and make amendments where necessary.

During our time together, Elaine Swain was discerned as the Continental co-ordinator for Asia-Southern Cross Continent. We experienced a very painful time during the meeting. The Lebanese delegates had to return to their war torn country. We witnessed that the tears of a Muslim mother are the same as the tears of a Christian mother. For many of us, war had never been so close to those we loved. We continue to keep them in our prayers.

We were challenged to "Enlarge the Space of our Tent" during these special days.

We left the meeting with great confidence that the Holy Spirit would always be with us.



The Pastoral Workers from various parishes were hosted by the Pastoral Planning Office. Janet Archer, Marie-Therese McRae, Bishop John Cunneen, Rosita Bennett, Sr Anne Marie Shine RNDM, Sr Betty Dwyer RNDM, Judith O'Sullivan (Bishop's Liaison), Janese Pepper, Sr Judith Murphy RSM. Absent: Sr Audrey Wafer RSM.

Pastoral Workers

On Thursday 7th September the Pastoral Workers were hosted for a day by the Pastoral Planning Office. This was an opportunity to discuss the Pastoral Plan and an opportunity to meet with members of the Catholic Youth Team and the Catholic Education Office to speak about their work in supporting Parishes and Pastoral Areas. Pastoral Workers undertake vital work to support parish life. Their roles are quite varied depending on the size and needs of the parish. As the Pastoral Plan develops, these roles and similar ones will be essential in the life of parishes and Pastoral Areas.

TOTALLY COMMITTED TO GOD!

Have you, as a lay person young or older, made a private decision that you want God to come before everything else for the rest of your life – totally to do God's will in all things. Since then are you unsure what to do next or who to share this with.

You could get in touch with Fr. Mike Doyle. Ph 351-3291 or email 2mjd@orcon.net.nz

Hospital Chaplaincy With the sudden death of Fr Kevin O'Grady, the Christchurch Central and Christchurch South Pastoral Areas are considering how best to respond to this new need.



Pastoral Planning Office

As the year almost draws to a close it is appropriate to reflect on our journey thus far since the Pastoral Plan's launch in February and the entrustment in May by Bishop John of the Plan to Our Lady Help of Christians.

Bishop and Priest Coordinators gather to discuss Pastoral Plan

New insights were gained when Bishop John, Bishop Barry and the Priest Coordinators gathered on Tuesday 7th November to share about the Pastoral Plan.

It was evident from the gathering that the Priests of the Diocese are providing real support and leadership for the Pastoral Plan in their parishes and communities. Bishop John was heartened by the sharing and the level of support that the Priests were providing for the Plan. It was evident too from what was shared by the Priests that the laity is motivated and supportive of the Pastoral Plan.

Each Priest had an opportunity to share something of what had been happening in their respective Pastoral Areas. Here are a few examples...

Mid Canterbury:

Bishop John inaugurated the Mid Canterbury Pastoral Area on Sunday 8th October with a liturgy at Holy Name Church, Ashburton, beginning the Pastoral Planning process for the Area. This liturgy was the culmination of four very good parish meetings in each of the parishes in Mid Canterbury to discuss the Plan. The bulletin has been used

extensively to speak about the principles and the Plan generally. Bereavement care has been introduced in the Pastoral Area.

South Canterbury:

Each parish was visited to provide an opportunity to speak about the Plan prior to the Bishop inaugurating the Area in August. A meeting of all the parish councils was then held with the Bishops and myself present to formulate the structure of the Pastoral Area Council.

Christchurch Central:

A *School of Prayer* was held between the Cathedral and St Mary's Parishes (two evenings in each Parish) with numbers limited to 40 people.

Christchurch Shore:

33 people, along with a number of apologies, from parish councils came together for a gathering, which looked at an overview of the Plan, the pastoral principles and the Pastoral Area. This concluded with a shared meal.

As a Diocese there have been opportunities undertaken for clergy formation. Upon reflection, a good deal has happened over the year and we look forward to 2007 as we continue to implement the Pastoral Plan in the Diocese. Thank you for all the support and prayers.

Please keep up the prayers for the Diocese and the Pastoral Plan. I can be contacted on (03) 366 9869 or email mstopforth@chch.catholic.org.nz

Mike Stopforth

Bishop's Deputy for the Pastoral Plan



Fr. Kevin O'Grady

Fr. Kevin died suddenly on 20th Sept. 2006 from a head injury suffered in a fall. Ordained in 1959, he served in various parishes in the Christchurch Diocese. He is best known for his work as a Hospital Chaplain, mainly at the Christchurch Public Hospital for about 32 years and Chaplain to Nazareth House for many years. He was dedicated to the patients and their families and was on call 24/7. Fr. Kevin was a close friend of staff, whether Catholic or not, and played a significant part in many of their lives performing marriages, baptisms and in other important events in their lives. The Memorial Service filled the Cathedral with people and was attended by a cross-section of all the Hospital personnel. Memorial books, which were signed by staff at both hospitals, were presented to the family. At the time of his death, he was Chairman of the Inter-Church Council on Hospital Chaplaincy and also involved with Catholic Social Services. On the lighter side, Fr. Kevin was well known in trotting and rugby league circles.

He was a big man with a big heart and his death has left a huge gap in many lives.

Monsignor Matthew James Duggan

On October 9th last in a crowded Cathedral, four Bishops and 24 Priests concelebrated the Memorial Mass for Monsignor Matthew James Duggan who died suddenly at his home in Cork City on September 29th 2006, aged 80 years.

Msgr. Matt was born at Ballydehob, County Cork, Ireland, in 1927 and was ordained a Priest on June 8th 1952. Having volunteered for work in New Zealand, he was appointed to the Christchurch Diocese and within months he was one of six Priests in Greymouth. The weather and the strong faith of the Catholic population reminded him of home. For the next 50 years he worked as curate in many different parishes and then as Parish Priest in Ngahere, Waimate, Ashburton, Leeston and Sockburn.

In 1985, whilst Parish Priest at Sockburn, he was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese and one year later was made Prelate of Honour. He was then appointed Parish Priest of Bishopdale and spent nine years as Administrator of the Cathedral.

His final appointment was as Parish Priest at St. Albans.

A larger than life personality, his keen sense of humour, ready smile, profound sense of justice and compassionate heart equipped him well for his life's vocation. People of all ages found in him a wise counsellor, caring pastor and true friend. The Bishop Joyce Centre at Sockburn is testimony to his inspirational leadership and selfless dedication to his people.

Msgr. Matt had a passion for rugby and was an avid supporter of the Crusaders. A personal friend to many sporting personalities, he was Chaplain to the Marist/Albion Rugby Club.

Having retired to Cork in 2001, we were fortunate to have him return for a few months earlier this year. He enjoyed doing supply where needed, and old parishioners found his prodigious memory for names and faces was as sharp as ever. Little did we know it was to be his last visit. May he rest in peace.

Restorative Justice Programme

Fr. Bernard Goulding tells about the Sycamore Programme.

It is a restorative justice programme based on the encounter Jesus had with Zacchaeus. It is making an impact on prison inmates, turning their lives around.

Further interest in the programme can be explored by visiting

www.pfnz.org.nz



Fr. Hubert Hayward SSC

No one could have predicted how satisfying Fr. Hayward would find the life at Good Shepherd House when Bishop Meeking invited him to move from Cathedral House.

But how would he, who had spent much of his life living alone, adapt to living in a house in close proximity to young men training for the priesthood? How would this man, in some ways gruff and unconcerned with small talk, fit in? In the event, it worked out very well indeed. This old Priest, with his store of priestly experience and treasured friendships with fellow Priests of a lifetime, became the kaumatua, the bearer of wisdom, for the young students. He was able, at the table usually, to join in and add his views and his knowledge of the mind of the Church, to all the discussions as they arose. He too was a witness to priestly virtue and values. He would never have said so, of course, but they were learning about the gospel

counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience as ways of imitating Jesus, the Priest.

How he loved being a Priest and serving as a Priest. He lived in order to celebrate Mass, either in the Chapel with the students, or taking his place at the altars of the diocesan Churches, filling in for Priests who were away for one reason or another. He celebrated the Latin Mass frequently in the Cathedral, on whose building committee his father had served. He heard confessions there often, as well as serving the Cathedral branch of the Catholic Women's League as Chaplain. He had a special link with the Korean Catholic Community, whose Chaplains welcomed him warmly and the contribution he was able to make assisting with the Sacrament of Penance and Sunday Mass.

Fr. Hubert's stories of training to be a Priest in Ireland, in the Columban seminary, of cycling around France in the holidays, of being imprisoned by the

Japanese Army soon after ordination and his first appointment in Korea, of eventual repatriation to New Zealand via South Africa, of being caught up in the second war when he returned to Korea in 1947, of Priest colleagues and parishioners being killed by Communists all belied this quiet, short in stature Priest who seemed so ordinary in every way. He was very well read, ordering books regularly and systematically working his way through them and then giving them away, always books on theology and spiritual writing. He was a great devotee of the work of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and knew his writing very well.

On reflection, the latter years of his life were good years, after the deprivations and hardships of many of the earlier ones and for that, one could only be glad.

As Tertiary Chaplaincy winds down, it has been a year of challenge and excitement.

We began this year as a new team with our Priest Chaplain, Fr Frank, from the Philippines.

This is the second year the ministry has been serving tertiary staff and students, with the job evolving every day into bigger and better things. Our work involves working at the four main tertiary institutions. Mass is celebrated at Canterbury University, Lincoln University and Christchurch Polytechnic each week. Along with Mass, the team is busy organizing retreats, events such as International night, faith building activities/events and all the things you need to do in a parish for our Sunday Mass which is held at Rochester and Rutherford Hall at 7pm during term time. The end of the year saw the team visiting the seniors at all the Catholic Secondary Schools, informing them what is available to them as a student next year.

The team would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have prayed for this ministry over the last two years; to those who have been generous in giving donations and for those who have offered their time and services – very much appreciated. Lastly Fr Frank Gan will be leaving us on 5th December 2006 to go back to the Philippines (Calagua Is). Fr Frank has been an amazing asset to the team, bringing in lots of laughter, good times and wisdom to this ministry. We will miss Fr Frank dearly, especially his stories at the beginning of his homilies. Fr Frank loves serving God and never misses an opportunity to evangelise. Good-bye Fr Frank on behalf of the team and the staff and students who you came into contact with this year.



Tertiary Chaplaincy

Catholic Discipleship College

A new outreach in the Catholic Church

This College is due to open in February 2007. It is for those wanting to deepen their knowledge and experience of being a Catholic who belongs in a supportive church family. Many young people have experienced this in the annual 10 day school called 'Hearts Aflame'. This new College will be a kind of live-in deeper experience of the same spirit.

It is a national school and will be based in Tuakau, south of Auckland. Those interested (any age) should contact the acting principal, immediately.

Fr. Neil Vaney SM
Phone (09) 489 8197
Email info@cdc.ac.nz

Golden Jubilee - a Family double

Sister Mary of the Angels, of Carmel, celebrated 50 years as a professed religious Carmelite on 1st October 2006. Leading the celebration of the Mass, assisted by Bishops Cunneen and Meeking, was her brother, Fr. Bevan Smith, who was celebrating his 50 years as a Diocesan Priest.

It was a memorable occasion and one that is quite unique in the history of the Church in New Zealand.

May they both be truly blessed in their vocations and in the time ahead.



Schools



Room 2 children from Sumner School, Our Lady of the Sea, with letters from the Kenyan orphanage.

Sumner School, Our Lady Star of the Sea

Gifts from pupils at the school were well received by the children in a Kenyan orphanage. Children from Room 2 raised \$100.00 for them by doing extra jobs at home, etc. The money was used to buy a variety of games. One of the parents travelled to Kenya to deliver the games. There was great excitement among the Kenyan children when they received them.

New Hope Children's Centre is a charitable children's home situated in the Uplands area, about 40km from Nairobi, Kenya. The home was started in April 2000 by Mr and Mrs Chege, retired employees of Barclays and Baroda Banks. The couple run the home on a voluntary basis and live among the children in the orphanage. The orphanage relies solely on the benevolence and generosity of individual and corporate well wishers for its survival.

A member of the community has recently been working as a volunteer at NHCC, currently the home for 105 orphaned or abandoned girls and boys.

These kids have little, except the love and bond of each other and their Christian faith.

Roncalli College, Timaru

Award Winners

The College outdoor programme is climbing to success. The school was awarded the best Outdoor Education Programme Award for 2006 in a ceremony held by Outdoor New Zealand in Wellington recently.

College Deputy Principal and outdoor education coordinator, Gerry Fennessy, said the school was thrilled with the success. He has been involved with the outdoor education programme at Roncalli for a number of years and he gives thanks for the support and help from the Principal and other staff members.

Mr Fennessy says "Our programme of outdoor education was something positive for students. I think the biggest thing students learn is the ability to get on with each other. It is so good being with nature and in the wilderness."

Our Lady of the Assumption, Hoon Hay

Our Lady of the Assumption School is celebrating its 50th Jubilee in March 2007.

The building of Our Lady of the Assumption School began in 1951, when the original two classrooms were used as the first church in Hoon Hay. The school officially opened on 7th February 1957 with a roll of 55 pupils. Bishop Joyce obtained the services of Sisters from the Order of the Good Shepherd, who staffed the school until 1968.

Every decade, dedicated staff and hard working parents have contributed to developing the school further with upgraded facilities and maintaining Catholic traditions and beliefs.

One of the main strengths of O.L.A. is that it has always been a family centred school. Co-operation between staff and parents is integral to this school community. Currently there are approx. 210 students at our school. Amazingly there are 22 families in our community, with a parent who is an ex-O.L.A. pupil. We have 33 second generation students. Some are related to first day pupils, ex-teachers, cleaners and a past secretary.

The 50th Jubilee celebrations will be held on the 2nd-4th March, 2007. Enrolments can be obtained via:
olaschooljubilee@yahoo.co.nz
and the school office ph 338-9503.

Catholic Cathedral College

A New View

For those travelling down Ferry Road to and from the city there is a brand new view of the Cathedral and Cathedral College or should it be said, a long forgotten view. The high brick wall built in 1927 has now largely gone, replaced by a steel-rod "see-through" boundary fence. The old Sacred Heart College swimming baths and former Montessori School were demolished during the September school holidays just ended.

The site is being landscaped, giving quite a spectacular new view through to the Cathedral. There are other plans in the pipeline, along with this exciting new development.

The Sacred Heart Montessori Department under Sister Mary St. Theodore was opened in 1925 in a separate open-air building near Ferry Road, with "modern in 1925" apparatus and comfortable furnishings, hitherto undreamed of in New Zealand infant schools.

Thirty or so years on, the Sacred Heart Girls' College Annual Magazine 1960, page 25, has the entry, with accompanying photo, of the official opening of the Swimming Pool – a day of joy and triumph – "A Dream Come True".

The "new view" shows Catholic Cathedral College is just that – Catholic Cathedral College – and proud of it.



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Around the Parishes

South Westland

New Zealand Citizenship Granted

September 18th was a memorable day for the Parish Priest of South Westland, Fr. Kevin Wei. Joined by 15 others at a ceremony in the Westland District Council Chambers in Hokitika, Fr. Kevin was formally granted N.Z. Citizenship. It was a proud occasion as he received his certificate and a Kowhai tree. On hand to witness and support him were Anthea Keenan, Secretary and Fr. Peter Costello, Parish Priest, of St. Mary's Parish, Hokitika. Congratulations Fr. Kevin.

Hokitika Parish

St. Mary's

A Video Night. After Mass a pot luck meal was enjoyed by about 40 people in the St. Mary's School hall supper room and then they viewed the video of Mother Teresa. This movie was an excellent presentation of her life and was enjoyed by all. We strongly recommend this movie to other parishes. A great night was had by all who attended.

Catholic Hospitality.

Hosting 'Parish to Parish for Bed and Breakfast' has given much appreciated accommodation alternatives for other parishioners and for me, an abundance of pleasure. The guests we have had have been genuinely delighted with this experience and some come back more than once. We have Australians and NZers who enjoy the Catholic hospitality as well as the scenery and friendship of the locals. Priests from Australia have been with us and that is a special blessing, especially when they are able to celebrate Mass in our home.

Marie Anderson of Christchurch (03 - 359 5541), is the contact person for this great work. Contact her for a copy of 'Catholic Hospitality in Australia and New Zealand'.

Sockburn Parish

Some reminiscences by Tour Chaplain, Fr Kevin Burns

Cite St-Pierre is only 15 minutes from the centre of Lourdes. This wonderful place is spread out on the hillside above the town and was built for pilgrims who have little or no financial resources. Having experienced extreme poverty in her own life, Bernadette prayed that Lourdes would provide for the poor who came to the shrine of Our Blessed Lady for prayer and healing. Our guide was one of the 1000 volunteers who give three weeks of their time to helping in the Cite. In 1955 the site was purchased for this purpose and developed.

Earlier that day, 6am to be exact, we 33 pilgrims and 50 other pilgrims from a

parish in North America entered the grotto under the statue of Our Lady to celebrate holy Mass. This was an exquisite hour made even more beautiful by a gentle rain. I call the rain beautiful because without it the custodians of the grotto would not have called the pilgrims to enter right into the grotto and attend Mass alongside the altar, sheltering from the rain. Oh blessed rain! In this grotto, the place of the apparitions, we celebrated Mass and placed at Our Lady's shrine many messages and petitions from our friends and parishioners.

Four days later in Dublin we were guided round St Patrick's Anglican Cathedral and in amongst the beauty and history of that building with its windows, altars and furnishings, 33 Afghanistan men were sitting together on a hunger strike and seeking asylum. They were avoiding being extradited back to their own country and chose the Cathedral to make their plight publicly known. We were 33 in number too. Our own freedom of movement in that city and around the world seemed immense in comparison to the plight of these young men who were desiring a better life for themselves in a country they had illegally entered and where they hoped to stay.

In the material I read on pilgrimages and journeys of faith there is one important attitude pilgrims are encouraged to keep at the forefront of their mind and that is to see themselves, not only receiving something from the place visited, but leaving something there - spiritual gifts and movements of the heart and soul which is the very essence of pilgrimage.

St. Matthew's Parish, Bryndwr

On Sunday 22nd October 27 young people were confirmed by Bishop John Cunneen at the 10am Mass. The preparation was run by a team the weekend before and was great fun.

After this Confirmation, the Ignite Group of Christ the King and St. Matthew's ran a successful fun afternoon for years 7 and 8 children.

St Paul's Parish, Dallington

The Papal Blessing presentation was made to Natalie Jennings on the occasion of her 50 years' service to St. Paul's Choir in Dallington. The choir, which began in 1956, has a current membership of 33 choristers ranging in age from 11 - 80+. The choir supports the liturgy with music from ancient and modern genres. We sing at Mass at least once a month and give support for major feasts and celebrations. Our choir is most ably supported by Michael Collins, our organist. Above all we, as a choir, believe that we have a duty to support one another and to this end we socialise and share in both joyful and sad

times. We are very proud to celebrate 50 years of service with Natalie.



St Paul's Parish

Woolston Parish

Parishioners were delighted to welcome Bishop Barry Jones to their Vigil celebration on 18th November for the Sacrament of Confirmation, conferred upon 21 young members of the Parish. The next morning a choir from the Samoan community within the Parish made their mark in leading the Sunday Mass with their fine choir of voices. This was a new initiative for the Parish and something we hope will become well established.

Fr Chris Friel leads a two week tour of the Holy Land on 14th April 2007. A small number of seats are still available. Please contact Fr Chris (03 384 1600) or Peter Fleming (09 580 0470) if you are interested.



St Mary's Past Pupils' Association

On 1st October (Mercy Day) the Association held its 62nd Anniversary gathering with a Mass, followed by a luncheon at Rosebank Estate Winery. The Association's aim is to help the Mercy Sisters who are working in the Samoan and Tongan Mission.

It has raised a lot of money over the years for this cause. The annual fund raising, which began 25 years ago, started off in a small way but has become so popular that it is now held twice a year. The Association is grateful for the support of members and others in this work.

Pictured are the four Blazey sisters who have been staunch supporters for many, many years.

Catholic Youth Team Update

25+ YOUNG ADULTS RETREAT

In late October, the team held a retreat for Young Adults aged 25 and over at Wainui, a beautiful and peaceful location. The theme of the retreat was the 'call to holiness' and 21 Young Adults gathered with Fr Michael Pui who led the retreat and gave us some excellent and insightful talks. Aside from the talks there were small groups, silent time, prayer times including Mass, Adoration and Reconciliation, as well as plenty of time for fun and getting to know the other Catholic Young Adults. It was a very blessed weekend; look out for the 25+ retreat in October 2007!

YOUNG ADULTS LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR

The team recently ran a Life in the Spirit Seminar especially for Young Adults for the first time. 35 Young Adults gathered to learn more about the role of the Holy Spirit in their spiritual journey and to recommit their lives to Christ in a new and deeper way. It was an amazing and anointed seminar with an atmosphere of deep peace throughout the event. A variety of speakers challenged and inspired the participants while a fantastic music team led the participants in prayer, praise and worship. Small groups were another highlight of the seminar. It was clear that the Lord worked powerfully in the lives of many. We hope to run another Seminar in the future.

OTHER CYT NEWS

-We are pleased to announce that Caitlin Humphrys has been appointed as Youth Worker and will start with the team in January 2007. Caitlin is from Brisbane, Australia, and it is great to have her joining the team. At the time of writing we are in the process of advertising for a World Youth Day Coordinator to join the team early next year.

-Mark on your calendars the dates for our Antioch Camp for Years 11-13 next year – March 2nd – 4th, 2007.

Catholic Youth Team Camp.



Seeking God First

External observers make sometimes critical and even bigoted remarks about the Catholic Church. That is what we expect. "A servant is not greater than his master." At times it is hard to take because we live surrounded by a cultural atmosphere that says impressions are what matters. It does not require a huge experience of life to know that human beings worry about what others think of us. The entire world of advertising is built upon the premise that we should fret about how we look to others. Looking good or being "with it" is the modern Grail many are seeking. But what a hollow trophy. In death it will all end and then comes the judgement. It is said the size of our funeral will depend on the weather. Empty fame. But remember St Paul who chooses God-pleasing over people-pleasing. His first and only allegiance was to Jesus Christ. This mindset he summed up succinctly to the Galatians: "Am I now trying to win the approval of people, or of God? ... If I were still trying to please others, I would

not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). It is said that two kinds of people always fail - those who listen to nobody and those who listen to everybody. St Paul writes: "... Each of us will give an account of themselves to God" (Romans 14:12). In the end, it's only how God judges us that counts. Wisdom is seeking His Will first. Let others think what they like but as long as we are right with God, then all is well. We do care about others but care about God's Will first. Too often our actions are ruled, not by a sense of purpose but by a need to please. We are concerned so much about what certain people think. With every step we look over our shoulder to see whether they are smiling or frowning. God says, 'You shall have no other gods before me' (Exodus 20:3). Now, our first thought might be: 'But I don't have any other gods?!' But we do when we dedicate our life to impressing people rather than obeying God. When we are the children of God our number one responsibility is to please Him. Our second is to live our

life to the fullest. Living on purpose, choosing to live God's way in God's world, whatever people say, is the way to really live; anything else is just existing. This is all quite practical. At Mass on Sunday we come to worship God, not to be entertained. His glory and His Praise matter most. We come to do that. As His creatures each Sunday in justice we give our worship to God who is giving us everything. The Mass is not about us. The Mass primarily is for God.

Main point: Our Catholic Diocese exists first to worship God through Christ. That is our primary task. If we do that, and we do so each Sunday, basically, all is well. Forget the critics. Let us not judge ourselves by their disapproval. Come let us worship Him. "Seek first the Reign of God and all will be added unto us."

Fr. Carl Telford SM



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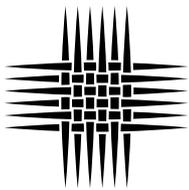
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When God Calls

Jenny Trolove, 21year old parishioner of Oxford in the Rangiora Parish writes,

'When Jesus said to build our lives on a firm foundation He meant it. In our education or career we can be building with the speed of eight workers before we have even considered that little, but vitally important thing: the foundation. For me, my year at Bible School ensured that.

I remember a youth retreat I attended at fifteen where Father Neil Vaney described a Catholic Bible school in Canada, singing its praises and urging us to make our way to one which he hoped to begin in NZ. Three years later as I finished high school no one seemed to know anything about it. Assuming the seed once planted in my heart had died, I decided to work for a year before studying Fine Arts.

However, "we humans make plans but the Lord has the final word" (Prov 16:1) ...and I'm so grateful that He does! The opportunity arose for me to visit my sisters in South Africa and Spain, so with an Around-the-World ticket in hand and University on hold, I headed off overseas. Continuing on to England I gained employment and also had time for sightseeing. It was a wonderful time in my life, yet as the next academic year was set to begin in New Zealand I had to come to a decision: What did I really want to do with my life? That question immediately drew forth my response "I want to do what You want me to do Lord," followed by another question, "And what would that be?" After years of the Bible School not even crossing my mind it seemed to breeze right on in again. The following September I was in Radway, Alberta, Canada.

John Paul II Catholic Bible School was a fantastic foundational year for me.

At Bible School Christ walks with us, taking us back to the basics with few outside distractions. The experience is so tightly woven in prayer and community life that every day brings both challenge and restoration, forming deep genuine friendships through



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shared experience ...and also hilarious fun! Bible School for me was a year of healing and restoration of wounds I didn't even know I had, a discovery of God's love and plans for me, a

greater desire to delve further into the truth, and most importantly a far closer relationship with Jesus. Christ became my cornerstone, and that life is planted in and built on Love. To use but one word to describe the year's outcome: freedom. Absolute, complete freedom. It was while I was at JP II that I first got wind of the NZ Bible School actualising. Here, seven years after first hearing of it, the Catholic Discipleship College (CDC) has become an exciting reality. Now it is my joy, in God's ever-perfect timing, to be asked to join the CDC team. It is brilliant that so many Kiwis can now experience what for me was such a whoompha of a year ...without having to endure Canada's forty-below temperatures!

Whether you feel like you are standing back contemplating your future or already in the midst of constructing the third floor, now is the time to check in with the one who has created the blueprint for your dream home: "Is there any work You want to do on my foundation Lord?" From experience, if He nudges your spirit even slightly towards the direction of a yes, take the leap, send in your application and go for it. One word: Freedom!

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Inform

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