



# inform

ISSUE 71 December 2007

Newsletter of the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch

## Christmas

May the Holy Family be an inspiration and help to all Christian Families and bring peace to all.

And may the Christ Child shower many blessings on you all this Christmas.



### The One True Gift – by Peb Simmons

The two Church seasons which, for a few weeks duration, disturb routine activity, are Advent and Lent. Ash Wednesday is a reminder of transient life and spiritual responsibility when, for the following forty days, we are encouraged to give up some usual daily comfort, give to those in need, and return to prayer. But the beginning of Advent almost immediately jolts the memory to consider Christmas card lists, over-eating and enforced shopping. Gift giving is upper-most in the general consciousness; but what should we give, and to whom?

Secularism has stripped Christmas of almost all reference to the Christ Child. No longer is it the season of Christ's Mass – His special time for recognition and honour – but a mere holiday, during which public Nativity displays are not politically correct, and the all-embracing greeting of "Merry Christmas" is reduced to "Happy Holiday", just in case we offend someone! So-called courtesy to others has whittled away at the foundation of all we used to enjoy and hold dear. Certainly since 1223, when Saint Francis of Assisi constructed the first Crib, 'in remembrance of the Child born in Bethlehem' [1], the festival has been celebrated with joy, tenderness and love. All over the Christian world, Christmastide was once a time for pause, a listening in the heart, awakening a desire to stir that special Love the newborn Babe, held in the arms of Mary His Mother, offered to all humankind.

Advent (once referred to as a *little Lent*) is that special time

for preparation, a few short weeks in which to make ready for His coming. Thankfully, it is still possible to give Him glory, even when so much of the traditional offerings have become tarnished. Could it be that in seriously listening to and acting on the Word, we might prepare the heart and mind to live more truly His great Commandment to Love one another? In the final test, in the Last Days, everything will be reduced to how we loved those people whom the Lord sent into our individual and collective lives. There will be a questioning into how we used the gifts of *mercy, kindness, gentleness, generosity, patience, and peace*, while at the same time discarding the beams of judgment and criticism. In this too violent and greedy age – almost a mirror image of the Roman world into which the Christ Child was born – we could be forgiven for wondering if our present-day civilization is also teetering on the edge of another Decline and Fall. Yet Christ's teachings still remain the only true template by which humanity can grow and live together in peaceful harmony.

Christ loves us, each one, and 'now we must do the same' (Col.3:13). Thus it is right and proper to grow in the Commandment to Love. This is the one true gift we can offer Christ on His Birthday. With this Advent, let us respond to the Word and '...open our hearts to one another as Christ has opened His heart to us – and God will be glorified.' Rom.15:7

[1] The Life & Times of St. Francis-Paul Hamlyn 1967

# Bishop's Pastoral Letter

## The Word of God in Advent

One aspect of being a person is to be able to communicate with other persons. We live by communicating, which we do in a variety of ways - signs, gestures, music and artistic forms of various kinds - but most of all, we communicate by word, either written or spoken. Indeed, we would say that the person unable to communicate by word is severely handicapped.

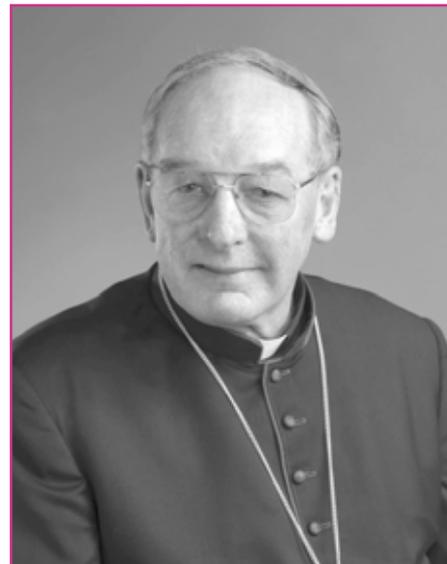
Being able to communicate means being able to share something of myself with others.

St. Augustine has captured it memorably: "If I think of what I want to say, the word is already in my heart. And if I want to talk to you, I look for some means whereby what is in my heart may also be in yours. So wanting the word, which is already in my heart, to come over to you, and make its way into your heart, I make use of my voice to talk to you. The sound of the voice brings you to understand the word. And when my voice has done this, it ceases; but the word carried to you by the sound is now already in your heart, and has not left mine..."

From eternity, God has thought of what he wanted to say - within God there has been a Word, an expression of himself, a divine self-utterance. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jn 1,1. Within God, there is God and His self expression, His self utterance. This is Father and Son, God and Word, from all eternity.

This mystery of divine self expression, self utterance, is the foundation of the liturgy of the Word in the liturgical celebrations of the Church. From all eternity, the divine plan included the incarnation of the Word - the world was created so that God could become part of it, by taking flesh and being born of the Virgin Mary. In the Gospel of St John, we find this mystery of God's self-disclosure in Jesus expressed as "The Word became flesh and lived among us..."

God's self expression, self communication, self utterance, God's Word, took palpable flesh from Mary. For centuries, however, a process of the preparation and formation of a holy people had been in place. Pope John Paul II, in an



address in February 1993 introducing a document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, taught us about this process. "...it is true that putting God's words into writing, through the charism of scriptural inspiration, was the first step toward the incarnation of the Word of God. These written words, in fact, were an abiding means of communication and communion between the chosen people and their one Lord. On the other hand, it is because of the prophetic aspect of these words that it was possible to recognize the fulfilment of God's plan when the "Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us".

In the plan of God, the incarnation of the Word was prepared for by the prophets, sages, psalmists and chroniclers of the Old Testament. These inspired writings, and the speakers whose words they capture, brought the Word of God to a people in order that it might be a holy people, a consecrated nation in one of whom, God the Son, the Word, would take flesh. Smaller visitations of the Word prepared the way for the mystery of the incarnation of the Word.

In Advent each year, the liturgy of the Church makes present the ancient expectancy of the Messiah. The Church assists us to share in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming by putting before us in the Liturgy, a carefully chosen selection of biblical readings. These readings from the inspired Word of God once prepared a people for the coming of the Messiah. Now they prepare us to celebrate the great feast of Christmas, when the Holy Spirit makes present to the Church the birth of the Word.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "+ B. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style.

★ Barry Jones

**Bishop of Christchurch**

# DIOCESAN GROUPS

## Diocesan Welfare Council *meets the Tindall Foundation*

Members of D.W.C met many of this year's successful funding applicants at Cathedral House on Tuesday, 9 October.

Applicants who received funding were:

- Cobden Mercy Outreach.
- 9 Months Plus.
- Bishopdale Community Trust.
- Catholic Social Services.
- Christ the King/St.Matthew's Parishes' Youth Group.
- Christchurch Womens Refuge Inc.
- Catholic Youth Team.
- Faith and Light.
- P.A.T.H.S Charitable Trust.
- St. John of God Waipuna Trust.
- Sydenham Community Development Trust.
- Youthline Inc.
- Catholic Network of Marriage Educators Inc.

During discussion over tea and posh cake, Council members expressed surprise at the extent and variety of welfare work undertaken by these groups. All in all, the Tindall Foundation provided \$47,000 to the D.W.C. to distribute.

A wonderful process to be part of. Grateful thanks from all involved, to the Tindall Foundation.

**Murray Winder**

**Chair**

**Diocesan Welfare Council.**

## Catholic Women's League

Members have been very busy knitting for the Neo-natal units in Christchurch and other cities. They have also supported Street Out Reach with lovely knitted garments. This is part of our mission at home. Money and goods sent to the League Mission Stations in the Pacific last year from Christchurch totalled \$42,257.15.

**Jenny Muschamp**

**President**

## Prison Chaplaincy



*Mary Kamo (Diocesan Chaplain and leader, seated left); Doris Brown, (standing rear) Mollie Goossens, (seated) and Christine Billante.*

Christine Billante retired recently after serving almost 10 years with the Diocesan Chaplaincy as Chaplain to Rolleston Men's Prison. In appreciation for the volunteer support by teams from Sockburn, Burnside, Hornby, Lincoln, Phillipi, Ascent and Catholic Workers who supported her in the mission, she hosted an afternoon tea in the parish centre at Our Lady of Victories Parish. During the afternoon Molly Goossens and Doris Brown, who both retired during the year after 25 years of volunteer service, were presented with flowers and a Certificate from the Diocese in recognition of all they had done. Additionally Ben Carr of the Philippi Group was acknowledged with a Certificate for his ongoing support to the Catholic Chaplaincy at all the prisons.

A range of interesting items were arranged as entertainment during the afternoon celebration.

## Secular Franciscans

Congratulations to the Secular Franciscan Order who celebrated their 75th Anniversary on the 25 August, Feast of St. Louis, King of France, Patron of the Secular Franciscans. Bishop Barry concelebrated Mass at Nazareth House with Father Bede O'Gorman, Father Paddy Cahill and Father Matthias Murphy, O.F.M. Cap who delivered the homily. Father Mario Dorado, O.F.M. Cap played the guitar while hymns were sung. Friends and visitors from North Shore, Hokitika, P.N.G - American Capuchin Friar, Australian Secular Institute Franciscan, Father Dan Doyle of Oxford and Linda

Atkinson, National President of the Secular Franciscan Order and of course members of the Holy Spirit Fraternity. John Moylan's 50 year Jubilee was recalled and celebrated.

## Secular Discalced Carmelites



*Recently elected Council of the Secular Order Discalced Carmelites, Peace of Christ Community, Christchurch.*

*Left to right,  
Barbara Hempseed - Formator,  
Kevin McCarthy - Second Councillor,  
Noeline Sapwell - President,  
Mary O'Boyle - Third Councillor,  
Claire Tier - First Councillor,  
Karen Marra - Treasurer & Reserve Councillor,  
Pat Carroll - Secretary.*

They also recently celebrated their 25th birthday.

Margaret Dwyer, an original member, shared with the community the origins of the Secular Order in Christchurch.

## Passionist Family Groups



Earlier in the year a formation weekend was held at Hanmer for anyone involved in Passionist Family Groups. Ann and Henry Siave were acknowledged and thanked for their role as Regional Co-ordinators in the Christchurch area. Jan and Kevin Whitburn have now taken over the regional co-ordinators role for the Diocese. It was a fantastic weekend where the children spent Saturday afternoon enjoying the outdoors. The sack races proved a hit. The adults shared stories and experiences of what Passionist Family Groups mean to them.

# AROUND THE PARISHES

## St Mary's Parish, Manchester Street



*St Mary's Catholic Women's League*

In October 2007 the St Mary's Catholic Women's League Branch celebrated its 40th Anniversary. A special Mass of thanksgiving was offered by Parish Priest, Fr Carl Telford SM and this was followed by luncheon at Eliza's Manor House.

The first Branch President, Maureen Gill, received life membership and seven other members, 40th Anniversary badges. The Anniversary cake was cut by Maureen Gill and the present President, Erin Ryan.

On the feast of Corpus Christi a set of green vestments was presented by the President, Erin Ryan, on behalf of St Mary's CWL, to commemorate the

Anniversary. In her presentation speech she recalled the dedication, in faith and service - the motto of the League, of all past and present members and asked that Mary, the mother of God and patroness of the League, send members a deep faith, so that the voice of women within the Church may continue to be heard by the generations of the future.

Fr Carl Telford, in his acceptance reply, thanked the members for their generous gift and for the constant support within the Parish.

## St Joseph's Parish, Papanui St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Joseph's St. Vincent de Paul Society of Papanui, celebrated 50 years in September this year.

The original initiative for a Society came from Fr. Timoney, then Parish Priest of Papanui, who shoulder tapped a number of parishioners who became the original Society. These men were Mick Duffy (President), J Warren (vice President), Bill Wilcox (Secretary/Treasurer), and Jack Gavigan. The first meeting was also attended by Fr Timoney and Joe Cullen.

In those days Fr Timoney was the source of information about which families needed a visit. Giving of material comforts were not the only objective and the early minutes record at least one client being encouraged to resume attendance at Holy Mass.

Then, as now, grocery orders were given to families in need to tide them over. One poignant case was recorded for Mrs X in 1959, "one dress had been received from the parish for daughter's First Communion. Husband is in prison for 28 days, and has lost his job. She has bills outstanding for groceries, rent and lighting and has no fuel." These days absolute material poverty has been replaced by a soul destroying spiritual poverty that blights the lives of families.

Prayer and visitation of the poor in their own homes is still the most important activity of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

As current president, I extend my thanks to those parishioners who have assisted the Society's charitable work in Papanui. Thanks also to the members of the Society over the years. The Society will

## RECENT HAPPENINGS IN PARISHES

In June the Ashburton parish had a change of leaders in some of the groups, this was acknowledged at the Sunday Mass by Monsignor Harrington and the new leaders were given candles from the Parish co-ordinators Louise and Richie McRae and was followed by morning tea.

Adrienne and Ian Hunter were thanked for their many years of enthusiasm and commitment to the Passionist Family Group Movement at St Matthew's, Bryndwr. Maureen and Jim Kerr are now the new parish co-ordinators.

### PFGM Aims & Goals

- They come together to share their Christian lives together
- To give example to our children

- To support each other in times of need
- Live and Love like the early Christians - See how they love one another
- Build and promote community spirit within the parish

### Marriage

A national Training Weekend is being held (23rd to 25th May) in Christchurch for those involved in pre marriage education - who assist couples coming to the Church to be married. It is also ideal for those involved in ministering to couples after the wedding celebration, for example Marriage Encounter and Marriage Enrichment.

For more information about the weekend check out the website [www.chch.catholic.org/marriageweekend](http://www.chch.catholic.org/marriageweekend)

### Voice for Life: (Formerly SPUC)

As we know prayer works miracles. We wish to remind all people to keep in your prayers the cause of the unborn. The 18 000 plus abortions in our country annually is a scandal and as the late Mother Theresa said "the greatest evil in the world today is abortion."

We know there are many people who share our concern. We would like your support through prayer and action.

Please phone Ann (03) 9813436 or Denise 9819340

not know the true benefit of its works until we face the judgment of God. Let us pray that the Society will continue to be able to help the poor of Papanui. St Joseph, St Vincent de Paul and Blessed Frederic Ozanam, pray for us.

### St Ita's Parish, Rakaia



On September 1st, St Ita's Parish joyfully celebrated with eleven children and their families on the occasion of the children's First Holy Communion.

Pictured: Rev Msgr James Harrington with - Back row: Timothy Hanrahan, James Boag, Todd Boag, Jamie Burrows, Simon O'Reilly; Front Row: Nicola Baxter, Sophie Schrader, Olivia Schrader, Melissa Fawcett, Sarah O'Reilly.

### St Patrick's Parish, Lincoln



*50 Year Celebration*

Recently St Patrick's Parish Lincoln celebrated the 50 year anniversary of the opening of the present church building in Lincoln.

After the Saturday evening and Sunday morning Mass there was a chance to view a display of parish photos going back to the early days. We also viewed videos of the removal of the old church building on Shands Road in 1957 and the 25 year celebrations in 1982.

On the Sunday present and former parishioners and former Parish Priests enjoyed a jubilee lunch at Lincoln University. Parish Priest, Pat Crawford, and parish chairperson, Helen Gallagher, welcomed 100 people to share memories and a meal. Long time parishioners John Ryan and Myles Rea spoke of the past history of the Parish. Dominica Finch and her string quartet provided some wonderful music. Our jubilee cake was cut by Ilene Kortegast

and Fr Pat Crawford.

Ilene Kortegast has been in the Lincoln Parish since she was five years old and is the longest serving parishioner.

To complete our 50 year celebrations, later in the week we had the pleasure of welcoming Bishop Barry Jones on his first visit to our Parish to confirm 12 of our young people.

### St Patrick's Church, Greymouth

The Historic Places History Trust-listed window was gifted by the family of Felix Campbell in 1925. Felix was involved in goldmining and owned a liquor store and was known for his generosity as a parishioner. It was an extremely costly gift and remains a lasting memorial to the faith of the donor.

The window was inserted in the original frame in the church on Chapel Street that was opened in 1888.

It was manufactured by John Hardman & Co, Birmingham England, to the contract specification templates provided by Duffy and Clarke, Christchurch. The exacting workmanship of the templates was acclaimed, for the panes perfect fitting. This original frame is now being restored.

The central theme is the Coronation of Our Lady by Christ. It also includes John the Baptist - Patron Saint of the Christchurch Diocese;

St Patrick - Patron Saint of Ireland and the Greymouth Parish; St Brigid - also Patron Saint of Ireland and St Francis Xavier - who was then Patron Saint of Australasia and the East The upper sections are of the Crucifixion, Annunciation and the Nativity.

*Excerpts from; The Grey River Argus March 16th 1925 / The Greymouth Evening Star January 4th 2006*

### South Westland Parish



*The McGrath family and parishioners*

On the 25th August there was a special celebration at St Anne's Church in Hari Hari, South Westland.

At the Vigil Mass Michael Gerard McGrath was presented with a Papal Blessing for his many years of service to the Church.

A shared meal followed at the local RSA Hall and Michael was joined by family and friends in celebrating this occasion, with many stories being shared.

Originally from Greymouth, Michael has been a member of St Anne's for 54 years, and although now suffering from bad health, continues to delight people with his sense of humour.



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## St Teresa's Parish, Riccarton



On Sunday 25th November, just before the 10:00 am Parish Mass we welcomed five children from the parish school into the Catholic Church. The children have been participating in the RCIC programme "Journey of Faith" since 15th August, with a Rite of Acceptance taking place on Sunday 23rd September during the Parish 10am Mass. The children have been instructed by Fr Ramiel Alvarez – Parish Administrator, Ms Suzi De Gouveia - School Principal and Judith O'Sullivan – Parish Pastoral Assistant.

The children will be joined by a younger sibling for Baptism and five other children for First Holy Communion."

**Judith O'Sullivan**  
Pastoral Assistant

## Rangiora Parish



The Parish celebrated the many cultures that make up our vibrant Parish with a very special Mass celebrated on Sunday August 29th. Each of the many cultures took part in the Mass with an opening and welcome in Maori.

Our Parish Priest, Father Dan wore ceremonial vestments that were presented to him upon his leaving the Mission in Papua New Guinea.

The Mass was followed by a special shared meal with parishioners bringing a great range of different national dishes.

The whole event was an outstanding success ably organized by our Parish Council Secretary, Jenny Carter.

The photo attached shows one of the cultures represented at this Mass.

## St Bridget's Church, Loburn



*Loburn*

On Sunday 4 November Bishop Barry Jones concelebrated Mass at the historic St Bridget's Church in Loburn with Frs L. O'Connor, Bernard Goulding and Dan Doyle.. This beautifully maintained church was opened on 30 May 1875 and the conditions of the church and grounds are a credit to the local parishioners. About 80 attended the Mass, including parishioners from Rangiora and descendents of those buried there. After Mass, in glorious sunshine, Bishop Jones blessed the cemetery.

Many of the people buried there came from Ireland in the 1850's and 1860's to escape the hardships in Ireland. They acquired farms in the Loburn area, had families and built a small Catholic community who supported each other through many tough times. Eventually they decided to build the Church of St Bridgid .

St Bridgid's is one of very few Catholic churches in the Christchurch Diocese with its own churchyard or cemetery. An interesting fact is that the ancestors of three Roman Catholic Bishops of Christchurch, Bishop Joyce, Bishop Ashby and Bishop Jones, are buried in this small cemetery.

Mass is celebrated twice a year in May/ June and November. It is also used for weddings and funerals.

## St Patrick's Parish, Kaiapoi



On Sunday 4 November, 24 young people (adults included!) received the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Barry Jones at St Patrick's

Parish, Kaiapoi. It was wonderful to see the Parish coming together to celebrate this wonderful day. As part of the preparation for Confirmation the younger ones attended JAM Camp with the Catholic Youth Team, and the older ones visited the Carmelite nuns and spoke to them about their Christian call. Jessica Ham and Emily Billcliff, who were Confirmed as part of this group, have registered to go to World Youth Day with Fr. Michael Pui, the Parish Priest, as part of the North Canterbury Pilgrims.

## Korean Catholic Community



*St Paul Chang Hasang Catholic Church*

Fr Andrew, their Priest, was farewelled by the Korean Catholic Community in September. Pictured is a small group of the leaders who gathered with some Priests and Bishops of the Diocese to farewell him. He is seated in the centre.

It's been two years since the Korean Catholic Community moved to the Redemptorist Monastery.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped and supported the KCC.

We wonder if it will be possible to retrieve any of the Church adornments (Monastery) that were given away at the time of the closure of the Monastery

We would be willing to buy them back.

In October I joined the Korean community at Sunday Mass in the St Paul Chang Hasang Church. It was a wonderful experience for the writer. The Church was full with people of all ages from teenagers upwards. There was an air of expectancy as we awaited the beginning of Mass and to one side some were going in and out of the confessional.

The Mass itself was solemn, dignified, full of joy and praise of God in worship. About 25 or 30 members of the choir led the singing but the entire

congregation joined in heartily for most of the hymns. There was very much a feeling of community and family. Fr. Matthew, the new Priest, seems to be one with the people already. During the sermon there was a lot of laughter from the congregation but I noticed there was a serious tone towards the end. As the whole Mass was in Korean I did not understand a word. The Sign of Peace was a true reaching out to one another and I, one of two non Koreans there, was made to feel very much at home.

This kind of celebration of the Sunday Mass would do much to build up the strong faith of the Korean Catholic Community.

We, who are not Korean, are blessed to have them living among us.

### Sisters of Mercy



Congratulations to Sister Anna Burrowes (centre), who was welcomed into the novitiate as a New Member of Nga Whaea Atawhai Sisters of Mercy, on Friday 31st August. Anna lives with the Sisters of Mercy in Bishopdale and has been working as a Catholic Tertiary Chaplain. She will move to Wellington in January to continue her novitiate. She is photographed here with Sisters Kath and Raylene.

### Little Company of Mary



Mary Potter Community Centre

Bishop Barry Jones met with Sister Jeannette Connell, Little Company of Mary Congregational Leader, during her visit from England in August. The

photograph is taken in the new Mary Potter Community Centre at 442 Durham St North, St Albans. Bishop Barry Jones will bless the Mary Potter Centre before it is officially opened by the Hon Lianne Dalziel on November 23rd. An Open Day will be held on Saturday November 24th from 11a.m. to 3p.m.

## Youth Team Report



JAM camp was a fantastic weekend with 50 yr 7 and 8's from around the Diocese gathering at Blue Skies, Kaiapoi. Over the weekend the youth heard great talks, played lots of games, went to Mass at St Patrick's Kaiapoi and completed a fun and challenging confidence course.

### Young Adults

In October 37 young adults who are over 25 gathered for an amazing retreat led by Fr John Adams. He spoke to

them about Edith Stein. It was an amazing weekend of prayer, friendship and excellent input.

### World Youth Day

The Diocese so far has 550 people registered to go to Sydney next July. Many Parishes and schools are doing lots of fundraising to help young people attend. Please be generous with your support.

Join us on April 6th for 'The Journey of Mary McKillop Pilgrimage' to Temuka in preparation for World Youth Day. All are welcome.

### Tertiary Chaplaincy Team

We farewell Kerren and Anna from the Tertiary Team. We wish them both the best as they pursue new endeavours.

### Christchurch Polytechnic



For many years the Tertiary Chaplain celebrated Mass for staff and students at CPIT Christchurch. In recent times no Chaplain was available but a group, consisting mainly of staff, continued to meet and pray together. The photo shows some of this group preparing to pray together on a recent Monday. They meet in their lunch hour.



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## PASTORAL PLANNING OFFICE

### Why Pastoral Areas?

Each Parish in the Diocese is part of one of the nine Pastoral Areas. These Pastoral Areas offer new possibilities as the Pastoral Plan indicates:

*“Pastoral Areas offer exciting opportunities to be generous and imaginative, enabling parishes to look beyond their boundaries to their neighbouring parishes. It invites parishes to identify how they can help each other and share their resources. For example, a Pastoral Area might decide together to employ additional pastoral or youth workers or to combine for education programmes or sacramental preparation. Increasingly they will share priests. The concept of Pastoral Areas requires priests, religious, laity and parishes as a whole, to be generous in looking beyond personal interest to the wider needs of the Diocese and the mission of the Church.*

*The adoption of Pastoral Areas gives us an opportunity to review what is happening in our parishes, to acknowledge what is not happening, and to dream what might be possible in the future. Sharing the resources of people – priests, religious and laity – gives our parishes and Diocese the potential to be more vibrant in faith and in mission.* “

- Diocesan Pastoral Plan page 18

If a need arises within a Pastoral Area the principle that the Bishop has is that he looks to the Pastoral Area first to see what resources might be able to be accessed. A practical application of this is Christchurch Hospital where the Christchurch Central Area was asked to take responsibility for pastoral care of the Hospital.

The full Parish and Pastoral Area list can be found on the web [www.chch.catholic.org.nz/pastoralplan](http://www.chch.catholic.org.nz/pastoralplan)

### Certificate in Pastoral Ministry:

In 2008 the Certificate in Pastoral Ministry will be offered for the first time in the Christchurch Diocese. This has come out of a response to the Diocesan Pastoral Plan and the desire for continued formation of people across the Diocese.

This Certificate is offered by the Wellington Catholic Education Centre (WCEC) and taught by lecturers from the Christchurch Catholic Education Office. Each course requires 18 hours of teaching time, plus reading and an assignment. Courses can also be taken for interest. The Courses are offered free of charge.

This is an exciting new beginning in the opportunity for adult education in our Diocese.

For more information about the courses and when they are being offered check the website [www.chch.catholic.org.nz/formation](http://www.chch.catholic.org.nz/formation) or contact Mike Stopforth [mstopforth@chch.catholic.org.nz](mailto:mstopforth@chch.catholic.org.nz) phone 03-366 9869 or Charles Shaw (Course Coordinator) [cshaw@chch.catholic.org.nz](mailto:cshaw@chch.catholic.org.nz)

### Parish Secretary's Day



A day was held at Cathedral House for parish secretaries on Wednesday 19th September. This day followed a very successful day held some years earlier.

22 of our parish secretaries attended the day with another five sending an apology. Parish secretaries fulfil a very important role within the life of the local parish so it was opportune to provide a day for them which included:

- Sharing best practice and resources among themselves
- A time of prayer and reflection led by Sr Jill McLoughlin RSCJ
- An input on the working relationships of the secretary by Msgr Gerry O'Connor
- Administration matters (Paddy Beban and Janice Rennell)
- An update on the Pastoral Plan (Mike Stopforth).

### Mike Stopforth

#### Bishop's Deputy for the Pastoral Plan

*“The Pastoral Plan for our Diocese has been developed over a number of years at the initiative of Bishop John Cunneen. The Council of Priests oversaw this work, and I was a member of it, so I have been familiar with the plan from the very beginning. I endorse it, and recommend it, because the Church must always work in its present situation. As is well known, the need for excellent collaboration between priests and lay faithful to carry forward the mission of the Church is paramount.”*

- Bishop Barry Jones

## Inform

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