



21 March 2019

Issue No: 195

From +John...

*We are one,
they are us*

Kia tau te rangimarie ki a koutou,

In my last newsletter two weeks ago, I wrote about the line that had deeply impressed me from a Hymn sung at a Mass I celebrated with the Sisters of Mercy. The line of the Hymn was “***There is never a time for hope to die.***” Little did I know that just a week later New Zealand would be facing one of its “darkest days.” The tragedy of 50 people being shot and killed while they were at prayer on a Friday afternoon could easily make us think that hope had died. We have heard so much in the last few days about how “New Zealand has changed forever.” I believe that is true, this has been a very difficult time for everyone and will continue to be for a long time to come.

Amid this disaster people all over the country have turned out in their thousands to pray at many different services, have taken flowers to Mosques and stood outside the Mosques in solidarity with Muslims. Politicians and Civic Leaders who do not often speak of love and compassion, kindness and care have done so eloquently and with passion.

We have witnessed deep goodness and compassion in so many people. I have never heard so many people talking about how a dreadful act of violence has brought out the good in so many other people. This is the time for anyone in New Zealand to stand up and say that we have had enough of violence and racism and bigotry and hatred, attitudes which are negative and destructive do nothing for our society.

Last year Pope Francis wrote that wonderful document on Holiness called “Gaudete et Exsultate,” he wrote powerfully about the call to holiness and used the Beatitudes from Matthews Gospel to help us reflect on what holiness is. He wrote:

Being poor of heart: that is holiness

Reacting with meekness and humility: that is holiness

Knowing how to mourn with others: that is holiness

Hungering and thirsting for righteousness: that is holiness

Seeing and acting with mercy: that is holiness

Keeping a heart free of all that tarnishes love: that is holiness

Sowing peace all around us: that is holiness

Thousands of people around Aotearoa New Zealand have mourned with others, have been showing us that they are hungering and thirsting for right behaviour and justice, have been showing mercy, keeping their hearts free of anything that might tarnish words and acts of love, and above all have been sowing peace all around. Most of those people would not dream of calling themselves “holy”. I believe they are.

I thank God and I thank the people of New Zealand who have shown such love and goodness, such attitudes of welcoming all and accepting everyone in this land we are proud to call our home. This is bigger than New Zealand; messages of love and support have been received from Civic and Religious Leaders from all over the world who are thinking of and praying for us. Thank you to everyone who has not “allowed hope to die.”

With abundant blessings,

Naku noa. Na + Hoane

NEWS . . .

- Fr. Gregory Lakra OFM Cap will be leaving the Parish of the Holy Trinity on 1 April and will be returning to India for the rest of 2019. Fr Gregory has been unwell for some time and it has been decided that it will be better for him to return to India. We express our deep gratitude to Fr Gregory for his nine years in the Archdiocese and wish him every blessing.
- The website for the **National Office of Professional Standards** has recently gone live. Please share this as much as you can as it is another way to remind everyone that our Mission today is to build a safe Church for everyone. The website can be found at <http://safeguarding.catholic.org.nz>

Upcoming Safeguarding Workshops

Thursday 21 March:	Te Awakairangi	6.45 pm St Bernadette's Hall.
Tuesday 26 March	Otaki	6.30pm St Mary's Catholic Church 4 Convent Rd, Otaki
Thursday 28 March:	Te Wairua Tapu	6.45pm Our Lady of the Rosary church
Thursday 4 April	Our Lady of the Valleys and St Joseph's Upper Hutt	6.45pm Pettit Centre
Sunday 7 April	St Francis of Assisi Ohariu	4pm Ss Peter and Pauls Church Hall, 37 Dr Taylor Terrace Johnsonville
Tuesday 9 April	Plimmerton St Theresa's and Kapiti our Lady of Kapiti	6.45pm St Theresa's Hall Plimmerton
Thursday 11 April	Otari, St Mary's of the Angels, Sacred Heart Cathedral	6.45pm St Thomas More Church, Wilton
Tuesday 30 April	Our Lady of Hope	7.15 Cuppa and 7.30 pm start at Our Lady of Fatima Church Tawa, 169 Main Rd,
Tuesday 7 May	Wairarapa Parish	Yet to be determined



In February this year Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad el-Tayeb met together. The two religious leaders have asked all people 'to rediscover and spread 'the values of peace, justice, goodness, beauty, human fraternity and coexistence.' They go on to say they believe 'that among the most important causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and a prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies.' (See document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and living together.)