



18 April 2019

Issue No: 197



From +John...

Kia tau te rangimarie ki a koutou,

The liturgies of this Holy Week invite us to engage with the words, actions and experiences that were part of Jesus's journey to live the life his Father called him to live. As we live Holy Week, hopefully we can see how each step and feeling that Jesus experienced applies to our lives as well. His reality reflects our reality. That is the mystery and truth of the incarnation and Holy Week. In a strange way this Jesus week is a metaphor for our own lives.

Palm Sunday saw Jesus welcomed as a King with shouts of confidence and acclamation. Most of us know what it is to be celebrated and affirmed by others, to have others put their faith in us and to be recognised as someone special. We also know how quickly that can change. Realisation dawns that they didn't really understand – that the relationship wasn't mutual or life giving.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mirror the ordinary times of our lives. We journey along enjoying, and maybe enduring, the ordinary and the mundane wondering what we are here for and experiencing a restlessness about life and our future. Maybe we like Jesus start to look around us wondering if our friends are committed to the same values and dreams.

Holy Thursday is our big wake up call. Jesus shows us how he wants each of us to be. He shows us what service and sacrifice is all about. He gives us a mandate to love and to serve and to give ourselves without counting the cost. Yet even the one closest to him don't get it. Peter is confused and protests. Jesus looks at each of us and says that is how I want you to live YOUR life. Do as I do. Let your life mirror my life.

Then the horror of Good Friday. He is judged and condemned because he is a good man. Feelings of chaos, despair, betrayal, fear, anxiety, well up in Jesus and us. Is the pain, challenge and change too much? Will we face it and live through it? Or run away and ignore the one we | followed. So, what do we do? The Challenge of Good Friday is to kiss and embrace our cross. And like him in our pain and suffering reach out in love, forgiveness and compassion. In total trust we throw ourselves willingly and fearfully into the hands our God.

Saturday is the time of emptiness and aloneness- when we are faced with nothingness. The end of a relationship, a betrayal, a hopeless situation, despair and darkness, and what seems like nothing. The day when we witness the

death of our dream and fall into our personal deepest fear and dark tomb. A sad and scary nothingness. Sit there and life will teach us.

Then the fire of hope is lit in the church and in ourselves. We renew our Baptismal vows as adults – recommit to that which was done for us as children. We say we will live like Jesus did, walk his way, speak his truth. Make Jesus the meaning of our lives. Make him the reason for all the seasons and weeks in our lives.

We are now an Easter people of hope who are confident and graced to shine the light of the Real and Risen Christ in our inner and outer worlds.

Happy Easter, peace be with you

Naku noa. Na + Hoane

NEWS ...

- The Bishops of the six dioceses of New Zealand are meeting from Sunday 26th April until Thursday 2nd May . Please keep us in your prayers as we meet.
- The Care Alliance has started a nation-wide petition to all MPs urging them to vote 'NO' to the End of Life Choice Euthanasia Bill. Some of you have already taken the opportunity to sign this petition. If you have not yet done so, and you will be eligible to vote in next year's election, you can still sign online: This petition has the full backing of the New Zealand Bishops. Go to www.carealliance.org.nz and simply click on the "Sign the Petition" button.
- Anzac Day Mass will be celebrated at St Mary of the Angels Church at 9am on Anzac Morning. All are welcome to attend.
- All clergy are reminded to complete and return their Police Vetting Form to Lesley Hooper.

The only authority we have is the authority of service
Pope Francis