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From +John...

Kia tau te rangimarie ki a koutou,

A few weeks ago at a parish meeting I reminded all gathered that Pope Saint John Paul II had told us that "First of all, I have no hesitation in saying that all pastoral initiatives must be set in relation to *holiness*." (*Novo Millennio Ineunte* 30) A few years later Pope Benedict wrote of the centrality of the Word of God and said "let the Bible inspire all pastoral work" (*Verbum Domini* 73). They are two excellent reasons for us to remember that ALL our parish and school meetings should begin with a substantial time of prayer.

I then asked someone to read out the following story as part of the prayer to begin the evening.

I heard once a story about a young African called Kahua. Kahua lived in the hills above a vast savannah in East Africa. One day he came down to the savannah and turned up at the Catholic compound where he met the priest. Kahua asked for a job for six months and as the priest urgently needed someone he was given a job. It turned out that Kahua was honest and industrious, imaginative and reliable and above all he got on with everyone so the priest came to rely on him. The priest was shocked when just short of the six months Kahua came to him to tell him that the time was almost up and he would be leaving in a week. No Kahua, you can't go. I need you. I know I have been cranky and difficult at times and I probably haven't paid you enough but I promise to be better and make it up to you." Kahua explained that it really wasn't about money. He reminded the priest that his original request had been for a job for six months. When pushed he also explained that he lived in the hills and that one day when he was thinking about his life he had looked out on the savannah below where he saw the Christian compound and the Muslim mosque. He knew they were among the great world religions and thought they might have the answers he was searching for. So he told the priest, "I thought I would go and work for you and the imam for six months each and then I would know which religion was best for me. Now it is time to go to work for the imam." My God, Kahua, why didn't you tell me?" muttered the priest. But the fact is most people don't tell us. They watch us. It is our witness not our homilies that is important.

Our parishes are about building loving supportive communities, reaching out to one another and creating places and spaces where everyone feels accepted and welcomed, where they know they belong. Last Friday in Blenheim at the Vigil for Fr John Pearce and at the Mass in the Marlborough Convention Centre on Saturday the constant message was one of thanks for the way John had "connected" so many people and so many diverse communities in the vast Marlborough area. It was his witness and his reaching out to others that was deeply appreciated.

Are we creating close and warm relationships in our parish and school communities, in our families? Does each person know that they are held in a network of solidarity and belonging? Do we enable others to find contentment and friendliness in our communities?

What would Kahua say if he was looking at us?

Naku noa, Na + Hoane

NEWS . . .

- **Prayers of Sympathy - Fr John Pearce CP**, parish priest of the parish of the Star of the Sea, Marlborough died very suddenly on 5th May. Our deepest sympathy and prayers goes to Fr John's own family (two brothers and a sister and their families) to the parish and to the Passionist family. May he rest in peace. Sympathy and prayers are offered to **Lucienne Hansel**, Parish Secretary of Wellington South parish and a Launch Out graduate on the death of her mother Lucy in Malta on 12th May. May she rest in peace.
- **Welcome to new Catholics Mass** The annual Mass on Pentecost Sunday (9 June) to welcome new Catholics will this year be held at 5pm at St Mary of the Angels Church. When the Mass was in the Cathedral, it was held at 7pm so **please note the change in time**. It will also be the three-monthly Archdiocesan Mass for Young People. This will be a wonderful occasion for RCIA teams and those baptised and received at Easter, please encourage them to come. As usual a small gift to welcome the new Catholics to the wider family of the Archdiocese will be presented.
- **You are the light of the World (*Vos estis lux mundi*)** Pope Francis has issued a new document meant for bishops, priests and religious requiring them to report sexual abuse and cover ups. While it is meant for those named above it would be helpful for everyone to read and be familiar with this document. A link to the document can be found [here](#).
- **Confirmation Gospel 2019** the Gospel reading for the Sacrament of Confirmation for 2019 is Luke 4: 16–22

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world

Archbishop Desmond Tutu.