

Our Lady of Kapiti

Te Whaea Tapu o Kapiti

Report from the Chair – Parish Pastoral Council

The Journey so far

Sometimes it is necessary to look back and imagine ourselves at the beginning of a journey; only then can we appreciate how far we have come. So it is with the creation of Our Lady of Kapiti out of the two original parishes of Our Lady of Fatima and St. Patrick's. Despite the inevitable difficulties and heart-searching, so much has been achieved. We need to think back over the last three years or so to remind ourselves of the major happenings and milestones so far:

- Fr. Michael was appointed as administrator of Waikanae parish following the retirement of Fr. Owen in June 2012.
- Request by Archbishop John for our two pastoral areas to become one and, subsequently, he formally asked our two parishes to consider coming together.
- Gathering at Pukekaraka.
- Extensive consultation and information gathering to enable informed decision making.
 - Input from individual parishioners
 - Combined meeting at which views were gathered and written down (the 'plates')
 - Parish gatherings, facilitated by the Cenacle sisters, in both Paraparaumu and Waikanae to share views and information, and then to vote on the question of merging.
 - Meeting of our parishioners and those from the Pastoral Area (including Otaki and Levin parishes) to encourage collaborative thinking.
 - Results of voting announced – overwhelming majority of parishioners in both parishes in favour of coming together.
- Determination of the name of our new parish, including
 - providing draft guidelines for the process,
 - invitation to parishioners to submit suggestions,
 - recommendation by Parish Pastoral Council, and
 - Voting by parishioners which resulted in the name Our Lady of Kapiti (*Te Whaea Tapu o Kapiti*)
- Promulgation of formal establishment of the new parish – Archbishop John, 13 June 2013
- Measures to bring the various elements together.
 - Joint meetings of the two Parish Pastoral Councils and the two Finance Committees
 - Following which, the inauguration of a PPC and FC for our new parish
 - Substantial work to amalgamate the two administration and financial systems – see separate Finance Report.
 - Encouragement to parish groups to merge where they covered common ground. This process continues but has already given rise to much collaboration and, for example, the formation of a joint Liturgy team and St. Vincent de Paul Society.

To celebrate and make a strong visible statement of unity, a hugely successful outdoor mass and concert was held in October 2013, featuring contributions from our parish school and many diverse groups and integrating te reo Maori.

The Future

In October 2013 Archbishop John presented a document called 'A Future Full of Hope – Re-imagining the Archdiocese of Wellington'. This paper was the outcome of wide consultation and set out in broad terms the planned structure of the archdiocese in the future. It detailed the decisions about which parishes were to merge and their timeline for doing so – virtually all parishes are to be affected.

As a follow up, in May 2014 Archbishop John spoke to representatives of our Pastoral Area on the topic of 'Understanding Church'. He asked us - "What is church?", and led us through a series of discussions to help us answer that question. He emphasised the centrality of 'mission' for each parish and covered its various elements:

As the archdiocesan guidelines state, the PPC, together with the parish priest, is to take responsibility for 'the big picture'; its main function is "to agree on a Pastoral Plan, make sure the plan is carried out and evaluate the results". With the wealth of input received and starting with an overarching Vision and Mission Statement, the PPC was able to focus initially on the first task, namely the creation of the Pastoral Plan.

The Pastoral Plan is covered separately in more detail – but we should bear in mind that it is a beginning, a work-in-progress; we will refine it as we implement the decisions and learn from the outcomes. The focus is on longer term goals and the intermediate steps we need to take to move towards them. As the plan evolves, the various groups within the parish will be asked to review their activities in the light of the overall parish plan and to consider how they may need to make some changes.

Part of the considerations for the future shape of Our Lady of Kapiti is the suitability of the present buildings and other facilities. To this end Fr. Michael has appointed a Development Committee whose brief it is to review this and make recommendations. Again, this is addressed more fully in a separate agenda item.

With the parishes of Otaki and Levin now coming together, we will undoubtedly have to turn our mind before long to further collaboration across the pastoral area, building on the work already done by the previous Pastoral Area Council.

I would like to express my gratitude to Fr. Michael and Fr. Dennis and the other members of the PPC, the Finance and Liturgy Committees, and all those who have contributed so effectively to the journey so far and to the remarkable achievement that is our new parish – Our Lady of Kapiti.

Blessings,

John Butterfield
Chair, Parish Pastoral Council

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June 2014