



## From +John...

Dear Friends,

The Church, and in particular the Archdiocese of Wellington was in the spotlight again this week with the public sentencing of former priest, Peter Hercock, who was sent to prison for six years and seven months. Something like this is never easy for any of us and we all feel the shame. Priests are in position of power and of great trust, whenever power is used to take advantage of vulnerable people then that trust is broken and they suffer. This case, as every case does, raises many questions. It was a good thing that these women reported this to the Police. I think it was also good that a guilty plea was entered; this meant that these women did not have to go through the horror of standing in the witness box and re-telling the trauma they suffered.

When such incidents occur we need to do two things.

**Firstly** we make sure that the victims are treated with justice and compassion while expressing deep sorrow and regret for what happened to them.

**Secondly**, we work to ensure that such abuse does not happen again. In these particular cases I believe that all was handled well and that the victims were treated with deep concern and very good pastoral care was provided. When people come forward with such allegations they are always told that it is their prerogative to go to the Police and, in fact, they are encouraged to do so when it is clear that a criminal offence has been committed. Much progress has been made in the New Zealand Catholic Church to safeguard our children, young people and adults at risk.

In Holy Week 2010 I wrote, "Following the example of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, bishops and priests are called to protect and nourish those entrusted to their care, seeking out the lost, binding the wounded, making the weak strong. This means giving their lives in the service of God's people, and like Jesus *"paying the exorbitant price."* This is what priests commit themselves to at ordination and renew at every Chrism Mass. Priests have a privileged responsibility and one which you honour with your loving and generous support."

The National Professional Standards Committee has a programme called *"Safeguarding in the Catholic Church"* which I will be encouraging all in ministry to attend. I also take the opportunity to remind clergy and lay pastoral leaders to ensure that they have spiritual direction and supervision on a regular basis.

With all good wishes and blessing to all.

+John

## NEWS ...

- I hope the holidays were restful for all teachers and students and the batteries are recharged and all are ready to go for a term of learning and fun.
- **Mass to welcome New Catholics Pentecost Sunday Cathedral 7pm** — On Sunday 15 May, the annual Mass to welcome those baptised and received into the Church at Easter will be celebrated. Please tell those people who were welcomed into your communities of this occasion so they can be welcomed to the wider church and Archdiocese.
- **Year of Mercy Pilgrimage Resource** is available on the ADW website. What type of Pilgrimage are you planning?
- **Congratulations** to Bishop Viard College on the blessing and opening of their new Gymnasium/ Arts Centre.
- The **Stewardship Day** for Te Awakairangi Parish, is being held at St Bernard's College 7 May.
- **Book launch** *An Inner Music, Living a life in God*, a book by Craig Larkin SM **Monday 9 May** at The Cathedral of the Sacred Heart 7pm.
- **We wish all students** competing in the O'Shea Shield at Sacred Heart Girls' College New Plymouth next weekend the very best of luck.
- **Benefit Impact Week 10— 14 May**, A mass to launch this event will be celebrated at 9am on 10 May at St Joseph's Upper Hutt.
- **Works of Mercy in Practice**, An opportunity to put into practice "the works of mercy" in a multi-faith service day: baking sweet treats; preparing hygiene kits and toiletries for the Homeless Women's Trust and Men's Night Shelter; outside jobs – clean up and planting. Lunch will be generously provided by Wellington Islamic Centre. **Venue:** St Patrick's Church centre, 3 Childers Tce, Kilbirnie, 21 May from 9.30 with 10am departure for outside jobs - lunch available from 12.45pm. **For further information:** Sister Catherine Jones, smsm [c.jones@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:c.jones@wn.catholic.org.nz) Rev Jenny Chalmers [vicarjenny@mac.com](mailto:vicarjenny@mac.com) Sultan Eusoff [sultane-usoff@gmail.com](mailto:sultane-usoff@gmail.com) Dave Moskovitz [dave@abrahamic.nz](mailto:dave@abrahamic.nz) Ravi Mistry [ra-vi.mistry@hotmail.com](mailto:ra-vi.mistry@hotmail.com)
- The week of prayer for **Christian Unity** starts this coming Sunday 8-15 May. Please take some time to stop, pray and act.

Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth, make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family, and its beauty in God's plan.

Extract taken from Prayer to the Holy Family *Amoris Letitia*

