



## From +John...

**We apologise for the delay in sending this newsletter to you. Due to staff absence last week this was overlooked.**

Ngā Mihi Nui ki a koutou katoa

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network for July was focussed on *"the tiredness of priests."* Pope Francis is so realistic and won to earth and begins by saying:

*"The tiredness of priests... Do you know how often I think about it?*

*Priests, with their virtues and defects, work in many different areas.*

*Working on so many active fronts, they cannot remain inactive after a disappointment.*

*At such times, it's good for them to remember that the people love their priests, need them, and trust in them.*

*Let us pray together that priests, who experience fatigue and loneliness in their pastoral work, may find help and comfort in their intimacy with the Lord and in their friendship with their brother priests."*

Near the end of the video (which can be found at [www.popevideo.org](http://www.popevideo.org)) there is a scene which shows that lay people often offer their priest support which brings joy into their lives. Several years ago, the New Zealand Bishops wrote a letter to all the priests in New Zealand entitled **"In the Service of Christ and His People."** One of the lines I have often thought about from that letter is that which reads **"we are moving into an era when we will need each other's support more not less."** I often quote this line when speaking with our priests, and it is usually in such a way that I am asking the priests to support each other. Pope Francis asked the world to pray that *"priests, who experience fatigue and loneliness in their pastoral work, may find help and comfort in their intimacy with the Lord and in their friendship with their brother priests."* I am suggesting in this newsletter that we are all invited to support our priests, especially through, prayer, a kind and affirming word, a smile or some form of encouragement.

The Pope said in his message *"it's good for them (priests) to remember that the people love their priests, need them, and trust in them."* I am very aware that there are times when people are disappointed and frustrated for a whole range of reasons. The priest snapped at them before Mass, they did not understand the homily and the content was not relevant, he was bad-tempered and impatient, he acted as though it was his Church. I am also very aware that there are all sorts of pressures on priests every day, as there are for everyone as they deal with jobs, family illness, financial difficulties, etc. Perhaps that is where we are all called to help, support, assist and encourage one another in our parish communities.

If we all do some little thing in our parishes to develop close and warm relationships, create community, and try to hold each member of the parish community within a network of solidarity and belonging we can create a setting for a dignified life.

We all deserve a dignified life. We help each other, priests and parishioners to create that.

Mā te Atua koutou e manaaki, e tiaki

+John

## Cathedral Closure

The announcement of the closure of the Cathedral has come as a major disappointment to us.

However, I am confident that we will find a way through this. This will mean a great deal of prayer, of careful listening to one another and trusting that all will be well. It will also mean generosity on behalf of all of us, as we make do in the meantime with interim gathering spaces for the celebration of Masses and other liturgical ceremonies.

Up until a few weeks ago we had not thought at all of the possibility that we would have to close the Cathedral. We had understood that the major work done in the 1980s was sufficient and that our Cathedral was safe. Unfortunately, we have had to come to this difficult decision and the shock of such a sudden closure has come as a shock to parishioners and the wider Catholic community, as well as the Wellington community in general.

In May of this year an interim report identified a potential earthquake prone risk. On 25<sup>th</sup> May a Detailed Seismic Assessment confirmed that due to deficiencies in the detailing of the ceiling the Cathedral rating was less than 33% of the New Building standards. A peer review was carried out by another engineering firm and on 11<sup>th</sup> July the report came in confirming the earthquake status as a less than 15% of NBS. On 12<sup>th</sup> July the Cathedral Parish Finance Committee met and recommended immediate closure until remedial work can be undertaken.

I ask that you please keep all involved in making decisions for the future in your prayer, we will all need prayerful support and the wisdom that only the Spirit of God can bring.

This is a time for us to deepen our understanding of :

- How our Cathedral Church can make us more aware of God's presence in our everyday lives;
- How hearing God's transforming Word might truly change our lives and send us forth to live out that Word;
- What it means for us as a people to be built up, stone by stone, into that spiritual house, the living temple of the Lord.

#### *News*

- **ALL CLERGY PLEASE READ AND ACTION IMMEDIATELY:**  
**Clergy Prayer Day, Tuesday 7th August.** This Prayer Day will be at the Home of Compassion, Island Bay. Input will be given by Sr Margaret Anne Mills, Congregational Leader of the Compassion Sisters, on the Life and Spirituality of Venerable Suzanne Aubert. The day will start with coffee at 10am. It is essential, for catering purposes, that you register your attendance with Tania at my office by 20 July (Friday) 04 496 1766 or [t.halliday@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:t.halliday@wn.catholic.org.nz).
- Please remember in prayer Mecilla dela Torre, mother of Fr Rico dela Torre. Mecilla died on Thursday 12 June in the Philippines. May she rest in peace.
- Also remember in prayer, Stan Witkowski, father of my secretary Tania Halliday who died on Tuesday 10 July. May he rest in peace.

***“To this day I believe that we are here on Earth to live, to grown, and to do what we can to make this world a better place for all people to enjoy freedom.”***

Rosa Parks