

WelCom

Newsletter of the Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand

ISSUE 14 - September 2026

Ordination of Fr Emilio Capin

It was a blessed Spring day on September 5 at a full Sacred Heart Cathedral in Wellington as Fr Emilio Capin was ordained to the priesthood.

The now-Fr Emilio Capin was ordained by Archbishop Paul. Also present were Cardinal John, the priests of the Archdiocese, Emilio's family and hundreds of parishioners.

Archbishop Paul said at Fr Emilio's ordination that God continues to call his priests, and that it's important to trust God when he does call.

"The strength of a priest doesn't come from having all the answers. It comes from knowing the one who called him."



Archbishop Paul also said: "The priesthood is not something we achieve, but a gift we receive."

Fr Emilio spoke to the congregation at the conclusion of the ordination. He thanked all those who had supported him in his journey, his family and

Cardinal John, who Fr Emilio said accepted him as a seminarian.

He also expressed his humility at being called to priesthood and asked for continued prayers. The congregation responded with thunderous applause.

Fr Emilio completed his formation at Holy Cross Seminary and was welcomed at Masses at Holy Trinity Parish in early July, where he will minister as Assistant Priest. His Mass of Thanksgiving was at St Francis de Sales Catholic Church in Island Bay on September 6.

Fr Emilio is from the Philippines. He started his seminary formation in 2020, and prior to becoming a priest was ordained to the diaconate in September 2025.

Please pray for Fr Emilio as he takes up God's call. Let's also pray that more young men may take up the call to priesthood.



WelCom

Something happening in your parish?
An event, celebration or call for
volunteers?

Please let us know! Info can be sent to b.mack@cadw.nz
We look forward to hearing from you!



Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington
Level 2, 204 Thorndon Quay, Wellington 6011
PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140



04 496 1777



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From Archbishop Paul

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ

One of the opportunities we priests have each year is to go on retreat. The chance to step away from ministry and spend time in prayer and reflection is a great gift. To pray and to listen to what God may be saying to us in this time is a privilege that we never take for granted.

This year, I spent a week on retreat at the Cistercian monastery at Kopua. This group of monks were invited by Archbishop McKeefry to come from Ireland and establish the monastery near Norsewood in Hawke's Bay. They were given a farm by a very generous Catholic couple, and they have lived there since 1954.

Each day they pray for God's people, following the rule of St Benedict. They pray the Office of the Church seven times during the day, the first being at 4am! They have a guest house and many people take up this offer of hospitality. You can go for a day, a few days, or a week as in my case. You can join with the monks in prayer or you can follow your own routine.

While I was there a group were present from the NZ Community for Christian Meditation. These people promote meditation as a way of prayer, drawing on the inspiration of Fr John Main OSB. This form of prayer is about self-emptying so that the Lord can speak in the silence

of our hearts. It is a very old form of prayer and one which has found a real appeal in the noise of our modern age.

The group there were asking me why the bishops in New Zealand don't encourage Christian meditation more. Now one of the things about being a bishop is that there are many groups who want to know why we don't promote things more, especially the area they may be passionate about! I understand that.

But what I do want to promote and ask you to think about in terms of

and Word does change how we understand and live our lives.

My desire is that all of us learn how to pray in a real way. When I hear people say that they don't know how to pray, that is a sign of failure on our part as a Christian community. It would be very powerful if each parish had groups who were helping people learn the different ways of praying and giving guidance to help those who might be searching in that area.

One of the great joys of my time as Bishop of Christchurch was discovering the power of the

“The grace of spending that time each day being open to his presence and Word does change how we understand and live our lives.”

your own lives, and your parishes, is the life of prayer that we have as Catholic people. There are many different ways of being able to pray. You can use Christian meditation, Lectio Divina, imaginative prayer as St Ignatius Loyola developed, charismatic prayer, Taizé prayer, just to name a few. What is key is spending the time in prayer, finding the time to do so and learning what form of prayer helps you to hear what God might be saying to you.

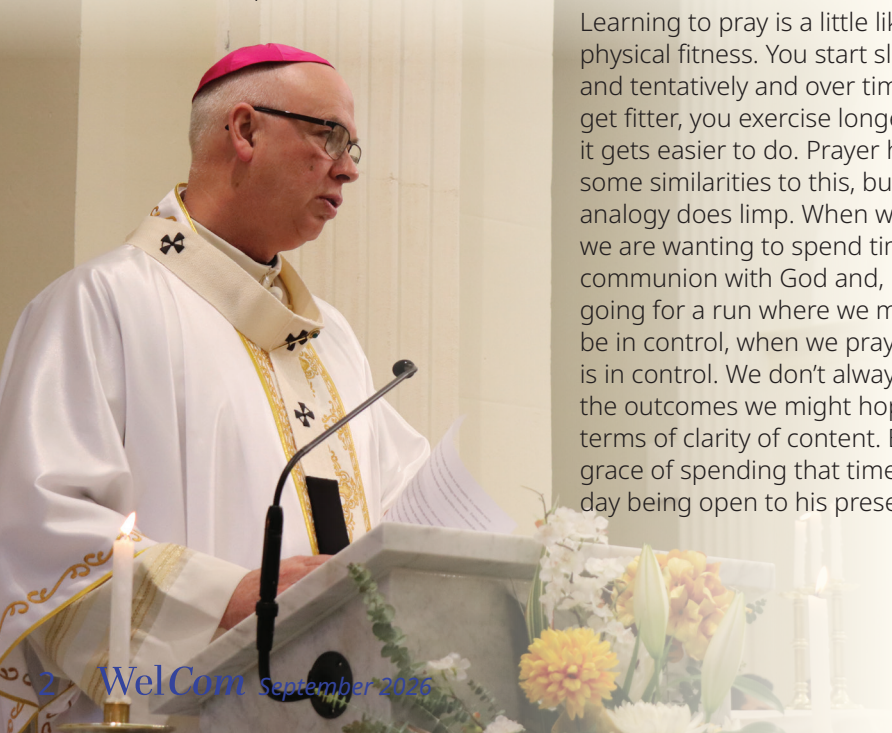
Learning to pray is a little like physical fitness. You start slowly and tentatively and over time you get fitter, you exercise longer and it gets easier to do. Prayer has some similarities to this, but the analogy does limp. When we pray, we are wanting to spend time in communion with God and, unlike going for a run where we might be in control, when we pray God is in control. We don't always get the outcomes we might hope for in terms of clarity of content. But the grace of spending that time each day being open to his presence

Adoration chapel that was set up at St Gregory's Church in Bishopdale. There the Blessed Sacrament was exposed 24 hours every day, and people were rostered to be there for all of those hours. The number of people who would come and spend time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament over the course of the week was amazing. People of all ages and stages would come and do so regularly, as well as those who were rostered. The power of that place of prayer in the diocese was real. I would very much like us to have something similar here in our Archdiocese.

My desire is that all of us become people of prayer and people of the Spirit, allowing the God who loves us unconditionally to grace us with his power and strength so we can live this life he has given us to the full. That will only happen when we do something concrete about it. What can you do?

Yours in Christ

+ P. B. MarL'son





The joy of connection: a conversation with the Apostolic Nuncio

This is part 2 of an interview with Archbishop Gábor Pintér, Apostolic Nuncio to New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, and Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific Ocean.

As Apostolic Nuncio to New Zealand, Archbishop Gábor Pintér plays an important role as the Pope's diplomatic representative – much of which he says takes place behind the scenes – to ensure Catholics can practise their faith freely and openly.

But he also helps serve as a bridge between the Holy See – the Vatican – and the six dioceses across the country. Although the Nunciature is in Wellington, this means he is regularly travelling throughout the country, from Kerikeri and Cape Reinga up north down to Invercargill and Bluff in the Deep South, to parishes of all sizes, attending everything from Masses to cultural events. He meets with everyone, from bishops to parish priests and lay people of all backgrounds and ages.

It might sound busy. Yet he says it's a privilege to meet with so many people, and to see the Church thriving in our part of the world.

And New Zealand is far from the

only place he's regularly travelling throughout. Archbishop Gábor is also Nuncio to the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, and Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific Ocean. This means he visits parishes in these places, too – no fewer than 17 dioceses throughout the Pacific.

Many of the places Archbishop Gábor visits are also very remote, with flights only once or twice a week. Other places – such as isolated islands in Samoa and Vanuatu – he must reach by boat.

All this means he can sometimes be travelling for weeks at a time. And then there's the diversity of cultures. While there are similarities, including the universal commonality of the Eucharist, a Mass in Fiji is not the same as a Mass in the Marshall Islands. There are different histories, languages, customs – and different situations for Catholics in these countries.

The remoteness of some of the places he visits can also mean it's a big deal for these communities when the Nuncio visits. And if that's not enough, he sometimes must return to Rome, on the other side of the world, for meetings at the Vatican.

This is illustrated when we talk. While we're meeting in Wellington, Archbishop Gábor says he's off that weekend to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Cook Islands diocese, and will be travelling throughout the coming months.

Yet he's quick to describe this important work of diplomacy and visiting so many communities as a joy, not a burden. It's important, he says, that Catholics can feel connected to the Church, as it's a Church for all Catholics, not just Catholics living in one country or region.

Read part 1 in the previous issue of WelCom or online at <https://cadw.nz>

Men's One-Day Retreat

†
Saturday 10 October 2026

Time: 8.30 AM - 5.00 PM

**“I AM READY FOR
ANYTHING ANYWHERE”**

— Philippians 4:12 —



Led By: Murray Adams
Ignatian Spiritual Director



Location
Our Lady's Home of Compassion
2 Rhine Street, Island Bay, Wellington



For more information... Steve 027 3569555



Morning Tea, Afternoon Tea & Lunch Provided.

“Suggested Koha of \$25 to help with costs”

Organised by
JOSHUA
CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Mission Sunday hits 100-year milestone this October

Fr Michael Pui, director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in New Zealand, has called on Kiwis to respond to Pope Leo's call "to be one in Christ, united in mission".

Fr Pui's encouragement comes as the Church around the world prepares to celebrate the 100th Mission Sunday, to be marked this year on October 18.

When speaking with the directors of Pontifical Mission Societies from around the world, including Fr Pui, the Holy Father said Mission Sunday "invites all members of the Church to a deeper communion in Christ and to a fuller unity in his divine mission of love".

"These aspects," he continued, "call for a missionary renewal in the Church in the years ahead. I encourage you to live an authentic spirituality of missionary unity and communion centred on Christ, and to promote it among the faithful."

In New Zealand, the Pontifical Mission Societies operate under the names MissioNZ and Missio Aotearoa. Among its key tasks is the promotion of the work of the Pope's missionary entities through Catholic schools and parishes.

The Four Pontifical Mission Societies

Propagation of the Faith

Propagation of the Faith enables missionaries to be more effective in their works of evangelisation. Spreading God's Word throughout the world. Caring for the Carers.

The Holy Childhood Association

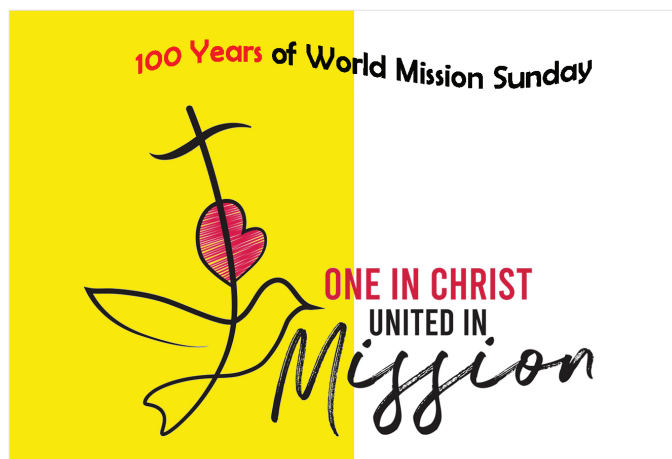
The Holy Childhood Association supports the health and religious formation needs of children in the mission territories all over the world. Enables Children helping Children.

Society of St Peter the Apostle

The Society of St Peter the Apostle helps fund the formation of seminarians and religious nuns and brothers in the mission territories. Guarantees to assist the continuity of ministries in the Church.

Missionary Union

The Missionary Union advocates ongoing missionary formation, awareness and networking among religious, lay and priests.



In recent decades, that promotion would often include the distribution of "mission boxes" to each student in a Catholic school, encouraging them to contribute to the annual Mission Sunday appeal.

Fr Pui has reintroduced the mission boxes to renew the sense of generosity, but also to raise awareness about the Church's missionary activity around the world.

Students across New Zealand were invited to submit possible designs for the boxes, with Vivian Nguyen, a student at St Joseph's School, Papanui, and Angel Siju from Sacred Heart College in Napier, winning the junior and senior sections respectively.

Fr Pui is also inviting schools to participate in the "Centenary Challenge", which is encouraging students to pray that people will hear the call to mission, to share that call with others and, if possible, to donate to the Pope's missionary effort.

Catholic schools are being challenged to raise the equivalent of a gold coin donation from each student. Fr Pui suggested that could be achieved through activities like mufti days, car washes and book sales. They can also capture the spirit of generosity and missionary zeal in a short video, with the winning school to win a Missio Rosary for every student.

Fr Pui said: "As we celebrate this milestone – 100 years of World Mission Sunday – Pope Leo's motto captures the heart of the moment: 'In the one Christ, we are one.'"

"His call is clear: To be one in Christ, united in mission; to enter more deeply into communion with Christ and with one another; and to renew our missionary commitment for the century ahead.

"We are called to support the Pope's missionary endeavours by praying for and donating to the Pontifical Mission Societies."

Material for schools and parishes to commemorate Mission Sunday are being distributed in the coming weeks.

Access Mission Sunday resources and donate at: <https://missio.nz>

Social Justice Week Focuses on Belonging to God



The Catholic Agency for Justice, Peace & Development

As the Church marked Social Justice Week 2026, New Zealand's Catholic bishops urged people to recognise the dignity and worth of every person in a world increasingly shaped by conflict, displacement, misinformation and exclusion.

In a statement launching this year's observance, which ran from September 6-12, the bishops said the theme, "You belong to God | Nā te Atua anō koe", was a reminder that every person has inherent value and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

This year's Social Justice Week marks the beginning of a three-year focus on the theme of "Belonging". The 2026 programme explored humanity's relationship with God, with future years set to consider belonging with one another and belonging within creation.

"We believe God has created everyone for relationship," the bishops said. "In his new encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo writes, 'Created for relationship, every human person is planned and willed by God to enter into communion with him, with others and with creation' (#50). Our lives are woven together by growing in these essential relationships to our being."

The bishops noted that there is often "little regard for the weak, small and most vulnerable among us", including people experiencing poverty, homelessness, disability, illness and exclusion.

Beyond its religious dimension, the bishops' statement also highlighted social challenges familiar to many societies, including the impact of disinformation, the erosion of respect for others and hostility towards people perceived as different.



"Social Justice Week this year invites you and us to recognise and affirm the God-given dignity of ourselves and all others...May we work together to defend and protect human dignity wherever we see it undermined or ignored," the bishops said.

In a video for Social Justice Week, NZCBC president and Bishop of Auckland Steve Lowe said the time was "a week of journey, a week of belonging or reflecting on belonging in a new, deeper way to deepen our much longer journey of life".

Bishop Lowe noted the thinking of early Church fathers who spoke about being called into God's likeness.

"And I think [this is an] interesting concept for us to reflect on particularly as we come into Social Justice Week...is how am I growing in the likeness of God and do I reflect God's attitude towards me, his love of me, do I reflect that to other people because that's part of belonging to God – that we become like God in the ways we speak and in the ways we act," Bishop Lowe said.

Exploring Faith in a Changing World

Whānau Mercy Ministries has partnered with Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington to host a three-day symposium this December, exploring the impact and relevance of religion in education, healthcare and social services.

"As Whānau Mercy Ministries began considering how to mark the 200th anniversary of Catherine McAuley's pioneering work in Dublin in 1827, a vision emerged. The idea was to launch the commemorations with a gathering focused on formation, dialogue, and reflection on what it means to be a faith-based organisation in an

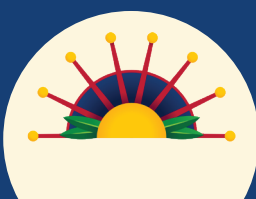
increasingly secular society.

"Drawing together voices from a broad range of faith traditions and sectors, the programme will offer valuable insights for those involved in leadership and governance of faith-based organisations, educators, healthcare professionals, social workers, advocates for social justice,

and for the faithful in our parishes across the motu who may not work directly in religious organisations but who know what it means to be a person of faith in a secular environment." – Anna Nicholls RSM

Learn more and register at: <https://whanaumercy.nz/catherine-mcauley-symposium/>

13-15
DEC
2026



Atawhaingia ō tātau kāinga

CATHERINE MCAULEY SYMPOSIUM 2026

Join leading thinkers in Wellington to explore faith-based leadership, identity and mission in a changing world



Archdiocese hosts Fully Alive Youth Festival

By Regina Fernandes

2026 marked the first year the archdiocese hosted its Youth Festival! We were incredibly fortunate to be joined by Braden Johnson, a Catholic influencer and youth speaker from the United States.

As we welcomed the students in, they were invited to meet other teens, contribute to the fingerprint painting and play some games. The room was soon full of laughter as people started engaging in conversation.

Our first session brought together 60 teenagers in a game of "Get into the Waka", which mixed everyone up. In no time, students were mingling with people from across the archdiocese. Braden led two sessions focused on relating his encounter with Christ to the students with us. Having worked as a YouTuber and a semi-pro basketballer, he shared his encounter with Christ as a young person and how that led him to pursue youth ministry.

We were fortunate to have students from Chanel College lead the teens in a session of praise. Their beautiful ministry helped bring the students



“A beautiful moment was seeing the teenagers come together in prayer.”

together and prepare them for the following sessions.

A beautiful moment was seeing the teenagers come together in prayer. Where once the room was filled with laughter, jokes and pleasant conversation, there was a sense of calm and peace. The teens were gathered in small groups and Braden led them in individual and group prayer where they were encouraged to pray together and focus on God.

We concluded with the Vigil Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral where we filled five rows of the Cathedral. It was a beautiful way to end the event, by celebrating the Holy Mass with each other. We are so pleased that the event turned out full of joy for every single teenager.

Look out for the next ADW Youth Festival, as we are excited to host it again next year!



Looking to the *future*. Leaving a legacy of Compassion.

A gift in your Will to Compassion is a powerful way to ensure your values live on. Your kindness will help provide homes, meals, and support for vulnerable people in our community for generations to come.

For more information, contact Bernadette at bernadette.d@compassion.org.nz or 021 220 5095



Final Mass celebrated at St Thomas More

It was an emotional day on Sunday, August 30 in Wilton, as the Otari Parish community said farewell to St Thomas More Church at the final Mass to be held in the building.

Opened in 1969 by Cardinal Peter McKeefry, the cosy church was full for the Mass. Many tears were shed, but there was also lots of laughter and smiles.

The Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Paul. Songs and prayers were in te reo Māori and English, with an opening karanga from Kararaina Millin and taonga puoro from Hēnare Walmsley.

In his homily, Archbishop Paul shared his sadness at the closure – but reminded attendees that they are part of one body of Christ, united in faith, and that wherever believers gather, Christ is there.

“Today is also a day of gratitude, for we give thanks for all that’s happened here,” he said. “This place was built out of faith, out of generosity and out of commitment.”

He added: “The faith that’s been living here is not being closed today. The Church will continue, because the people of God will continue.”



“The faith that’s been living here is not being closed today. The Church will continue, because the people of God will continue.”

“As we say farewell to this church, we do so with sadness. But not without hope.

“The question is not, ‘what are we leaving behind?’ The question is, ‘what are we taking with us?’”

He ended his homily with some words to reflect on: “Our home is not simply a building made by human hands. Our home is in Christ.”

Following the Mass, which included

the Eucharist under both kinds, parishioners shared tea, kai and memories in the lounge, with the food from Chalet Caterers and assisted by two St Mary’s College students.

The closure of St Thomas More means St Teresa’s in Karori is the only church in the Otari Parish.

Please pray for the St Thomas More community as they transition into the next phase of their spiritual journeys.

St Pius X School

TITAHI BAY

Celebrating our History.
Saying Farewell



St Pius school is **celebrating its 72 years** and saying farewell to friends, former staff and students and their families on **Saturday, October 31**. The school is scheduled to close in December this year.

The ceremony begins with **Mass at the Church at 1pm** celebrated by Archbishop Paul.

Giving Thanks for our Religious Sisters in the Archdiocese

A number of religious women in the Archdiocese have recently returned to God. We honour their service and ministry to the People of God in our Archdiocese and beyond.



Sr Annie Pulikken | Sister of St Peter Claver Died August 27

As a religious sister for 57 years, Sr Annie worked with her religious sisters in charitable services supporting ethnic communities in Wellington, working particularly with those of African and Asian descent.



Sr Therese Couderc | Daughter of Our Lady of Compassion
Died June 29

As a religious sister for 67 years, Sr Therese was for many years a theatre nurse in the Home of Compassion hospital. She studied theology in Rome, was appointed secretary general of the order and later novice mistress. For the last 30 years of her life, she was with the people in Wainuiomata.



Sr Ruth Pickering | Daughter of Our Lady of Compassion
Died September 7

As a religious sister for 11 years, Sr Ruth was involved with the Compassion Soup Kitchen in Wellington serving the most vulnerable and needy people in the city with the love and compassion of foundress Venerable Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert.



Sr Carmel Paul | Daughter of Our Lady of Compassion Died July 30

As a religious sister for 60 years, Sr Carmel provided care for families, the elderly, women, children, the sick and especially those in need, with a spirit of compassion exemplifying her foundress Venerable Meri Hōhepa Suzanne Aubert. She was with the people in Wairoa for 20 years.



Sr Joan Manson | Sister of Mercy Died July 2

As a religious sister for 72 years, Sr Joan taught in Palmerston North, Westport, Blenheim and Wellington primary schools. After her teaching career, she moved into leadership roles and spiritual direction which included involvement in retreats in daily life.



Sr Pauline Leonard | Sister of Our Lady of the Missions Died August 30

As a religious sister for 65 years, Sr Pauline was involved in education and leadership and was awarded a Companion of the NZ Order of Merit for her decades of service to education. She retired as a Proprietor's Representative on the Mission Colleges Lower Hutt Trust Board in 2023.



Sr Cecily Finucane | Sister of Mercy Died July 4

As a religious sister for 64 years, including a long presence in Palmerston North, Sr Cecily retired to Villa Joseph in Upper Hutt. After her teaching career, she became involved in prison chaplaincy, supported migrants and refugees, and served a home tutor helping migrants and former refugees wanting to learn English.

*To read more, please visit
<https://cadw.nz/community/giving-thanks-for-our-religious-sisters-in-the-archdiocese/>*

Remembering Fr Pene Patelesio



It was with sadness that we learned of the unexpected death of Fr Pene, parish priest of Our Lady of Kapiti, on August 16. He was 67 years old.

Fr Pene was ordained to the priesthood at Sacred Heart Cathedral by Cardinal Tom Williams on September 12, 1987. He was the first Tokelauan to be ordained for the Archdiocese.

Fr Pene served in several parishes, including 20 years

as parish priest of Holy Family Porirua. In 2019, he returned to Tokelau to minister to the people there. At the beginning of this year, he became parish priest in Kapiti and quickly established himself as a priest with a good pastoral heart.

Fr Pene was involved with the Samoan community for many years. He was known for his good humour, apostolic zeal and community involvement. This was reflected in the large number who gathered for his vigil and funeral.

We pray for his eternal rest and consolation to his family and those who mourn him.