



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

Bishop's Office – Te Taumata o te Pihopa Katorika

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4 January 2023

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Christmastide blessings to you.

This Sunday, the Solemnity of the Epiphany, I will be celebrating Mass at Totara Point on the northern shores of the Hokianga harbour. It was here that Bishop Pompallier was welcomed into the home of Mary and Thomas Poynton and celebrated Mass on 13 January 1838. It was the first Mass celebrated in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The annual Miha of remembrance, on the second Sunday of January, has become a significant gathering each year as we remember those who laid the foundations of our faith in this land.

I'm especially aware that we as a church farewell Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI this week.

I will include him in my intentions at the Totara Point Mass on Sunday. Given the timing of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's death when our parishes are wound down and so many are away for the summer holidays and given the fact that I am in the Far North this weekend, instead of a Mass at the Cathedral I ask you all to join with me in remembering Pope Emeritus Benedict in your prayers at Mass this weekend.

The funeral Mass for Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI will take place on Thursday evening 9.30pm NZ time. Two official channels will broadcast the funeral live on Thursday evening, the Vatican Media YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INHE3mjiiFw>) and the Vatican News Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/vaticannews/>).

Please pray with me now for Pope Emeritus Benedict as we pray, *Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual life shine upon him, may he rest in peace. Amen.*

Yours sincerely in Christ the Good Shepherd

✘ **Steve Lowe**
Bishop of Auckland