

Whāia te Tika

Seek Justice

Justice & Peace Commission Catholic Diocese of Auckland



Nativity icon.

St Catherine's monastery, Sinai, Egypt, 6th Century.

Christmas 2023
Special double edition



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In mid-September 2023 the Catholic Church worldwide held its very first conference on Catholic Indigenous Nations in Washington, with delegates from the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand taking part.

Archbishop Paul Martin, Manuel Beazley and I attended on behalf of New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference.

On the first day after prayer and introductions, each country talked about the history of the Church in their particular Iwi, or Nation, or region, or Country. This proved to be a complex and enlightening experience for all, especially when one considers there are over 500 different languages spoken in indigenous Australia, 300 languages spoken by First Nations Peoples in the USA and more than 80 languages spoken by First Nations Peoples in Canada. New Zealand is unique in that, with the exception of different pronunciation of specific words and phrases, Te Reo Maori is pretty much one language spoken across all of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Historical backgrounds of when the Catholic Church was received into each Country differed in time, for example Canada and the US in the 16th century, Australia in 1788 and New Zealand in the early 1800s. Common concerns of reconciliation and healing showed the effect of colonisation on each of the four countries' Indigenous Peoples. Abuse, inter-generational trauma and their effects were discussed among all of us. It was also noted that Pope Francis apologised to Canada's Indigenous Peoples in July 2022 when he set about his penitential pilgrimage of Canada, something that resonated with all of us. This also gave us an opportunity to korero about the work that is being carried out now in each country, specifically around our social teachings, on a preferential option for the poor and human dignity. We were all genuinely astounded at the level of commitment, the programmes of work, the advocacy of our Indigenous nations for change for the better, the demand for uplifting those in poverty out of poverty and the real presence of the Holy Spirit in our mahi.

Inculturation was something each country was proud of, proud to present and proud to represent. Pope John Paul II visited every one of the four countries during his time and announced to each Indigenous nation that it was as Maori, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia, Canadian and American



Linked by our Catholic faith, love of culture and humanity



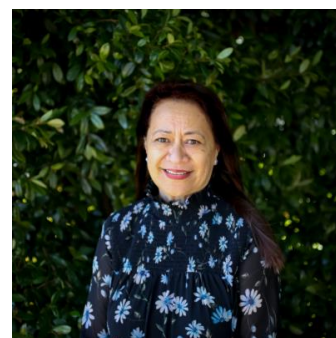
Above: *Delegates at the conference.*

First Nations that they belonged to the Church, the one Body of Christ. Aotearoa New Zealand is a small nation in the scheme of things, 5.2 million people, compared with 331 million Americans.

The people who attended the conference made it so special. We were linked by our Catholic faith, our love of our respective cultures and by our humanity.

As this was the first hui ever of the gathering of Indigenous nations, there was hope for more such gatherings, noting that this hui came immediately before the Synod, which Manuel and Archbishop Paul attended. What better introduction could one have as preparation for the Synod?

Loraine Elliott



**Vicar for Social Impact & Communication
Christmas, 2023**

Governments continue to fail their responsibility for enough housing

Many New Zealanders will celebrate Christmas again this year by gathering with family and friends in secure, comfortable homes.

For a great many other people that will not be possible because they do not have proper homes. Their situation is more like that of the Holy Family when Jesus was born in a stable “because there was no room for them at the inn” (Luke 2:8).

Fallen short

Successive Governments in recent years have fallen far short of their responsibilities to ensure adequate and comfortable housing for all New Zealanders. The exciting promises made by the new Government in 2017 were not fulfilled.

It did build a greater number of state houses than had been done for years, but when statistics are analysed the net gain after

By Norm Elliott, Convenor, Affordable Housing Committee

demolition and removal of existing houses was hugely disappointing.

The waiting list of families or individual persons who cannot afford either to purchase or pay market rental has remained consistently at around 25,000.

Lack of proper affordable housing is both a cause and a result of family poverty in New Zealand. The Affordability of Housing Committee will continue to advocate for more state housing. In addition we will follow up on approaches made to the previous Government and to electoral candidates before the general election to make Crown land available for leasehold private housing.

That has the obvious advantage of not requiring purchasers of new homes to cover the cost of the land value in the initial purchase.

Commission welcomes new Executive Secretary



This August we welcomed Kathleen Card (**Above**) as Executive Secretary for the Justice & Peace Commission. She has devoted a decade to pastoral and spiritual care and co-ordination in hospital chaplaincy and hospice care in Aotearoa-New Zealand and Australia.

She holds a Master's degree in Theological Studies from the University of Divinity, Catholic Theological College, East Melbourne. She studied Catholic social teaching (justice), moral theology (Christian ethics), theology and the spirituality of human ageing, pastoral studies, systematic theology and spirituality. She also received postgraduate awards in pastoral studies in 2016 and 2017 and was a Loreto, Mary Ward Grant recipient in 2017. Born in Whangārei and raised in Melbourne, she is of Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tupoto descent. She returned to Aotearoa-New Zealand in early 2019.

Card attributed her firm spiritual and religious foundation to her mother's deep faith and constant guidance.

To P13.



Will prisoner rehab improve under new government?

Will there be quicker progress in prisoner rehabilitation under the new government? The Crime and Reconciliation Committee raised this question in its latest report. It said all parties agreed on the need to increase rehabilitation programmes. The committee said prison chaplains were doing their best to arrange for volunteers to enter maximum security areas.

Prison management was keen for volunteer prison visits to resume, but there remained a real focus on safety. Medium security volunteer access appeared to be back on track.



South Auckland youth work with SWAP committee to prepare for electoral forum

Youth in action

Young people from South Auckland worked with the Justice & Peace Commission's SWAP committee for two months to prepare an electoral forum at St Anne's on September 14.

The forum's four candidates were Faanānā Efeso Collins - Green Party (**pictured ABOVE LEFT speaking**) ; Agnes Loheni - NZ National Party; Arabela Boatwright - Te Pati Maori and Jenny Salesa - NZ Labour Party (**pictured ABOVE RIGHT speaking**).

Deacon Sanele Poluleuligaga, convenor of the SWAP committee, said the young people prepared questions for the candidates in line with the social teachings of the church.

The evening began with entertainment from St Mary's Papakura Youth group (**pictured RIGHT**) who put on a great entertainment with dancing and music.

The evening was chaired by Pat Snedden. Questions for the evening were organised by the

panel of young people, with several queries from the floor. Guest speakers on the night were social policy analyst Alan Johnson and Caritas CEO Mena Antonio. They both spoke on why it was important to promote the social teaching of the Catholic Church. "Alan Johnson has had a huge investment around social justice for many years and has also contributed to implementing housing policy while employed by the government," Sanele said. Johnson spoke passionately about his work and involvement, especially on the social teaching of the church.

Deacon Sanele said he had received many messages and compliments from people who wanted further events.

Deacon Sanele said the organisers were grateful to Mealamu Security who provided security for the night. He also thanked Radio Samoa 1593AM which sponsored the live stream of the event and promoted the evening on the station.



"Last, but not least, to my team at SWAP and our wonderful young people who put on a great performance on the night," he said.

"I think your message to the candidates on the night was very clear: It is the future generations that will be affected," Deacon Sanele said. **More photos P15.**

*Letter
from
Rome*



“Something extraordinary happened last week”

The Universal phase of the Synod was held in Rome in October. New Zealand sent three delegates: Archbishop Paul Martin, Auckland Diocese Vicar for Māori Manuel Beazley and Fr Dennis Nacorda. From Rome, Beazley sent this report on the work of the synod – and an unexpected invitation to sit and talk with Pope Francis.

<<Kia ora koutou, buongiorno a tutti a tutte.

Greetings from the Synod.

We have just passed the halfway point of the assembly. Each day has a similar pattern whereby we sit in ‘Circolo Minore’ or small circles of about 10 or 11 people. We use the methodology of ‘Conversations in the Spirit’ to listen and to discern a particular question relating to the overall themes of Communion, Mission and Participation. The group then provides a report to the gathered assembly. Following this, individuals are able to make interventions based on what we hear. I have made some interventions.

The Vatican has gone pretty high-tech. We each have a tablet in front of us, which we use to note our attendance, to register an intervention and to vote. We each have a personal QR code which we must use to operate the system. There is a swivelling camera in the middle of each table which turns to us when it is our turn for an intervention. We have monitors on our tables and the big screens around the hall



which show the speaker. We have only three minutes for an intervention, so we keep it tight. I am staying with seven others from the Oceania delegation, a member from Malaysia, a bishop from the Seychelles and a bishop from Trinidad and Tobago. We are being accommodated by the Daughters of St Joseph, an Italian Religious Congregation. We are being looked after very well - too well. Our group have formed a very close bond.

Archbishop Paul and Fr Dennis are staying elsewhere. In fact Archbishop Paul is staying at Casa Santa Marta where the Pope lives. He said, though, that one Bishop staying with him says that the meals at Santa Marta are like

Jesus - they are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow! Our Oceania group will be going to dinner this Saturday at the Australian Embassy. +Paul (Martin), +Paul (Donoghue), Dennis and I had dinner last Saturday with Jackie Frizelle and her family. Jackie is NZ's Ambassador to Italy. I have been inundated with invitations for meals with various other people as well. There is a real sense of being part of a global family.

Pope Francis has been attending many of the plenary sessions of the assembly. Apart from the several quick greetings I've been able to give to the Holy Father something quite extraordinary happened last week.

The Holy Father was in the hall and as I was looking towards him, he looked at me and motioned me to come to him. He asked me to sit with him and we were able to have quite a good conversation (mostly in Italian). I think I might have had more time with him that some world leaders might get!

As I write, we are nearing the end of the Module B discussion around Participation. The conversations have been robust, but always in an atmosphere of peace and trust in the Holy Spirit. Apart from the assembly we have been participating in other activities. Last week all the assembly participants visited and prayed in the Catacombs. We fasted and prayed for peace in Israel. Tonight, we are gathering in St Peter's Square to pray for migrants and refugees.

Nga mihi aroha
Na Manuel>>

The great economic powers do not care about climate change, charges Pope Francis in *Laudate Deum*.

Their concerns, he says, are purely financial, "with the greatest profit possible at minimal cost and in the shortest amount of time."

In his groundbreaking document the Pope chastises world leaders who have been slow and even resistant in making the kinds of significant transformations that must be made to ensure a future fit for human life.

World needs drastic action at UN meeting



As this issue is being written world leaders are gathering in Dubai for the 28th Conference of Parties discussing climate change.

"If there is sincere interest in making COP28 a historic event that honours and ennobles us as human beings, then one can only hope for binding forms of energy transition that meet three conditions: that they be efficient, obligatory and readily monitored," the Pope said.

"This, in order to achieve the beginning of a new process marked by three requirements: that it be drastic, intense and count on the commitment of all."

Rich and powerful do not really care about climate change says Pope Francis in *Laudate Deum*

Responses to *Laudate Deum* have seen it as a call to action, especially ahead of Cop28.

Sr Ana María Siufi of the American Sisters of Mercy said the Pope reproached the lack of ethics among economies that privileged the few and lamented the failure to comply with previous agreements.

"Pope Francis asks for action on the urgent need for an energy transition," Sr Siufi said.

Fr Dominic Robinson, SJ, Chair, Justice & Peace Commission, Diocese of Westminster, has described *Laudate Deum* as "not just a papal document for Catholics, but a heartfelt letter with an urgent message addressed to all people of good will, of whatever Christian denomination, of whatever faith or none."

According to Dean Dettloff, Research and Advocacy Officer for Caritas Canada, the Holy Father's exhortation reflects both frustration and hope.

Although declaring that much of the damage done by the climate crisis is irreversible, the Pope said we must not give up.

"We are now unable to halt the enormous damage we have caused. We barely have time to prevent even more tragic damage," Pope Francis wrote.

Pope Francis has chastised world leaders who have resisted making the kinds of significant transformations necessary to ensure a future fit for human life.

"To say that there is nothing to hope for would be suicidal, for it would mean exposing all humanity, especially the poorest, to the worst impacts of climate change."
— Pope Francis.

"The world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point," he said.

Poor people and nations were sometimes wrongly blamed or criticised, despite contributing very little to greenhouse gas emissions.

The Pope urged international bodies to make binding decisions with real consequences. He also highlighted the importance of activists.


"The demands that rise up from below throughout the world, where activists from very different countries help and support one another, can end up pressuring the sources of power," he said.

Pope not in Dubai

Pope Francis will not attend Cop28 in Dubai.

The Pope has been ill with a lung inflammation. At the time of writing he was reported to be taking antibiotics.

Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin told *Vatican News* that while the Pope was on the mend his doctors said he should not expose himself to risks.



APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION
LAUDATE DEUM
Of the Holy Father Francis
To all people of good will on the climate crisis
October 4, 2023

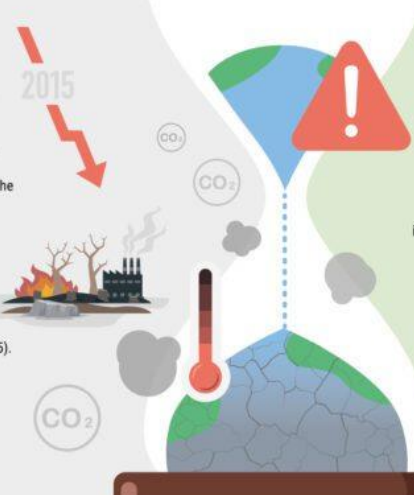
HOW DID WE GET TO THIS POINT?

SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF LAUDATO SI' IN 2015...

- We have not reacted strongly enough to the climate crisis (cf. LD 2).
- The world that welcomes us is crumbling (cf. LD 2).
- We see how the impact of climate change will harm the lives and families of many people (cf. LD 2).

THE SIGNS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ARE:

- Extreme phenomena, unusual heat, droughts (cf. LD 5).
- Heavy rainfall, floods (cf. LD 5).
- Unusual acceleration of warming (cf. LD 6).
- Acceleration of the increase of greenhouse gases (cf. LD 11).



Neither the **human causes** of climate change (cf. LD 11) nor its position in the **technocratic paradigm** can be doubted.

↓

The **human being** believes himself to be **limitless**, "whose capacities and possibilities could be expanded to infinity thanks to technology" (cf. LD 21).


↓

We believe that the world around us is an object of exploitation, of unbridled use, of **unlimited ambition** (cf. LD 25).

What is the point of preserving a power that will be remembered for its inability to intervene (cf. LD 60)?

LACK OF EFFICIENCY, OPPORTUNITIES, AND LASTING PROGRESS IN MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN STATES (cf. LD 34).

- There are no organizations with real authority to ensure non-renounceable objectives (cf. LD 35).
- Previous effective decision-making procedures were not sufficient (cf. LD 43).
- Prior Climate Conferences have had a low level of implementation (personal interests are privileged over the common good) (cf. LD 52).



POPE FRANCIS

The whole of the universe shows the inexhaustible richness of God (cf. LD 63). Let us join this path of reconciliation with the world that shelters us (cf. LD 69). "There are no cultural changes without changes in people" (cf. LD 70). "Praise God": a human being who pretends to take his place becomes the worst danger to himself (cf. LD 73).

COP28 UAE
UN Dubai COP28
NOV 30, 2023 - DEC 12, 2023

- It should be a turning point to react and show that what has been done was worthwhile (cf. LD 54).
- It should help us to make a better energy transition (cf. LD 59).
- It should help us to get out of the logic of patchwork solutions in order to seek the common good and ensure the future of coming generations (cf. LD 58, 60).

DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Contact the Laudato Si' Movement and the Laudato Si' Action Platform at
www.LaudateDeum.org
info@humandevlopment.va

What can I do to make a lasting difference?

It is often said that in hindsight we are all philosophers. With the release of the Apostolic Exhortation, *Laudate Deum* on the climate crisis, on October 4, the Feast Day of the Patron Saint of Ecology, Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis has revised and reflected on the eight years since his first entreaty on climate change, *Laudato Si*.

In *Laudate Deum* Pope Francis challenges us anew. We grasp in this exhortation a sense of urgency as he presents eight years of hindsight, scientific data, experience, passion, advocacy, joy, prayer and heartache to envision a metamorphosis of the past and present suffering of our planet to a future of "communion and commitment" by reversing "irresponsible lifestyles [and] making indispensable political decisions toward the progress of genuine care and concern for each other and the world at large."

In 73 compelling and commanding points, we read that the time to act on climate change is here. We must take responsibility and be held accountable for our own inertia and regrettable contribution to the world climate crisis. It can often feel as though the problem of climate change is far beyond our personal control. What can I, as one person in a country of more than five million people, do to create lasting change toward climate improvement?

It is worth considering the words of Pope Francis in *Laudate Deum*:

"It is not a matter of replacing politics, but of recognising that the emerging forces are becoming increasingly relevant and are in fact capable of obtaining important results in the resolution of concrete problems, as some of them demonstrated during the [Covid-19] pandemic. The very fact that answers to problems can come from any country, however little, ends up presenting multilateralism as an inevitable process."

Kathleen Ngaronoa Card, Executive Secretary, Justice & Peace Commission

Election support and workshops were highlights of Human Life Committee's work this year

The Human Life Committee concentrated its efforts in the run-up to the election on delivering and supporting National Party MP Simon O'Connor in his Tāmaki electorate, which he represented from 2011 until this year.

"Simon often led the pro-life charge in the last Parliament," committee convenor Catherine Gillies said. "He was the bold voice for the small contingent of strongly pro-life MPs."

Other projects the committee has been involved in this year included a workshop, 'Forgotten Fathers', a male post-abortion healing programme. This contained the Buttons Project, a display of 20,000 buttons commemorating people's abortions.

"The artworks created by the buttons were inspiring and the stories heart-breaking, but all felt hope as they honoured their lost children," Gillies said.

"For some, their healing journey began when they sent in a button. The array of buttons was a joy! I took my teenage grandchildren to see the public Buttons Project display as I thought these beautiful stories and the incredible artwork would teach them far more than I ever could about the heartbreak of abortion."

A mass for the Loss of a Child at St Michael's Remuera was well attended. Some people came with their own community of support, with friends and family.

"Some, bravely, came alone," Gillies said.

"Our priests are so familiar with working with people in grief, that they are ideal to have been involved with this work."

An online meeting on healing strategies for abortion survivors drew people from around the world. The term abortion survivor includes those who have physically survived an abortion attempt and those who have had siblings or family members aborted.

Gillies said counsellors found there was noticeably less intergenerational trauma when the parents of the aborted child had found peace with their decision and God. Forgiveness was always key in this work.

Gillies is scheduled to speak at a youth and family peace day and the annual March for Life in Wellington.

"Both talks will focus on the impact of abortion and the need to share the message of love, mercy and compassion to our deeply wounded brothers and sisters," she said.



What is Australia's offer to Tuvalu on climate change?

Australia has offered Tuvalu visas for people who want to leave the island because of the effects of climate change.

Tuvalu has been battered for years by rising seas with tides frequently sweeping across the atoll nation (**Above**) and polluting water sources.

However, only 280 people will be offered access to permanent residency each year.

Tuvalu Prime Minister, Kausea Natano said Tuvalu was "going to be under the water" if the world did not tackle the climate crisis.

Media reports say the Australian government does not expect "wholesale migration" from the Pacific nation.

The offer has been interpreted by some commentators as part of a push by Australia to counter Chinese influence in the Pacific.

State of our Communities Report 2023

The Salvation Army has released the latest issue of its highly regarded reports on the state of New Zealand society.

It builds on an earlier study recognising the challenges people face due to rising inflation, making it difficult for them to provide for their families, find secure work and affordable housing. This micro-level report explores the experiences of a select group of local communities. You can find it here:

https://www.salvationarmy.org.nz/sites/default/files/files/%5Bfile_field%3Atype%5D/tsa_thestateofourcommunities_2023_v5.pdf

More funding needed for alternative education, says committee

Alternative education schools need more funding and better pay for teachers, the Social Hazards Committee has argued.

The committee said a recent report showed alternative education students attended more classes, enjoyed learning more and felt safer.

The report argued there were serious issues with funding for alternative education.

"Even with the 2023 Budget increase of \$25.2 million these vulnerable students are allocated about half of the grant per head to a small secondary school," Social Hazards committee convenor Peter Garrick said.

Māori made up 68% of alternative education students.

"According to the report, alternative education schools had to pay their teachers out of the meagre grant they receive from Government," Garrick said. "They are substantially disadvantaged if they hire experienced teachers higher up the pay scale, a disadvantage few other schools have to carry.

"Perhaps the best way to rectify this unjust situation would be if qualified teachers in alternative education schools were placed on the Ministry of Education payroll and the funding allocation for these schools was increased at least to the level of a small secondary school.

"It surely can't be good if alternative education schools are having to fund-raise in order to pay for their teacher salaries."



Women's group disappointed by "failure at the synod" on ordinations

The Women's Ordination Conference has said it is dismayed by what it called the failure of the synod in Rome to take seriously calls to open all ordained ministries to women.

The US-based *National Catholic Reporter* reported that the WOC said that limiting the discussion of women's ordination to "the permanent diaconate or undefined 'new ministries,' simply does not reflect the needs of the church today, nor the fullness of women's vocations."

The *NCR* said the Synod report acknowledged differences of opinion among delegates. It said two paragraphs that addressed the issue received the most no votes, though both passed with the necessary two-thirds majority. The report asked for more "theological and pastoral research on the access of women to the diaconate," including a review of two commissions Pope Francis set up in 2016 and 2020 to study the issue.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/we-will-continue-be-heard-progressive-catholics-react-synod-report> Photo: WOC

St Anne's parish group joins diverse alliance to fight poverty and inequality

The St Anne's Climate and Social Action Group joined with other groups to form Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga Tāmaki Makaurau in September.

Te Ohu Tāmaki is an alliance of diverse organisations including faith-based, unions and community groups working together to address issues of poverty and inequality.

More than 500 people representing 45 organisations attended the founding event in September. They included 15 parishioners from St Anne's.

The event was attended by the Leader of the Labour Party, Chris Hipkins, Deputy Leader of the National Party, Nicola Willis and Co-Leader of the Green Party.

Youth in action

Young Vinnies in Auckland offers students and young adults the chance to live out their faith through action

Working with the community has brought major changes to young people involved in the Society of St Vincent de Paul's youth programmes.

Each year about 1300 young people take part in Vinnies' programmes for school students, school leavers, university students and young professionals.

Delphina Soti, who has been with the charity since 2000 as a volunteer and is now general manager of Vinnies Tamaki Makaurau community hub located in Onehunga, Auckland, said Vinnies worked with 15 schools in the Auckland diocese. Between 40 and 150 students were involved in each secondary school.

Non-Catholic schools were also involved, including St Cuthbert's college and the Auckland Diocesan School for girls.

Vinnies works with a number of parishes, three tertiary institutions and many community, corporate and government groups in Auckland. In 2023 about 2800 people were involved.

Vinnies Tāmaki Makaurau is responsible for the Vinnies youth development programme, Young Vinnies, advocacy, community development programmes and the main Vinnies food hub.

The Young Vinnies Education and servant leadership programmes in schools start in Year 9 and focus on social justice, awareness, leadership and faith, project management and knowing your community. Soti said when



ABOVE: *Students from Liston College, one of the 15 schools involved in Young Vinnies.*

students volunteered they often came with a lot of enthusiasm, mixed expectations and needs.

"They need practical skills, more self-awareness, a place to belong, a place to explore and live out their faith and a curiosity in how to genuinely help people and make a difference," she said.

This year Vinnies in Central and South Auckland received more than 15,000 referrals for families needing support.

Many students volunteered to work in the food hub, packing food. They also worked in emergency accommodation, ran homework centres, provided hot meals, grew community gardens and organised food drives.



"Among the other social themes covered in schools, we explore food insecurity with the students," Soti said.

"We discuss the cause and effects of food insecurity and give them an opportunity to explore their own family food story. They talk about what it is like to go without food and the



Above: Student volunteers at the food hub.

Training camps



Above: The youth team co-ordinate a Vinnies Secondary Schools Executive training camp at the beginning of each school year and several young adult service learning camps during the year.

Supporting people while upholding their dignity

From P10

social implications of this on their own families,” Soti said.

“In the food hub we also explore how to prepare food support in a way that upholds people’s dignity.”

Vinnies provides a range of options, including halal, vegan, and ready to eat meals.

Some schools offer their commercial kitchens to help prepare thousands of meals.

Vinnies offers young adults the chance to keep working with the group. Vinnies college alumni are able to accompany Vinnies youth workers to support school students and work as tuakana (mentors).

Soti said she had seen a growing number of Young Vinnies programme alumni who were professionals such as engineers, doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers and accountants.



Student volunteers help with homework

Vinnies youth volunteers work with staff to help co-ordinate homework sessions for children living in emergency housing in the North Shore and a school in West Auckland.

Senior students from a local secondary school (pictured **ABOVE**) work in a group of six to help children with their homework. Many of the children who use the programme do not have access to adults after school.

Most of the children come from poorer families who often have fewer resources to support their children adequately.

Students and staff give their full attention to these children for an hour and a half, fostering friendship and trust. A meal is provided so the children are not hungry.

Envisioning peace in Gaza

Statement of the Justice & Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland on the conflict in Gaza



The Justice & Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland calls for a two-state solution to end the war in Gaza.

In making this call, the Commission echoes the words of Pope Francis, who suggested a two-state solution based around the Oslo accords was needed. He said this should be accompanied by a special status for Jerusalem, which is a holy site for Jews, Muslims and Christians alike.

The current conflict in Gaza has continued to escalate and shows no signs of abating. We, the Commission, do not believe military action will bring any permanent end to the conflict and reject the concept of war as a legitimate means of settling disputes. Rather we aspire to promoting lasting peace through mutual dialogue and reconciliation which takes counsel from all people of goodwill who genuinely wish to see an end to the violence and conflict.

Photo: *New York Times*

We acknowledge it will require the utmost strength to put aside decades of intolerance, suspicion and violence to find a way for both sides to live in security, dignity, and harmony.

The legacy of war

As the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference reiterated in their revision of *Te Kahu o te Ora – A Consistent Ethic of Life*, “there are never any ‘winners’ in wars, and it is always the vulnerable – the elderly, disabled, women and children – who suffer the most.”

The Bishops also pay heed to the known legacy of war and conflict: the death and maiming of innocent civilians, destruction of family life, crops and land being decimated, starvation, limits to humanitarian aid and healthcare, curtailment of civil rights, and the poisoning and contamination of the environment through acts of

warfare. The detriment, suffering, harm and trauma caused by war and conflict is too vast and devastating to truly comprehend. The effects are long-standing and intergenerational.

A life taken in war and conflict is a life too many. Will Israeli and Palestinian mothers continue to weep in the graveyards for another 75 years?

Future Disarmament

Pope Francis upholds the need to establish an immediate ceasefire, to free the hostages in the hands of Hamas and to allow humanitarian aid to enter Gaza.

The Commission's call for dialogue between the warring factions also echoes New Zealand's official position.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has stated: “Ultimately, there is no military solution that will bring about a just and lasting Peace for Israelis and Palestinians.”

To P13.

West Papuan flag raising



A flag raising ceremony to mark the 62nd anniversary of the declaration of West Papuan independence was scheduled to be held at St Mary's Bay in early December. The event expressed solidarity with the West Papuans' struggle to regain their independence from Indonesia.

From P12.

"New Zealand calls on all parties and the international community to take urgent action to restart the Middle East Peace Process as the best way to ensure enduring peace and security for all those who live in Israel and Palestine."

Furthermore, the Justice and Peace Commission supports the sentiments of the Anglican-Catholic Bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand in emphasising the importance of prayer and composure at this time of heightened emotional anguish, where anger can lead to a rise in anti-semitism or Islamophobia.

Grant us peace

We pray with the words of the Pope Francis:

Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts and give us the courage to say: "Never again war!"; "With war everything is lost". Instil in our hearts the courage to take concrete steps to achieve peace. Keep alive within us the flame of hope, so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last, and may the words "division", "hatred" and "war" be banished from the heart of every man and woman. Lord, defuse the violence of our tongues and our hands. Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be "brother", and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam!

All people living in the Holy Land deserve a safe and secure home. Sharing the land that was home to the prophets and patriarchs whose words are the foundation



of Judaism, Christianity and Islam is the only way to achieve this.

We pray, once more, together:
Shalom, Peace, Salaam!

For more information

Pope says two-state solution needed for Israel-Palestine

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/pope-says-two-state-solution-needed-israel-palestine-2023-11-01/>

Te Kahu o te Ora – A Consistent Ethic of Life Booklet

<https://www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Consistent-Ethic-of-Life-booklet-26-September-2023.pdf>

Joint Anglican-Catholic bishops' statement on Israel-Palestine conflict

<https://www.catholic.org.nz/news/media-releases/anglican-catholic-bishops-gaza-statement/>

Pope speaks by phone with Palestinian President Abbas

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2023-11/pope-francis-palestinian-president-mahmoud-abbas-peace.html>

Pope Francis Prayer for Peace 2014

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/prayers/documents/pa-pa-francesco-preghiere-20140608-in-vocazione-pace.html>

Israel Gaza conflict

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/countries-and-regions/middle-east/israel-gaza-conflict/>

Before the War (ABC Foreign Correspondent)

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-10-13/before-the-war/102973604>

New secretary**From P3**

"Being a childhood cancer survivor, a bereaved sibling from a young age and a bereaved daughter who endured chronic health conditions, prolonged hospitalisations and the deaths of those closest to my heart, I learned quickly that life is rarely fair or just and while peace is always sought, it is too often fleeting," Card said.

"I come from a whānau where inaction in the face of injustice is not an option.

"It was a natural progression to gravitate toward learning and practicing a 'faith in action' through pastoral and moral theology.

Social justice

"Social justice - and in particular Catholic Social Teaching - is not at the top of everyone's priority list, but care of our world, creation, society and environment should be high on the priority list of any professed Christian and Catholic.

"The question, which has become my repeated prayer and meditation is: 'What more can I do for others?'

"This now translates to: 'What more can we do as a Justice and Peace Commission?'

"I feel we are in a position where real, concrete change for the common good toward justice and peace is not only achievable, but expected and necessary.

"I look forward to exploring new ways with the Commission of approaching a future that actively seeks equity, justice, peace and integrity within the Diocese and extended community."



Italian monk's fascinating, if contradictory, view of Māori and pakeha in colonial New Zealand

REVIEWS

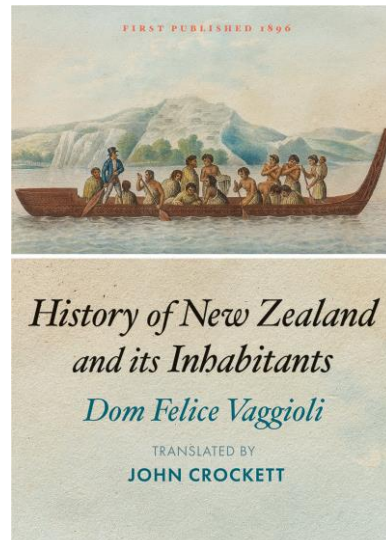
History of New Zealand and its Inhabitants. Dom Felice Vaggioli, (Translated by John Crockett). ISBN: 978199004863. 352pp. Otago University Press.

The Auckland Catholic Diocesan archives played a small, but important, role in ensuring that this book has an audience, more than a century after it was written.

The work of an Italian Benedictine monk, Dom Felice Vaggioli, who worked in New Zealand from 1879 to 1887, the book was printed in Italy, but angered the British, who objected to his anti-Protestant and anti-British views and asked the Italian government to destroy the book.

New Zealand writer John Crockett was doing some research in the Diocesan archives when he came across a copy that had been preserved and set out to translate it into English, his edition appearing in 2000 through Otago University Press. It has now been re-issued and offers new readers a fascinating account of life in colonial Aotearoa New Zealand. Vaggioli offered a very different view of the colony to the official one. For a start, he was extremely sympathetic to the Māori and saw them as victims of violence, fraud and oppression.

He provides his own account of the appearance of Indigenous religions around which people could gather as a symbol of resistance and describes with



sympathy the armed struggle of the Māori against the British.

Vaggioli's was not the only pakeha voice raised in support of Māori rights, nor the only one to point out the cruelty of British colonial policy, but one of the few to try to reach a wider audience.

Reviewers of the 2000 edition queried some of his dates and details and saw the book as part of the 19th century struggle between Protestants and Catholics. Certainly, Vaggioli was very much a clergyman of his time. For him the Protestants were the enemy, ministers of error who tricked the Māori and served the needs of the colonial administration. He also expressed many of the prejudices of the time, seeing the New Zealand Education act as a Jewish-Masonic plot.

Dom Felice's views may best be described as contradictory. On many issues he was deeply sympathetic to Māori and yet on others he could be quite the opposite. He bemoaned the influence of "degenerate

Europeans" on "native youths" and declared that "If this is supposed to be the civilisation which is meant to benefit the Māori it would have been better for them to have remained in their former state of barbarity and ingenuousness."

Again, while deeply anti-Protestant, he credits Bishop Selwyn with doing much to avert the Waikato wars, blame for which Vaggioli attributes entirely to Governor Grey.

History of New Zealand is a fascinating book and deserves to be widely read.

- Philip Cass

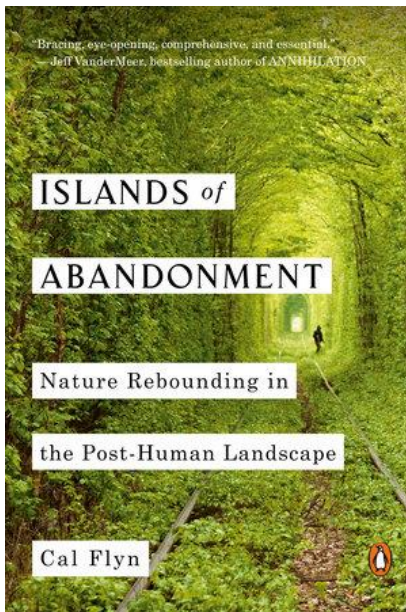
Icon exhibition now in book form



Artwork from the exhibition of Orthodox icons, *Heavenly Beings*, which was reviewed in these pages – and which proved to have unexpected links to social justice – has been released in a new book from Auckland Art Gallery. The hard cover book features 152 images from the exhibition. Details are here:

<https://shop.aucklandartgallery.co.nz/products/heavenly-beings-icons-of-the-christian-orthodox-world>

Can the Earth heal itself?



Cal Flynn. *Islands of Abandonment*. Penguin Random House, London/New York. ISBN: 9780008329761, 2022

Scottish writer Cal Flynn examines places of human settlement that, for various reasons, have been allowed to fall into decay and been reclaimed by wildlife. In beautifully evocative prose, she tells stories of disaster and connection, of hope played out in human activity and lost by human folly. In all these places, though, beauty has won through. Each of them is a place where plants and



Above: The Eurasian Lynx is one of many animals that have thrived in the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. Check this report from the UN Environment Programme. <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/how-chernobyl-has-become-unexpected-haven-wildlife>

animals can and have found refuge. Many are refugia for rare species.

The questions asked, then, include "Can the earth heal?" And the answer is "Yes it can".

Another is "Is all human interference with nature bad?"

The answer to that is "It depends". It depends on how willing we are to let things stand and be.

The best-known example of a human-created wilderness reclaimed in triumph by nature, is Chernobyl.

Whatever the effects of radiation upon human residents of the area, animal and plant life has absolutely thrived. It formed the basis of a tourist industry that was growing steadily before the

Russian invasion. This beautiful and very accessibly written book is a must-read.

- Annie Cass

ABC documentary 'Before the War' shows hope and fear on both sides

The ABC's flagship international current affairs programme, *Foreign Correspondent*, had a crew in Israel and Palestine before the Gaza conflict erupted.

It is well worth watching to get an understanding of what hopes and fears were present on both sides in the weeks leading up to Hamas' attack on Israel and the devastating Israeli response.

Using interviews with Israeli illegal settlers, a senior Israeli military officer very much focused on a peaceful solution and Palestinian advocates, the documentary shows the tensions and aspirations for peace and dignity underlying the conflict.

It was shown in Australia just after the latest conflict began and is still available here:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-10-13/before-the-war/102973604>

Highly recommended for a balanced view of this tragic subject.

Electoral forum at St Anne's. From P4.



ABOVE: The electoral forum audience. Members of the St Mary's Papakura youth group opened the evening.

Justice & Peace Commission Catholic Diocese of Auckland

Executive Chair: Pat Lythe

Acting Chairs:

Vicar for Social Impact and
Communication Loraine Elliott
Deacon Sanele Poluleuligaga

Executive Secretary:

Kathleen Card

Website

<http://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/care-of-the-poor/justicepeace>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/JusticeAndPeaceCDA/>

For this edition

Editor: Pat Lythe.

Layout: Philip Cass.

Editorial: Loraine Elliott

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Where to get help

Depression Helpline-0800 543 354

Kidline:0800 942 8787

Lifeline: 0800 543 354 Free text
4357

Need to Talk? Call or text 1737

Victim Support: 0800 842 846

Rainbow Youth: 09 376 4155

Samaritans: 0800 726 666

What's Up: 0800 942 8787

Youth line: 0800 376 633 or text
2342

Shine (get-help):0508 744 633

Safe to talk 0800 044 334 FT 4334

Better Blokes: 09 378 6812

Rape Crisis Centre: 0800 88 33 00

Sexual Abuse HELP Foundation: 09
623 1700

Youthline 0800 376 635 Free text
234

Women's Refuge 0800 733 843

Suicide Crisis Helpline 0800 543354



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To donate, visit www.caringfoundation.org.nz

Or online: BNZ 02-0100-0242648-00

(Use your supporter number as reference or
surname and initials) or call our team (09) 360 3045

Help us make a difference

Do you feel spiritually called or interested in the welfare of others, our society, or our planet? Help us create a more just and peaceful society in our parishes, our diocese, our community, our world! We are looking for new members to join these committees:

- Bi-cultural: 'He tangata, he tangata, he tangata...'
- Affordability of Housing: 'Shelter is one of our most fundamental needs.'
- Social Welfare and Anti-Poverty: 'Solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.'
- Peace and International Justice: 'Peace for all is the fruit of justice for all.'
- Environment and Sustainability: 'Integrity of creation, life and beauty.'
- Social Hazards: 'Common good of the entire human family.'
- Human Life: 'Human life begins at conception and lasts until we draw our final breath.'
- Crime and Reconciliation: 'Find paths to a justice system which reconciles, heals and turns lives around.'

If you want to help make our world a better place, we'd love to hear from you! To find out more, contact Executive Secretary Kathleen Card at kathleenc@cda.org.nz