

## **Media Release**

### **Holy Name Catholic Church considers possible relocation to Ascension Winery.**

The Holy Name Parish Church in Warkworth has become too small for its growing community so the Catholic Diocese of Auckland is looking to buy a former winery outside the town for a bigger church.

General Manager of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland, James van Schie, says a consultation process with parishioners will begin this weekend to explore the option of buying the former Ascension Winery at 480 Matakana Road.

Buying the bigger property would allow relocating Holy Name Catholic Parish from Alwick Street in Warkworth to the new site, where a church and pastoral centre could be established.

“Warkworth has been undergoing significant growth and the recently completed Pūhoi to Warkworth Northern Motorway extension will continue to support this growth in years to come,” James van Schie said.

Holy Name Parish is outgrowing its current church building and has very little parking, he said. The winery property offers a wedding hall that could be adapted and used as a church with parking, good accessibility, and the capability to become a destination for Catholic weddings.

Under the proposal, the existing restaurant would be repurposed to provide hospitality for parish events, day retreats, community hire and as a space for both church and local groups to gather.

The land currently occupied by vines would be set aside with the intention of being developed for future pastoral use, such as a primary school in the long term. This second stage of development would likely not happen for at least ten years, depending on the growth of Warkworth.

Bishop of Auckland Steve Lowe says the history of Holy Name Parish is one of moving with the times to meet the growing needs of the community.

“Warkworth’s first Catholic church was built in 1910. It was enlarged in 1956 and a new church was built in 1990 to meet the needs of a growing community.” said Bishop Steve. “Once again, the present church is too small for an expanding community and its needs. This project offers the Holy Name parishioners of today with the opportunity to gift the Holy Name parishioners of the future with a new church and hopefully a school, so creating an active and dynamic hub for the mission of the Church within the wider community.”

Parishioners at Holy Name Parish have been invited to take part in a consultation period that will include a presentation, a site visit and a process in which to provide feedback. A decision is anticipated in late June.

### **Current Church**



### **Proposed New Church**



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