

NZ Catholic

The newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of Auckland

ISSUE 9 - DECEMBER 2025



Ordinary saints celebrated at Jubilee Volunteer awards

On October 31, the Auckland Diocese celebrated 12 wonderful members of the faith community. These saints were nominated by their parishes to receive a special Jubilee award in recognition of their outstanding volunteer contribution to the life of their parish.

This initiative was part of the Diocese's Jubilee celebrations and honoured those whose generous service reflects the hope and love of Christ in action.

Whether through pastoral care, liturgical ministry, outreach, hospitality or quiet acts of kindness, these individuals embody the spirit of Jubilee: restoring, uplifting and renewing the life of the Church.

It was an opportunity to celebrate the hope we find in one another, and to give thanks for those who help build vibrant, faith-filled communities.

Supporting the Catholic Deaf Community in Auckland

Ministry to the deaf within the Auckland Catholic Diocese is vital for fostering inclusion and ensuring that every person can fully participate in the life of the Church. For members of the deaf community, access to the sacraments, liturgy and pastoral care often requires intentional efforts such as sign language interpretation, adapted catechesis and community support. Without these, many may feel isolated or excluded from spiritual growth and parish life.

This ministry is not only about accessibility; it is an expression of the Gospel mandate to serve all people, especially those who face

barriers. By providing resources and trained pastoral workers, the Diocese affirms that the deaf community is an integral part of the Body of Christ. It also seeks to ensure that faith is communicated in ways that speak to every heart, regardless of hearing ability.

Each month, two Masses are prayed with interpreters present to increase the level of participation.

On the second Sunday of the month in the Poynton Room of the Pompallier Diocesan Centre, a deaf-friendly Mass using approved adaptations is prayed. Beginning at 12 noon it is followed by a shared lunch.



Good Shepherd Parish in Balmoral welcomes the community with the presence of NZSL interpreters at 9.30am on the fourth Sunday of the month.

In addition, the Gospels in NZSL are being progressively uploaded to <https://www.youtube.com/@deafpastoralworkercatholic1680>. They have been sorted into playlists according to the writer for ease of access.

Christmas Mass Times

Should you be away over Christmas within the diocese and looking to find local Mass times, parish details will be available from a link on the front page of the diocesan website from December 1.

Visit <https://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz> to find the listings.



Video series highlights

New Zealand pilgrimage sites

A new series inspired by the Church's Jubilee Year theme, Pilgrims of Hope, has been launched to showcase key places of pilgrimage throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Produced by the Catholic Enquiry Centre, the videos highlight sites in each diocese that were nominated as local pilgrimage destinations.

"We can often find ourselves looking to the Holy Land or Europe for places of pilgrimage, which we should, but we have our own faith-filled and inspiring stories in our land," said CEC director Carly Mulqueen.

"We have sites of great significance, like places where Masses were first celebrated, but also some great figures like St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Meri Hohepa Suzanne



Pilgrimage series presenter Joanna Kearney speaks with Fr Chris Denham about the history of the Cathedral of St Patrick and St Joseph

writer, and Joanna Kearney, who presents the videos.

"Rebecca and Joanna gave so much of themselves to this project, inviting

the Church's history here and our pioneers in faith, and people being inspired to follow their example."

The first two diocesan videos – for Auckland and Christchurch – are now live on the Catholic Enquiry Centre's YouTube channel.

The Auckland project focuses on the Cathedral of St Patrick and St Joseph and a range of sites in Northland – the site of the first Mass on New Zealand soil, the resting place of Bishop Pompallier and the mission house named for Pompallier.

Among the pilgrimage options in the Diocese of Christchurch are the parish in Temuka, with its beautiful church and the historic centre dedicated to St Mary MacKillop, who lived there; the Sanctuary of Fourviere at Leithfield; and Akaroa, the site of the first Mass and the first Catholic church in the South Island.

"There are so many great insights contained in these videos, that people will learn new and exciting things about the Catholic faith in our country," Mrs Mulqueen said.

Videos for the other four dioceses will be released in coming weeks.

Access the videos at: <https://www.youtube.com/@catholicdiscovery9588>

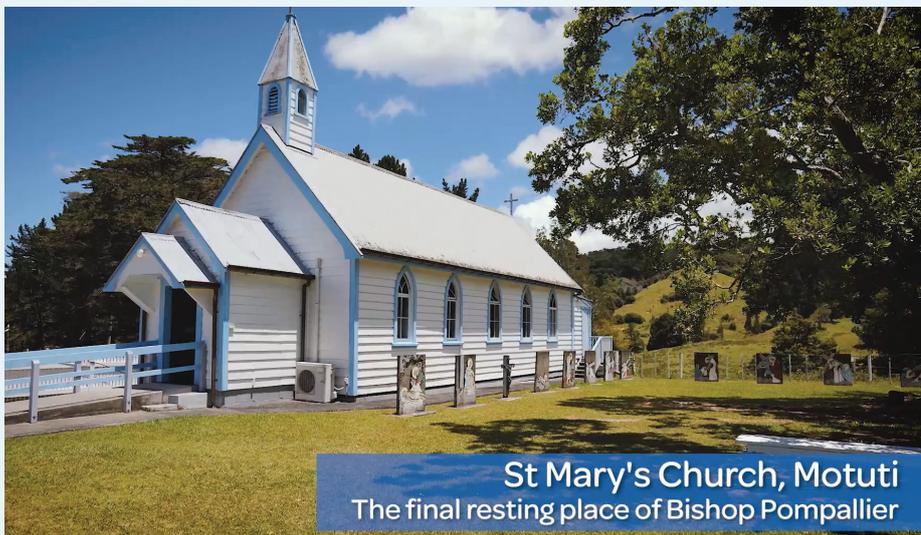
"There are so many great insights contained in these videos, that people will learn new and exciting things about the Catholic faith in our country"

Aubert and Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier whose lives we rightly honour."

Mrs Mulqueen paid tribute to her predecessor, Rebecca Taylor-Hunt, who was the series producer and

us all into these holy sites and the compelling stories of missionary disciples through the ages," she said.

"One of the fruits we hope to see is a growing understanding of





Bishop Lowe meets Pope Leo, extends invitation to visit

Bishop Steve Lowe says it was a “graced moment” to meet Pope Leo XIV recently and to bring to the Holy Father the prayers of the Catholic community in New Zealand.

The Bishop of Auckland and president of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference had a private audience with Pope Leo

“It was a blessed journey with a group of Kiwis whose faith has descended from some of the great saints of our Church’s history”

after the completion of a Jubilee Year pilgrimage that included holy places in Europe with New Zealand connections.

“It was a blessed journey with a group of Kiwis whose faith has descended from some of the great saints of our Church’s history,” Bishop Lowe said.

“To visit Lyon, where the Church’s roots date back to the first century and from where Suzanne Aubert and Bishop Pompallier came to New Zealand, was a source of joy for all of us.”

After the pilgrimage ended, Bishop Lowe met with Pope Leo at the Vatican. The woman many hope will become New Zealand’s first saint was one topic of discussion.

Bishop Lowe spoke of the affection

New Zealanders have for Suzanne Aubert and gave the Pope a copy of the book *Spiritual Tonics*, which includes reflections and quotations from Mother Aubert.

“I also had the chance to share with the Holy Father how warmly his election was welcomed in New Zealand,” Bishop Lowe explained.

“As someone who served in Peru for many years, Pope Leo understands what it’s like to be a long distance from Rome, but to remain deeply connected with the global Church,

under the pastoral care of the Holy Father.”

During the meeting, Bishop Lowe also extended an invitation for Pope Leo to visit New Zealand in the coming years.

“It’s almost 40 years since our first – and only – papal visit,” Bishop Lowe said.

“I was able to explain to Pope Leo that the Church in New Zealand is multicultural and vibrant and active in our country. I told him that a visit from the Holy Father would be a wonderful boost for the Catholic faithful in Aotearoa.

“I very much hope to get the chance to welcome him to our shores in the next few years.”



CathNews
NEW ZEALAND



SUBSCRIBE TODAY





News about the Catholic Church in New Zealand and beyond in your inbox every Tuesday and Friday



Youth Leaders Gather for Final Masterclass of 2025

During October, 40 youth ministry leaders from across Auckland gathered for their final Masterclass of the year. Masterclass is an event the Diocese hosts three times each year to equip and inspire those serving in youth ministry.

The October Masterclass began with two workshops. Sam Brebner, Manager of Ministries to Young People, led “Say Something That Sticks: How to Give a Talk that

Young People Will Remember”. Fr Frank Bird SM followed with “Creating Spaces for Grace: Helping Young People Encounter God Through Reflection and Silence”.

After the workshops, youth leaders shared a meal, followed by an evening of praise, worship and Eucharistic adoration. Youth leaders left the event energised for the final stretch of their youth ministry year. Masterclass will return in 2026.

A Gift for Disciples

Bishop Steve believes that young people – just as much as the older folk – are called to live their faith actively and joyfully in today’s world. In this Jubilee Year, he has gifted every year 7 student in the Auckland Diocese a copy of YOUCAT and every year 8 student a copy of DOCAT.

These resources seek to inspire faith and action, in ways that are clear, engaging and relevant to their lives. It is hoped that these books will inspire students not only to know their faith but to make a difference in the world, building their capacity as young disciples who bring hope and love wherever they go.

Pallets of these books were delivered to the Pompallier Diocesan Centre for distribution.



Before delivery, Bishop Steve gathered with members of the diocesan team to bless the books.

Personal Note of Gratitude

With the closure of *NZ Catholic* as a fortnightly paper, the Auckland Diocese began a collaboration with the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference to provide a monthly diocesan newsletter containing a mix of local news provided by CDA and national news supplied by NZCBC, which also provided the layout and graphic skills.

As with any new initiative it needed to begin with someone pulling together the local content. In my role of Leader of Pastoral Services, this fell to me. Now I am leaving my position in the Diocese, I thank all who have journeyed with me throughout the 13 years in various roles including this one for companionship, challenge and sharing of faith. Thank you.



Next time *NZ Catholic* comes your way, there will be a new compiler.

Sr Siân Owen rsj



Catholic Diocese of Auckland
Te Taumata o te Hahi Kātorika

aucklandcatholic.org.nz
[f](#) bishopstelvele
[f](#) [@](#) [v](#) aucklandcatholic