



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

Last Saturday, on the Solemnity of St Joseph, Pope Francis released a new Apostolic Constitution entitled in English **“Preach the Gospel.”** It is a document which opens up top Vatican leadership roles to any baptized lay person, including women. The document outlines the structure and function of the Roman Curia and brings much of his vision for the Church into the statutes of the Curia.

The whole document is too complicated to go into in this newsletter but an important point, certainly for me, and hopefully for all of us, is something that Francis has said many times, that any true reform is based above all on an “internal reform,” meaning personal conversion. That of course is what Lent is all about, a season calling us to greater holiness, integrity, aligning our whole life with the Gospel. We are always being called to inner conversion.

“Preach the Gospel” has been many years in the making, and now it has come at a very important time in the Church, during this time of preparation for the Synod which will lead us to listen to one another and become a discerning Church, a Church able to identify the work of the Holy Spirit among us and follow its lead. That task is for all of us, for all the baptised.

On the same weekend as the Pope’s document was published all priests of the world received a letter from the General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops and the Prefect for the Congregation of the Clergy. It was a letter of encouragement, asking us all to be involved in the Synod process. If we want the Church to grow, if we want the Church to be relevant to our lives, if we want the Church to be active in society and influencing society with Gospel values, then we all, priests and people, must be engaged in becoming a discerning Church, a Church able to identify the work of the Holy Spirit among us and to follow the Spirit’s lead.

Please look for ways to encourage one another, parishioners and priests together to engage in the Synod discernment process we have been invited to join in together.

With every blessing

Nāku noa. Nā,

+John



NOTICES

- Please keep in your prayers all our clergy. The frail and those who are experiencing ill health at present are Frs Frank Maguire, Peter O'Connell and Mons John Carde. Please continue praying for Fr David Dowling who is recovering well.
- **Consecration of Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary March,** Tomorrow (25 March) Pope Francis will consecrate Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate heart of Mary during a service in St Peter's Basilica. Pope Francis has asked the world to make this a day of prayer. Parishes have been asked to have churches open so that people can come at any time during the day to pray for peace. At 5pm at Connolly Hall I will pray the Prayer of Consecration which Pope Francis has sent us, and which I have forwarded to every parish. Because of COVID the numbers at Connolly Hall are obviously limited to 100, but please pray for peace in Ukraine wherever you are.

Covid 19 and Latest Government Announcements. As you will be aware the Prime Minister made some announcements yesterday about some changes re numbers at gathering, vaccine passes, masks, etc. Today I have also sent out a letter to all Clergy and Lay Pastoral Leaders spelling out what this means for us as we prepare for Easter. The essential thing for us to do is to remember at all times that this virus is passed on through our breath. Therefore in everything we do, including our Easter ceremonies, we need to make sure that we are wearing masks, not too close to one another and avoiding any risks of passing the virus on.

Catholic Centre As many of you will know by now the Catholic Centre recently received an Engineer's Report which detailed that the building is only 20% of the New Building Standards. On advice from the Board of Administration we have closed the Centre at this stage until we get further information which will allow us to make decisions about the future. All the offices from the Catholic Centre have been relocated to other sites. I want to assure you that work is continuing and we're trying to keep all services provided by staff at the Catholic Centre as normal as possible. Therefore, please do not hesitate to contact any of the staff who serve the Archdiocese during this time of upheaval

God of believers, God of deniers,
God of those who don't know:
faith assumes uncertainty.
The truth is hardly ever simple;
the path ahead rarely clear.
We turn to you in part because we know
not where to go.
Yet faith assumes assurance.
Faith remains, with hope and love, when
all else fades away.
As we step forth with you today, grant us
faith to trust ourselves, and let us believe
in the good you provide that is well be-
yond our knowing.
Amen.