



Kia tau te rangimarie ki a koutou,

It has been a challenge over these last few weeks to remember what we can and cannot do at various alert levels, and the last few weeks with Auckland at Level Three and the rest of the country at Level Two has added to the confusion. It has been hard going, events have been postponed – sometimes more than once; family gatherings which have been long looked forward to have been postponed or cancelled; people have lost their jobs and their businesses, and deep anxiety about the future has arisen. These are strange and challenging times for everyone.

These challenges are all over the world, and in most cases they are much worse than we are facing in New Zealand. However, here in New Zealand we are anxious about not putting ourselves or anyone else in danger. We are all trying to be careful not to take any risks and we are looking for any ways we can stop the spread of the virus.

With anxieties, challenges and questions we might find it hard to pray, but even in the midst of Covid-19 and what it is doing to us there is the chance to find God in new ways, to touch the depths of who we are and to seek ways to rekindle the fire in our souls. Remember this - we do not have to look for the extraordinary and sensational, the simple gifts of God are all around us, even in this time of pandemic. Take the time to look around, find grace in the present moment, allow the simple everyday things and events of life – the people you see every day, to bless you – let everything nourish and inspire you, they are gifts of God. See the holy in the ordinary and you will be greatly and deeply blessed.

Even amidst the challenges and anxieties, the changes and the questions, bring the longings of your heart to the present moment and find the grace that waits for you there.

With sincere thanks for all that everyone is doing.

Every blessing. Naku noa

+ John

## NOTICES:

Please **pray** for the work being done to prepare for the **Royal Commission into Abuse in Care**. The Church has established a group called **Te Ropu Tautoko** to assist in preparing for the Commission. An enormous amount of work has already been done, thousands of documents have been researched and sent in, and Briefs of Evidence are being worked on in preparation for Hearings later in the year. It is difficult work, with a lot of people working very hard to prepare the material and provide everything that is needed. Please keep them all in your prayers.

### **Social Justice Week 6-12 September 2020**

This year's theme is *Easy as CST: Unlocking the Church's Potential*. This focuses on Catholic Social Teaching. Excellent resources have been sent to Parishes, Schools and Colleges and can be found at [caritas.org.nz//parishes/social-justice-week](https://caritas.org.nz//parishes/social-justice-week)

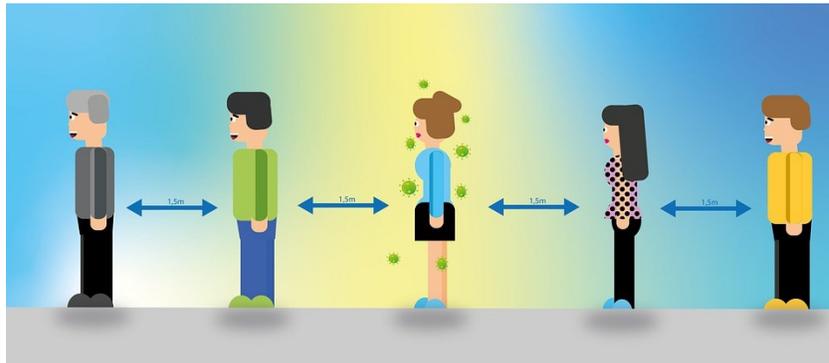
### **UPDATE - Archdiocese of Wellington Election Forum on Environmental and Climate Change Issues**

This **livestreamed event** is going ahead on Tuesday 1 September from 6-8pm. **Please note we are no longer holding a public meeting.** We invite you to join us from home, viewing live as young people of the Archdiocese question political party representatives about their environmental and climate change policies at [https://youtu.be/Dpog-Gva3\\_M](https://youtu.be/Dpog-Gva3_M). The discussion will be chaired by Dr Areti Metuamate of Te Kupenga – Catholic Leadership Institute and there will be an opening address by Cardinal John Dew. The video will also be available for viewing following the event. For more information, please contact Lisa Beech – Ecology, Justice and Peace Advisor, [l.beech@wn.catholic.org.nz](mailto:l.beech@wn.catholic.org.nz) 0212884388

A few days ago I sent out some prayer resources to all parishes, schools and Colleges. These are to help us pray for those who are struggling, for families and friends around us who have families overseas, or those who have lost their jobs, or whose businesses may be at risk. One of those prayers is included below, but please use the others to pray for and to be in solidarity with those who are struggling.

## Socially Distant

Mary,  
 with your sister and some others,  
 you stood on Calvary  
*at a distance,*  
 helpless with grief as Jesus died.  
 There are many today  
 in this pandemic crisis  
 who cannot be with those they love  
 who lie ill, perhaps dying.  
 All must remain *socially distant,*  
 unable to hold or even touch  
 lest the virus spreads.  
 Be with those who feel so helpless.  
 Comfort the healthy and the sick.  
 Ease the stress that distance imposes.  
 Open us to the strength you found  
 and to the peace no distance can disturb.  
 [Mark 15:40-41; John 19:25-27]



““Have mercy on me, Lord!” (Mt 15:22). It is the cry that is born out of a life marked by suffering... What type of faith is great? Great faith is that which brings its own story, marked even by wounds, and brings it to the Lord’s feet asking Him to heal them, to give them meaning. Each one of us has our own story and it is not always a story “of export”, it is not always a clean story... Many times it is a difficult story, with a lot of pain, many misfortunes and many sins. What do I do with my story? Do I hide it? No! We must bring it before the Lord. “Lord, if You will it, you can heal me!””