



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

On Tuesday 15 June I was involved in a Zoom conversation with Officials at the Synod Office in Rome. One of the people sitting alongside Cardinal Mario Grech, the General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops, was Sister Nathalie Becquart. Sister Nathalie is a French Catholic religious sister, a member of the Congregation of Xavières, and was appointed a consultor to the Synod of Bishops in 2019 and named one of its undersecretaries in 2021.

Why am I telling you about Sister Nathalie? I am writing about her because of the changes Pope Francis is making to the Synod process, and she is one of the drivers and hard workers behind it. Pope Francis has announced that there would be a Synod Assembly in Rome next year, in October 2022, that has now been put back to October 2023. It has been put back a year because Pope Francis wants a PROCESS that gives everyone a chance to be heard. He is promoting a synodal process that will involve the whole Church. It will focus on listening to one another and to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The Pope has said that this should begin with a bottom-up full diocesan-level process of consultation, which “*will require patience, work, allowing people to talk so that the wisdom of the people of God will come forth...*”. He is also very clear that this is a PROCESS of discernment. He went on to say “*A Synod is nothing more than making explicit what ‘LUMEN GENTIUM’ says...*” (*Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, is one of the principal documents of the Second Vatican Council.)

I will be communicating to the Archdiocese a lot more information about this Synodal Process over the next few weeks and months. Pope Francis will open the Synod process on the weekend of 9-10 October in Rome, then every diocese in the world will have an Opening Mass on Sunday 17 October. The synodal consultation process for the Archdiocese of Wellington will then follow. It has been said many times that history tells us that it usually takes 50-60 years for the effects of a major Council in the Church to be experienced. I believe that Francis is making that happen. The wonderful thing is that we can be part of it.

The theme of this Synod Assembly we will all be preparing for is “*For a Synodal Church: communion, participation, mission.*” This is our chance to be involved, to walk together, to listen to the Holy Spirit and to one another, to be in *communion*, to *participate* and to respond to our call to *mission*.

There will be much more information coming your way, in the meantime please pray that each one of us will make the most of the opportunity.

Nāku noa. Nā

John

A synod is an assembly of the Church—the people of God. That embraces persons who happened to be called to differing states of life within the community—ordained, lay or vowed religious. But they are all there by virtue of their baptism, in solidarity.

Baptism is the only ticket of admission. The Spirit is poured out upon the entire baptized community.

The goal of a synod is wisdom. It is to discover the way the Lord is calling the Church, not merely to think or talk, but to choose to act.



NOTICES

- Please continue to pray for the **sick and frail clergy**, especially Monsignor John Carde, Frs Maurice Carmody, Don Morrison and Colin Durning.
- **Change of Alert Level - Covid19**
As the Wellington Region moves back to Alert Level 2 until 11.59pm on Sunday 27 June, I have advised all parishes in the North Island of the Archdiocese that there are to be no Vigil or Sunday Masses this weekend or any other liturgical or parish gathering. We all must work together to keep each other safe. Remember to use the contract tracer app and to stay home if you are feeling unwell.
- **Safeguarding** Thanks to all who participated in the Safeguarding Audit recently, many diocesan staff and six parishes were audited by The Safeguarding Officer and another Auditor from the National Officer for Safeguarding and Professional Standards. We have received initial feedback and it is good to see that there is a great appreciation in the diocese of the necessity for Police Vetting, participation in Safeguarding Workshops and for good Safeguarding practises.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops are committed to fostering a culture of safeguarding in the Church. As a Catholic community, we each have a responsibility: to value all people and protect them from harm; create environments where people are welcome and safe
Te Kupenga – Catholic Theological College in collaboration with the *National Office of Professional Standards* have developed an online Safeguarding course for all people working in Church leadership roles. For more information go to:
tinyurl.com/Safeguarding-TPK0
- **Clergy Day**—as agreed at the recent Assembly a Clergy Only Day will be held on Tuesday July 13, St Theresa’s Plimmerton from 10—4pm. I look forward to seeing you there.
- **Jubilee Mass** will be celebrated on Wednesday 14 July at St Patrick’s Church, Kilbirnie at 11am followed by lunch at The Pines, Houghton Bay. All are welcome to attend Mass and celebrate with the clergy of the Archdiocese.

In this Year of St Joseph, we pray

<i>St Joseph, deeply loved</i>	- pray for us
<i>St Joseph, Tender and Loving</i>	- pray for us
<i>St Joseph, The Obedient One</i>	- pray for us
<i>St Joseph, The Accepting One</i>	- pray for us
<i>St Joseph, the Creative and Courageous Believer and Guide</i>	- pray for us