



Catholic Parish of Christchurch North

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Saturday, 2nd January 2021

Dear Parishioners,

Happy New Year. May the Lord fill you with his Spirit in the year ahead!
Tonight and tomorrow the following message from Bishop Paul will be read out at all Masses.

Brother and Sisters in Christ. Yesterday the Holy Father announced that I have been appointed as the Co-adjutor Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Wellington. This means I will be the successor to Cardinal John Dew when he retires as Archbishop. Because of this new appointment I cease to be the Bishop of Christchurch. However, I have been appointed the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Christchurch. This means I will continue to oversee the running of the diocese until a new bishop is chosen. I will also continue to remain in the diocese for some time. This appointment was a surprise to me and I am sorry that I will not be with you to see through the implementation of Our Faith Our Future and all that this means for the diocese. Be assured of my continued prayers for you and the diocese and I would ask that you pray for me too.

Archbishop Paul Martin SM

Whilst I am pleased for Cardinal John Dew and the Archdiocese of Wellington that they have a worthy successor and whilst I trust deeply that the Lord knows what he is doing, to have lost Bishop now Archbishop Paul after only three years is a blow for us in the Diocese of Christchurch.

This is particularly true as he has bravely set out on a daunting but exciting path of renewal in the Diocese which we are only just beginning to unfold. We will miss his direction in the future as we continue to unfold this vision.

I want to reassure you that the Bishop's plan will continue to be implemented as he has set out and we will continue to unfold this work here in the Catholic Parish of Christchurch North. Archbishop Paul has been made Coadjutor Archbishop which means he will take over the Wellington Diocese when Cardinal John retires. Archbishop Paul has also been named Apostolic Administrator of Christchurch Diocese as the Holy See works to appoint a new Bishop. This means Archbishop Paul will continue to oversee his plan until the new Bishop has been appointed and Archbishop Paul intends to stay living in Christchurch for awhile.

On the feast of the Epiphany this Sunday we as a people—and as individuals—are challenged, in the words of Isaiah, to shine out in this troubled world loved by God.

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you, though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples. (Isaiah 60: 1-2)

This Sunday as we celebrate the Revelation of the Son of God to the whole world as Saviour, I want to encourage us all to try and let go of any bitterness, doubts, hurts, and grief as we enter this New Year. Let us be eager for what God is doing in our midst. Let us look for that. The three wise men coming with their gifts to the tiny baby in Bethlehem are a reminder that Jesus Christ came as Saviour of the whole world.

Even in our beginnings of a new parish this year I have often been aware of the Holy Spirit at work drawing people to Christ from the most surprising places. The three wise men in their search came to Jesus, they found him and brought their gifts and themselves to him. There are many people out there open and being led by the Holy Spirit to faith. We ask the Lord to show us and lead us to them.

I ask you not use the transfer of Archbishop Paul to Wellington, which is for the good of the wider Church, as an excuse to stay in a place of inaction or confusion or hurt, or to pull back from offering our gifts and our lives for

the Gospel in our parish, in our workplaces and homes. We need your help in all sorts of ways big and small; ask the Lord.

Remember Jesus is not waiting until you and I are saints to use us. No! He wants us to let go of an, often false, alternate picture of ourselves **as we think we ought to be**, and to offer ourselves, **as we are**, in a thousand different ways for his kingdom.

Thank you to many for so much support and ideas and help during 2020 as we set up our new parish and parish teams. I ask that we pray for each other, look for the good in each other, look for the works of the Holy Spirit and say a big yes to Jesus in 2021.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Loughnan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fr Rick Loughnan
Parish Priest