



Kia tau te rangimārie ki a koutou

Many of you who read this newsletter will know already that one of my favourite websites is www.gratefulness.org. Over these days of Lockdown I decided to do a very simple eight day retreat which has come from this site...I needed to try to recapture some GRATITUDE after endless Zoom calls and emails.

A quote from the first day of these eight days was from an American writer named Ray Bradbury, who wrote ***“Treasure this day and treasure yourself truly, neither will happen again”.***

The same day I read the above quote I also happened to read a part of *Fratelli Tutti*, the Encyclical Letter of Pope Francis, who wrote:

“Consumerist individualism has led to great injustice. Other persons come to be viewed simply as obstacles to our own serene existence; we end up treating them as annoyances and we become increasingly aggressive. This is even more the case in times of crisis, catastrophe and hardship, when we are tempted to think in terms of the old saying, ‘every man for himself’. Yet even then, we can choose to cultivate kindness. Those who do so become stars shining in the midst of darkness.” FT 222

In thinking about both of the above I became very grateful. Grateful for the kindness of people and the way people treasure themselves, treasure themselves so much that they can be open and generous to others.

Why am I saying this? In the midst of lockdowns, uncertainties, wondering where this COVID pandemic will end up, when many are struggling to make ends meet and unsure about their jobs and livelihoods – in the midst of all this there is incredible generosity. I am hearing endless stories about kindness and thoughtfulness. An amazing response has been made to our Catholic Social Services appeal to assist Afghan refugees with accommodation, goods and donations. Thousands of people have shared my Facebook post about the Afghans coming to Wellington who are escaping from the terrible circumstances which have driven them from their homeland, and many people have commented. What is truly inspirational are the number of houses which have been made available, and the furniture, bed linen, kitchen utensils, and food which have been offered in abundance.

I am truly GRATEFUL for this generous response; to me this shows just how much so many people ***“Treasure this day and treasure themselves ...”***, and that as Pope Francis has said ***“even more the case in times of crisis, catastrophe and hardship, when we are tempted to think in terms of the old saying, ‘every man for himself’. Yet even then, we can choose to cultivate kindness.”*** **THANK YOU.**

If you would like to help in any way please contact Paul Alsford at Catholic Social Services on 021 754 145 or p.alsford@wn-catholicsocialservices.org.nz

With every blessing.

Nāku noa. Nā

John

A Prayer to the Creator

**Lord, Father of our human family,
you created all human beings equal in dignity:
pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit
and inspire in us a dream of renewed encounter,
dialogue, justice and peace.
Move us to create healthier societies
and a more dignified world,
a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.**

**May our hearts be open
to all the peoples and nations of the earth.
May we recognize the goodness and beauty
that you have sown in each of us,
and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects,
and shared dreams. Amen.**

Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*

NOTICES

- Please keep in your prayers all our clergy. The frail and those who are experiencing ill health at present are Frs Colin Durning, and Peter O'Connell.

As you are aware Fr Don Morrison died on Sunday 15 August. His Requiem, under Level 3 restrictions will be held this coming Friday in Carterton. There will be a Memorial Mass arranged for Don at a time when we can gather safely. Please pray for Don and his family at this time. May he rest in peace.

Many of you will remember Ronnie Grey, who worked here at the Catholic Centre for many years. I have been advised that Ronnie passed away on Saturday 28th of August. Please remember Ronnie and her family at this time. May she rest in peace.

- As we are unsure of the Lockdown level we will be in at the end of this month a decision regarding the Clergy Retreat will be made shortly and all clergy will be advised of the outcome.

A reminder of the Covid-19 pandemic

- Stay within your bubble.
- If you need to go out, wear a mask and remember 2 metre social distance rule.
- If you are unwell, seek advice from your medical centre or the Ministry of Health Covid19 Healthline 0800 358 5453
- Sneeze into your elbow
- Wash and sanitize your hands and work spaces constantly
- Use the Tracer App

Level 3 Restrictions

- Everyone should work from home if they can.
- Keep your bubble as small as possible. If you need to, you can expand it to bring in close family, isolated people or caregivers.
- Even if you have been vaccinated, you still need to follow the rules to keep everyone safe.
- Wear a face covering when leaving your home, especially if it is hard to keep 2 metres physical distance from others.