



Archbishop of Wellington

PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ;

How does God provide for people in need? I have seen it happen many times over – the abundance of God's love demonstrated through Christian acts of kindness and generosity. God shows his love to the world through each of us and our actions.

When we know deep in our hearts that God does and will provide, abundance is joyfully obvious – we can do little else than live in gratitude for every blessing.

I am very grateful to each of you and want to express my appreciation and thanks. It is a privilege to be in a position to bear witness to the great generosity you demonstrate regularly through selfless acts of charitable giving – meaningful gifts of time, talent and treasure. It is humbling indeed to be in a position of distributing those gifts in accordance with our Catholic values to areas of significant social need.

Each year, we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars; and parishioners' countless hours of their time, carrying God's love and support into a variety of challenging situations: the work done one-on-one through low-cost counselling and social work is arguably some of the most important and the most difficult: supporting people through change, grief and loss and helping young women and couples care for their families.

None of this work would be possible without those who support most generously either or both of the Archdiocese's annual campaigns: The Catholic Ministries Appeal in May/June and the Cardinal's Care Appeal in November/December. In the coming year, an important focus of Catholic Social Services is to ensure support services are available to help women, children and families grow and thrive, and that they have the opportunity, through your generosity to experience God's great love and abundance.

I invite you to read the enclosed newsletter and the testimonial of one parishioner's experience of attending church as a single mother. I hope her story inspires you to give generously in support of the 2019 Cardinal's Care Appeal. Women, children and families in our communities need to know that we are here to support them. They need to know we care. Because we do care! Your love and support makes that abundantly clear - Thank you!

Wishing you every Blessing in this Advent season.

✠ John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington

Archdiocese of Wellington, 22-30 Hill Street, Thorndon, Wellington 6011, New Zealand

T: 04 496 1766 E: j.dew@wn.catholic.org.nz



“What child is this who lay to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthem’s sweet, the babe, the son of Mary”

Through the telling of the Christmas story and the carols we sing, we often romanticise the story of Jesus’ birth, forgetting that Jesus was born in exceptionally challenging circumstances: a young mother finds herself unexpectedly pregnant. At nine months she is forced to travel to meet the bureaucratic requirements of a census and finds herself homeless during the birth of her child. She and her family are forced to flee as refugees shortly thereafter.

The story of Jesus’ birth, the practical issues of poverty, homelessness and persecution is neither quaint nor romantic. Much like Joseph, Mary and Jesus travelling through Bethlehem, our community includes women, children and families living in poverty and insecure housing. It includes babies in need crying for our support. It includes families, forced by conflict or persecution, to leave their homelands and raise their children in a new country. There are so many families in need.



Thankfully, there are people called by God to work in communities to improve the plight of others. Some of these very good people work for our very own Catholic Social Services.

We can be very proud to know that “In 2020, Catholic Social Services will undertake community facilitation and outreach in the Ōtaki, Levin, Upper Hutt, the Wairarapa and Kaikōura to discuss how challenging issues can be addressed to benefit local communities and their families.” explains Karen Holland, Kaiārahi (pathfinder) | Director, Catholic Social Services.



This is difficult work that takes time and resources, but it is critically important in order to create meaningful change.

Personal security, food, shelter and clothing are a beginning but to ensure strong and vibrant

families faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges and the overwhelming news of a new pregnancy may feel pressured into choosing an abortion. As Catholics our charity becomes

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Karen Holland, Kaiārahi (Pathfinder) | Director Catholic Social Services

communities, larger economic issues of education and personal development, opportunities to work, grow and contribute are also essential.

No one can flourish in poverty, and Catholic Social Services, Church agencies and community partners know well, the need in our Archdiocese is growing. As Catholics, we realise that regrettable decisions are often made in the face of practical circumstances. Most regrettably,

even more meaningful knowing that proper care and support services can help women and families make different choices.

Today, you have the opportunity to offer real hope to families facing poverty, homelessness and other pressures. The most Christian of ways is through acts of love, care and compassion. Your giving is an act of faith – a way to ensure God’s love and abundance reaches people in the most vulnerable circumstances.

Your response to the Cardinal’s Care Appeal will make families whole and strong.

Please, take this opportunity to make a loving gift in support of women, children and families.

May the peace of Christ and the joy of the Christmas season be with you!



A Catholic Parishioner Tells Her Story

“The doctor offered me many reasons why I should have an abortion: ‘You shouldn’t have got pregnant so soon after your recent vaccinations; this man doesn’t seem very committed to you; Are you sure you can afford to support a child?’

After many tears and much anguish, I thought church would be a place I would find support as a single parent. I was wrong. There were a few smiles, but I noticed more frowns, whispered gossip and sideways glances. As a devout Catholic, I never doubted my decision, but I felt lonely and very, very alone; especially, after one couple who travelled with a bumper sticker on their car saying, ‘abortion stills a beating heart’ asked me if I should be going to communion. There were times I felt utterly rejected.

A loving religious sister changed all that. She offered me welcome and practical support. She helped us find a home and became my rock.

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that we will be as well known for our warm welcome and support of all children and their mothers.”



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Anonymous Parishioner

“Praying - Acts of kindness - and Charitable Giving – these are opportunities to give back to God some of the gifts with which we have been so richly blessed.”

✠ John



THE
CARDINAL'S
CARE APPEAL 2019

