

Archbishop of Wellington

PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

22 February 2021

To: Parish Pastoral Leaders
Parish Leaders of Sacramental Programmes

New Archdiocesan Programme for Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism and Confirmation) and the Sacrament of Reconciliation for Children

Kia ora koutou,

Foundational to Catholic ministry with children today is the recognition that parents are the primary faith educators for their children. As pastoral ministers our role is to assist parents, providing them with tools and skills to be able to engage with their children in faith conversations and practice. We often hear that parents are uncertain about matters of faith or lack confidence to personally answer their children's questions. Rather than bypassing parents and attempting to form their children in faith ourselves, we are challenged today to enable parents to grow in their own faith and confidently share it with their children.

In this Year of St Joseph we remember that Joseph saw Jesus grow daily "in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favour." (Luke 2:52) We are delighted to present to you a new resource that aims to get parents talking about faith, together and with their children. You will see that the programme centres on group sharing and conversation among parents with the familiar sacramental content then picked up by parents and children at home. The content may at first seem relatively simple and this is its intention. Our people are encouraged to recognise the presence of the sacred (of God) in everyday life, raising their awareness of what is sometimes called 'everyday sacramentality'.

The Power Point / worksheet approach is designed for local adaptation and application in your communities. Many of you will use the programme to augment or perhaps update

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

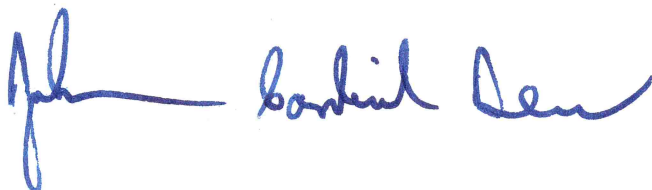
T: 04 496 1766 E: j.dew@wn.catholic.org.nz

your current practice and some will want to switch to the new programme entirely. I encourage your creative application as you know your local communities best. E.g. the use of local languages is strongly recommended to ensure that parents and children understand and can participate fully. Do not be constrained by the method but use it as a guide to ensure that you are truly connecting with the world of the contemporary young family. If you have suggestions for improvements do let our Church Mission team know as we see this programme as an evolving tool.

This year as you assist in the preparation of children for the Sacraments we ask for the prayers of Mary and Joseph, the first teachers of Jesus.

I am grateful to the Archdiocesan Church Mission team for bringing this programme together and especially the work of Philippa McManus, Fiona Rammell and Chris Duthie-Jung.

Yours sincerely in the Lord

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John A. Cardinal Dew'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the first letter.

John A Cardinal Dew

Archbishop of Wellington