



## ARCHBISHOP OF WELLINGTON

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10 May 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

Today I am announcing a special vocations campaign particularly to encourage faithful young men in our archdiocese who, through God's providence, could have a vocation to the diocesan priesthood. The campaign will take place next weekend, on Ascension Sunday (17 May, 2026).

As you know, our archdiocese has a great need for "more workers for the harvest" who will respond to Christ's call to "*go and make disciples of all nations.*" (Mt 28:19).

I firmly believe that our future priests will come from our own families, our parishes and schools, but we need all of you to encourage and accompany these young men as they discern their vocation.

Today, and in the coming week, I invite you all to take a good look around and take note of young single men in your parish communities. These men may not have necessarily expressed a desire to be priests. They simply need to love Christ and the Church, exhibit a strong faith, and have a heart for service. I invite you to pray intentionally for these young men, and to look for opportunities to encourage them. Invite them to be open to exploring God's call in their lives – whatever that may be.

A word now to any young man hearing this message today: I invite you to be open to God's plan for your life. Pope Benedict XVI once addressed young people with these words: "*The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.*" So be bold. Do not be afraid to take a step, or to ask the question, "What if?" God's plans for you are good – whether He is calling you to marriage, to priesthood or to a particular vocation of service in the world. Don't be afraid to ask.

When a young man comes forward to tentatively explore a vocation to the priesthood, he is supported by our vocations team, who continue to look for ways to accompany those who are discerning.

- A series of Come & See Mornings offer young men the opportunity to meet our priests and seminarians, share stories, ask questions, and find community among others who are on the same journey.
- An annual vocations retreat provides the chance to step away from busy lives to listen more deeply to God's call, which is often heard in the silence.

Catholic Archdiocese of Wellington

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- Spiritual directors are provided to help these young men grow in their interior life of prayer – something Pope Leo emphasised in his message for Vocation Sunday.
- Suitable reading materials are made available, and practical support is offered as needed.

We are doing what we can, but we need all of you, everyone, to take the initiative to encourage and nurture vocation in our families, schools and communities. Don't be hesitant to encourage someone. Keep in mind that often, others can see potential in us that we cannot see in ourselves. That simple word of encouragement can spark discernment, especially when accompanied with prayerful support.

This initiative is an important priority for me and for our archdiocese, and I ask you to participate in it thoughtfully. Please also join me in praying that the Lord will raise up many new priests to serve the People of God in our Archdiocese in the future.

Yours in Christ



+ Paul Martin SM  
Archbishop of Wellington

Pope Leo's message for Vocation Sunday 2026:

*“ I invite everyone — in families, parishes and religious communities, as well as bishops, priests, deacons, catechists, educators and all the faithful — to commit themselves more fully to creating conditions that allow this gift to be embraced, nourished, protected and accompanied, so that it may bear abundant fruit.*

*Only when our surroundings are illumined by living faith, sustained by constant prayer and enriched by fraternal accompaniment can God's call blossom and mature, becoming a path of happiness and salvation for individuals and for the world.”*