

District of the Pacific Update



Friday 13th May
2022

NEW ZEALAND NEWS

Palmerston North Venture from Br Kevin



Toasting marshmallows after Mass to start the academic year.

Life at TAKoM in Palmerston North began in February last year. The idea of the community of young adults was begun by Bishop Charles Drennan back in 2012. With two years of lockdown from 2019, the house became rental accommodation in 2020. But from 2021, it was renamed as **Te Ahi Kā o Mātauranga** which means *the hearth (the welcome place) of deep learning*, very much a formation for Christian discipleship as people grow in faith and practise hospitality to other young adults who are in many ways, by their absence from church, one of the neediest groups in the Church. So, the year involves those who opt to join the community in a journey of faith and growth in which they take up some theological study alongside their work, necessary because they



Isaac, Rob, Hamish, Kate, Hien, some of the members of the Sunday Gospel Group

contribute to the rent in the house owned by the diocese. Another way of growing in faith is the regular reflection group on the coming Sunday gospel, and this year, now that there is greater movement with the orange traffic-light system for Covid variants, the group has begun studying *Fratelli Tutti*, which is timely because of the warring situations in the world at present.

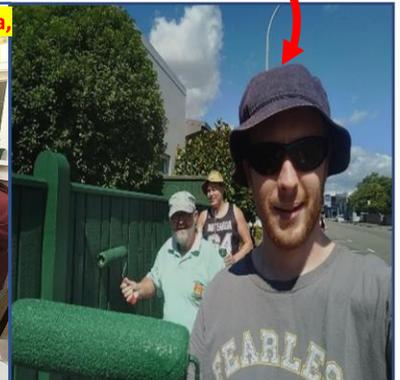
During this year 2022 we have tidied up our front fence, a job that had been waiting for us. Hāmuera is at the back and Isaac at the front of the photo. We are still blessed with fine weather. So, after the painting we could host a gathering for the academic start to the year in which we invited tertiary students, young professionals and those who are attached to the community for various gatherings throughout the year.



Kate, Isaac, kd, Jude on a day's tramp



Farewell for Romana (centre), armed with her PhD returning to Kenya, and friends (also PhD candidates from Sri Lanka, Ghana, Guatamala, NZ), Friday, 22/4/22.



Villa Maria Community from Br Bernard

On Sunday May 8th four of us, Sam, Joe, Kevin and Bernard, drove to Manly to visit our community there. We had met the previous week at Br Anthony's funeral, but Kevin had some things for Colin, and several of us had not been to Manly for many years, so we took the trip. The beautiful weather and a lovely lunch prepared by Kevin made the outing more enjoyable. It was especially good to visit Dunstan and Barry in their new community, and lots of stories were shared during our time together. Before heading back to Glendowie, Kevin showed us new developments on Whangaparaoa Peninsula, especially around Gulf Harbour.



Teaching ESOL to Migrants and Refugees from Br Tim

Since the beginning of this year, I have been working for **English Language Partners NZ** in South Auckland, the same group that Br. David is working with. It is a non-profit organisation with centres throughout NZ. They support the teaching of English to migrants and refugees. A variety of courses is provided from a focus on everyday spoken English to English for employment and even English to obtain a NZ Driver's Licence. They have an interesting operational model and organisation. Where I am working, there is a small central administration office in Papatoetoe, but classes are held in a variety of venues throughout South Auckland such as community centres, public libraries and in spare classrooms within state schools. Basically, the teacher travels to where most students live.

At present, I am working with two groups from Monday to Thursday. One group is in the Community Activity Centre in Ormiston and the other group meets in the Samoan Assembly of God Church in Papatoetoe. There are approximately 14 students in the Papatoetoe class and they come from Nepal, Afghanistan, Thailand, Fiji; Cambodia, Vietnam, Samoa and Myanmar. A photo of the group can be found at the end of this article. There is a possibility of a third class beginning with a small group of younger Afghan interpreters who wish to upskill themselves in academic writing with the goal of

gaining entry to a NZ University and continuing with the university studies they had begun back home. However, we need more applicants to make the class viable, so fingers crossed.

English Language Partners NZ also has many 'volunteers' throughout NZ who go to the homes of migrants and refugees to undertake one-to-one tuition. A 'volunteer' meets with one student on a weekly basis for basic ESOL tuition. With the teaching background and vast experience of many of our Brothers, maybe there is an opening for continued presence amongst a very needy group for some of our now retired Brothers who feel they still have the energy to undertake such a support role.

Finally, a word of thanks to my community here at Mangere Bridge. It is always good to come home to a community that is supportive of my involvement. Two wonderful Brothers who are easy to live with, fun to banter with and who are easy to relax and unwind with when one comes home. To you both, my grateful thanks.



Some of the refugee and migrants students coming from eight different countries.

A group speaking activity at the Samoan Assembly of God Church venue.

ZOOM Invitation!

There will be a Zoom gathering for the start of the Year of Marist Vocations on Sunday May 22nd, at 10 am (NZ, Kiribati, Fiji) and 11 am (Samoa). It should last about 1 1/2 hours, and will involve both Brothers and Lay Champagnat Marists.

A link for this will be given next week.