CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

Bishop's Office – Te Taumata o te Pihopa Katorika

Pompallier Diocesan Centre, 30 New Street, Saint Marys Bay, Auckland 1011
Private Bag 47904, Ponsonby, Auckland 1144
Telephone +64-9-360 3002
Email: EA-Bishopsoffice@cda.org.nz Website: www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz

2 September 2026

You are magnificent – Build your life with Christ

Earlier this year Pope Leo published *Magnifica Humanitas (Magnificent Humanity,* about safeguarding the human person in the time of artificial intelligence. In it, he contrasts two building projects: the building of the Tower of Babel and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

The Tower of Babel (cf. Genesis 11:1-9) was a project that had no place for God, where everyone and everything was to be uniform, and the beauty of difference and diversity was to be eliminated. In our world, we see this as globalisation, and unique cultural traditions are replaced by our dominant western culture (cf MH 7). Ask yourself, how does AI, the music and entertainment you absorb and the social media shape you as a person?

The rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem happened after the exile to Babylon (cf. Book of Nehemiah 1–2). *The narrative shows how the city is reborn, not through the initiative of one man (Nehemiah), but through the shared responsibility of all: men, women, priests, artisans, heads of households and young people all play a part. It is an undertaking with God at the centre, which rebuilds relationships before rebuilding with stones. Thus, ancient Jerusalem rediscovers a common language - not one of uniformity, but one of communion, namely the harmony that arises when all persons assume their own role and recognise that their strength comes from the Lord* (MH 8). Ask yourself, how am I a builder for the good of all within the community of my family, college and parish?

This image of communion is a beautiful one in the face of a world and society scarred by division and destruction. In the person of Jesus, we see how, in the face of division and destruction, he gave everything – this is my body given for you – to win an eternal communion. But Jesus hungers for this same communion now among us, and that is at the heart of our celebration of Eucharist: that we become one with him and with each other. For that to happen he invites us to join him, to recognise the beauty of all humanity and to be, with him, builders of communion.

We are now approaching the end of 2026 and will soon look toward 2027 and beyond. Ask yourself, what sort of future do I want to build for myself and those around me?

As a young person, you have the capacity to build a better world and a better you. May Jesus, the builder of Nazareth and the builder of the Kingdom, shape your heart and mind to be an amazing young person. Someone, who is passionate about building with him a better world where we increasingly shatter the walls of division and destruction and build a world of communion that is filled with justice, peace and love.

May the Lord Jesus bless you as we celebrate his birth at Christmas, in the year 2026 and throughout your life journey.



✠ Steve Lowe
Bishop of Auckland