

Archbishop Paul Martin SM Installation Mass
Post-Communion Homily
St Teresa's Pro Cathedral, Karori, 11am Saturday 17 June 2023

I want to take this opportunity to speak with you all in thanks for what we have celebrated together today. I know I have given a homily already so I will try not to preach again and not to be too long either!

I want to begin by thanking people. It is always dangerous to do that because you miss people out. But I do want to start by giving thanks to my family – to my mother Carmel and also to my dad Ron, who died 28 years ago. You both showed me what a life of faith looked like, you provided me with a very stable environment of love and enabled me to be able to respond to God's call to me. You have been a great support to me Mum ever since, while also letting me be free to do what has been asked of me. I am deeply grateful to God for all of this. To my siblings who have been so supportive, and to my wider family I thank you too. I am very grateful to have been born into two good families and your presence here today means so much to me.

To the Society of Mary, in whom I was formed and who were my brothers in ministry and my religious family, thank you. It is a privilege to be called by Mary to follow her son in this way, and I am very much the person I am because of this.

To the friends that have come here today who represent different stages of the journey of my life I thank you for your care for me and your support over the years. I have

moved around a lot in my life which was both interesting but also made building friendships not so easy. I am very grateful to you all.

To the people of the diocese of Christchurch, I wish to give thanks to you and to God for the opportunity of being the bishop there. I have said before that I never imagined that I would be a bishop, and that is absolutely true. However given that God had other plans I was extremely fortunate to lead and learn what it meant to be a bishop in the diocese of Christchurch. I am so delighted that Monsignor Rick Loughnan, who is the Vicar General and the Chancellor Fr Simon Eccleton are here today. Both these men were a great support to me. To the friends I made while in Christchurch and who are here today, thank you. People ask me do I miss being in Christchurch and what I do miss is really the people I became good friends with.

To you, the people of the Archdiocese of Wellington, I want to say that this is now my home and you are the ones that I now focus my care and concern for. In the mystery of God's plan I have been asked to lead this Archdiocese. I remember years ago sitting in the Cathedral and looking at the names of the bishops which were around the pulpit, men who lead bravely and well, and now God has asked that of me as well. I am aware of the faith and the witness of those who have gone before me, and I want to acknowledge with gratitude those who are still with us: Cardinal Tom Williams and my predecessor Cardinal John Dew.

I am very aware that we are the Church together. The church doesn't exist in some ethereal domain without bodies and people who have lives with all the joys and sorrows that make it up. If the church is going to do anything it has to be we who do

it. We can't be waiting for some magical other to do it, it is us – you and me, with our hangups and foibles, our talents and skills. This is what I am looking forward to working with you all on for the future of our Church in the archdiocese and indeed for Aotearoa New Zealand. We are living in challenging times but the Good News is still that, and I have great trust in God at work in our world, and through each one of us.

I want to thank those who have made this day come together, especially Tania my PA, the staff at the Archdiocese, Fr Patrick Bridgman, Debbie Matheson and Fr Ron and the teams from the Cathedral and Otari parish, my brother bishops for being here today and my brother priests and to you all. To our musicians who have led us in prayer and to the team at Challenge 2000 who are working at the venue afterwards as we gather for food together, thank you.

Finally, please continue to pray for me in this role that I have been given and I look forward to journeying with you in faith and with trust in whatever lies ahead.