

June Quarter, 2025 Highlights



DIOCESE OF POLYNESIA HIGHLIGHTS

LAUNCHING OF DIOCESAN WEBSITE May 23rd AND EVANGELISM

June 8th, 2025

The Anglican Diocese of Polynesia has taken a significant step forward with the launch of two major initiatives: its new diocesan website on 23 May 2025 and the official introduction of the Evangelism Ministry on Pentecost Sunday, 8 June. These milestones reflect the Church's commitment to remaining spiritually rooted while embracing innovation to better serve its diverse communities across Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, and Aotearoa New Zealand.

The new website provides a centralized, user-friendly, and visually engaging platform to connect congregations, share resources, and communicate the Diocese's mission. Archbishop Sione described it as more than a digital tool—it is a vital medium for proclaiming the Gospel and

strengthening unity across the region. Accompanying the launch was the rollout of a secure file-sharing system to support diocesan operations and collaboration.

Just weeks later, during a vibrant combined Pentecost service at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Suva, the Diocese launched its Evangelism Ministry. This initiative aims to reignite discipleship, empower faith communities, and expand outreach throughout the Pacific. Set against the backdrop of Pentecost—a celebration of the Holy Spirit's empowering presence—the launch underscored the Church's renewed mission focus and its vision for Gospel transformation in today's evolving world.

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Anglican Financial Care Visit Strengthens Partnership with the Diocese of Polynesia

In Loving Memory of the Late Bishop 'Afa Vaka



With profound gratitude and deep respect, the Diocese of Polynesia honours the life and ministry of Bishop 'Afa Vaka, a faithful shepherd, servant leader, and tireless witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Called to eternal rest, Bishop 'Afa leaves behind a legacy marked by humility, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to the people of God. We give thanks to God for his life, his ministry, and his enduring impact on the Diocese.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory, and may we carry forward his legacy with the same faith, humility, and love he so graciously embodied.



The Diocese of Polynesia was honored to host representatives from **Anglican Financial Care (AFC)** for a meaningful two-day visit focused on both pastoral care and financial well-being.

As the Diocese continues to grow in faith and mission, partnerships like this remain vital to ensuring its leaders are supported—both spiritually and practically.

During their time in the Diocese, the AFC team engaged with diocesan leadership, clergy, and administrative staff, providing valuable insights into retirement planning, investment strategies, clergy pensions, and overall well-being. The visit served a dual purpose—offering support while also building greater awareness around the role of AFC as a partner in sustaining the health and financial security of the Church's ministry.



A key focus of the visit was equipping clergy and diocesan staff with a deeper understanding of retirement fund options, entitlements, and best practices in parish financial management. The sessions were well received, and the Diocese noted that the visit was both empowering and timely as it seeks to strengthen systems of support for clergy and their families.



The dialogue also underscored the importance of continued collaboration between AFC and the Diocese to address the unique pastoral and financial needs of Polynesian clergy, widows, and their families. Both parties are exploring further opportunities for training and education in the near future.



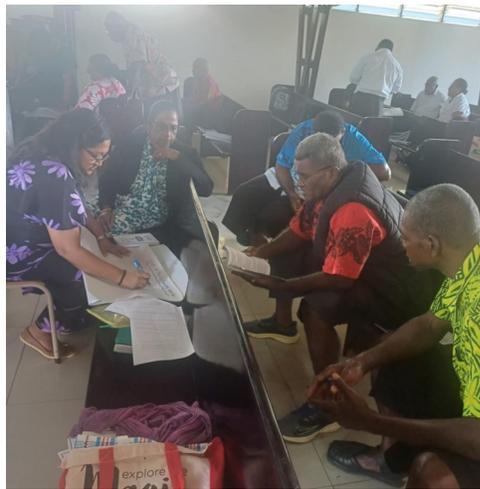
Ongoing Leadership and Lay Ministers Training Otahuhu and Vanualevu



Archbishop Sione, together with the two Co-Vicar Generals and staff of the Diocesan Office, continues to lead impactful training sessions for priests, lay members, vestry representatives, and lay ministers across the Diocese. As part of this ongoing leadership development initiative, training has been successfully conducted in Vanua Levu (Fiji), which included a special focus on Lay Ministers' formation and capacity building, and in Ōtāhuhu (Auckland, New Zealand), reaching a broad cross-section of the Church.

These sessions aim to deepen understanding of Church governance, liturgical responsibilities, and pastoral leadership, equipping both ordained and lay leaders to serve effectively in their local contexts. The programme reflects Archbishop Sione's vision for a spiritually grounded, collaborative, and mission-driven Church across the Pacific.

By continuing to invest in the education and formation of all leaders, the Diocese of Polynesia remains committed to building strong, informed communities of faith. Further training is planned across other Diocese as part of this vital ongoing initiative



Suva Clergy Meeting with Archbishop Sione



Archbishop Sione has once again called on priests serving in the Suva area to prayerfully re-examine their ministries and open themselves afresh to the leading of the Holy Spirit. In a recent gathering, the Archbishop encouraged clergy to reflect deeply on their calling, to renew their commitment to pastoral service, and to allow God's Spirit to bring new life, vision, and strength into their work.

This call serves as both a challenge and an invitation—to return to the heart of ministry, guided not by routine, but by the transformative power of the Spirit. As the Church navigates a changing world, Archbishop Sione emphasized the importance of Spirit-led leadership marked by humility, faithfulness, and renewed passion for the

3 Tikanga Meetings

House of Bishop's Meeting
- Palmerston North

Board of Trustees Meeting
with Te Kotahitanga

Join Hui - Te Kotahitanga
and St John's College Trust
Board.

CLLS and GSSC meeting

Archbishop Sione Joins Tikanga Māori and Archbishop Justin in Honouring Bishop Ngarahu's Retirement



Archbishop Sione recently joined our brothers and sisters in Tikanga Māori, alongside Archbishop Justin, in a special service held in Rotorua to honour the retirement and ministry of Bishop Ngarahu Katene.



The service was a deeply moving occasion, reflecting the deep respect and love held for Bishop Ngarahu across the three Tikanga of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia. It celebrated his faithful service, cultural leadership, and significant contributions to the life of the Church.



Archbishop Sione's presence at the service affirmed the strong bonds of unity and shared mission among the Tikanga, and the importance of honoring those who have led with humility, wisdom, and a deep love for the people of God.

As Bishop Ngarahu steps into retirement, the Diocese of Polynesia joins in giving thanks for his faithful ministry and prays God's continued blessings upon him and his whānau in this new season.



Archbishop's Easter Message

My Dear Brothers and sisters in Christ,
Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed! Alleluia

Across the Diocese, in Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga and our DoP community in New Zealand, parishes and Easter camps share a sense of quiet anticipation since Maundy Thursday. As night falls on this Holy Saturday, we gather in the darkness, each holding a small flame that soon transforms into a powerful symbol of our hope. The Paschal Candle is lit, representing the Light of Christ, and from that single holy flame, we light candles one by one, person by person, creating a warm and radiant glow around us. This beautiful scene captures the triumph of love and light over darkness, reminding us that even death is not the final chapter.

The Easter Vigil is a celebration of the essence of the Church where we journey from darkness into light, from death into life, through the waters of baptism, and into the joy of the Resurrection. This light leads us into the Easter Day Gospel of John 20:1–18. Here we meet Mary Magdalene, who comes to the tomb while it is still dark. Though she carries the flickering light of her faith, her grief is deep. But what she discovers is unexpected: the stone is rolled away, and Jesus' body is missing. Instead of answers, she hears her name, "Mary."

This encounter is profoundly significant. Jesus chooses to appear to an ordinary person and calls her by name, demonstrating that God is close and personal rather than distant. Amid our struggles during these challenging times, filled with climate change, flooding, social issues, and financial difficulties, God remains near to us. The light of Easter doesn't erase darkness; it transforms it. When Jesus tells Mary, "Do not hold on to me," He isn't pushing her away but guiding her toward a new kind of connection. Christ is now with us in new ways, through the Spirit, in His words, during Communion, and in our community. We're called to embrace what is new that is, a renewed creation, a redeemed humanity, and a Church that shares the message of Easter with the world.

Dear friends, Easter is not just a day; it serves as a way of life. To be an Easter people is to live each day in the light of the resurrection. It is to carry the hope of Christ into the darkness and our wounded community and world. It is to announce, through our word and deed, that love and light have triumphed.

As your Archbishop, I pray that the light of the Risen Christ brings renewal to you this Easter. May our churches shine with faith, our homes glow with joy, and our hearts burn with love and rekindling our hope. May the Risen Christ breathe peace into our hearts, and may His Spirit empower us to be witnesses of His resurrection, wherever He sends us. Let's take this Easter fire into the world, with confidence that darkness cannot overcome it. Let us joyfully echo Mary Magdalene and continue to bear witness to Christ's resurrection, proclaiming, "I have seen the Lord!" (John 20:18) Wishing you all a blessed and joyful Easter!!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!
Archbishop Sione Silongo Uluilakepa
Bishop of Polynesia

Easter Message

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