



# Cathedral Update

30 March 2025

Brothers and Sisters in Christ

As we travel through Lent together, I wish to share with you the latest information about another journey we are making as the People of God in Christchurch Diocese: The journey towards our new cathedral.

During the first half of last year, you shared generously with me your hopes for where our cathedral would be built and what name it would take. There was strong support for returning to our spiritual home on Barbadoes Street and in retaining our diocesan focus on the Blessed Sacrament in our cathedral's name.

In the months since, significant effort has been put into working on the first stage of the design of the cathedral.

In our period of dialogue about the cathedral location and name, many of you offered your perspective on how the cathedral might look. A series of working groups have gathered at various stages, including our priests, as well as members of religious orders, and representatives of cultural communities and the Cathedral parish.

A diocesan delegation has visited cathedrals and churches in New Zealand and Australia that have been built or substantially renovated over the past two decades.

I have also been fortunate to have a group of key advisers who have helped me draw together the wisdom from those sources and prepare a design brief. Those advisers have personal and professional attributes that allowed for robust, faith-filled and Spirit-led conversations that have led us to this point.

The design brief has recently been shared with a number of leading New Zealand architectural firms that we believe have the experience and capacity to work with us in designing our new cathedral. The brief has already gone through many iterations; it will continue to evolve during this period.

We look forward to choosing a genuine partner in this project – an architect that will share our aspiration to build a cathedral that is worthy of being our spiritual centre in the diocese and can be a beacon of hope for our city.

And of course, as the Psalmist writes: “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain.”

As with our journey so far, I have been keen to share important updates with you as soon as is practical. I expect we will have the chance to provide more information at various points in the coming months through these Cathedral Updates, including the outcome of the design process.

More information of the Cathedral project can be found at: [cdoc.nz/cathedral](https://cdoc.nz/cathedral)

May the Good Lord continue to guide us on our way.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads '+ Michael Gielen'.

+ Michael Gielen  
Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch