

Cruising through 2019 with Ross and Kathy Callaghan

We hope you have had an excellent year in 2019 – it has certainly been a great year for us. We pray you will have a wonderful Christmas and that 2020 will be another happy and healthy step in this great journey of life - for you and your family. As we get older, we seem to appreciate more and more the opportunities that life throws us. Perhaps this is because we recognize that our capabilities are dwindling somewhat, and that our time here on earth is finite. As a result, we are deliberate in trying to make the most of our retirement years. For us, this is focused on our community ministries; our family; keeping fit, and our travels.



Our community ministries. Kathy continues to sing with (and sometimes direct) the Kapiti Women's Choir, and do family history research. Together **Ross and Kathy** still run singalongs for elderly people in Kapiti rest homes and villages. Every Sunday we host a bunch of enthusiastic elderly people in our wonderful "Youth Group". We study the Bible, sing, watch movies, support each other and have lots of fun together. Ross has had to take three funerals during the year, but Youth Group continues to flourish.

Our family. We went to Melbourne three times during the year to see **Debbie, Fraser, JJ, Heidi, Luke and Dan, and Phil, Mo and Billie.** Debbie has just completed her speech pathology training and is looking for a job in the new year. She is very keen on her golf (even played 15 days in a row!) and has finally broken 100. JJ started at high school this year and the others changed schools, and all are doing really well. JJ plays golf and still belongs to the Australian Boys Choir, even though his voice has now broken; Heidi is really into calisthenics and dance; Luke is into drumming, footie and golf, and Dan is into tennis. Phil, Mo and Billie visited us at the beginning of the year, and we were thrilled to be in Melbourne for Billie's 1st birthday party in October. She now walks confidently, talks a lot and has the most gorgeous smile. Phil and Mo had a good year with their conventions and both continued to work at the Science Museum. Phil's 'Last Man Standing' T20 cricket franchise for Melbourne is going really well. It is great to see him being rewarded for all his hard work. We see **Sarah, Michael, Blake and Isla** regularly as they live in Lower Hutt, not far from us. The painting is now complete for the big renovations on their house and it looks great. Sarah's nasty auto-immune condition is much improved and she has been able to teach part-time through 2019. She has been studying for a new role supporting teachers of students with learning challenges and is keen to find a job in this field next year. **Blake and Isla** have both had a great year, although Isla broke her arm in October. They are both very accomplished on the computer and Blake is a promising drummer. Our grandchildren sure are a lot of fun to be around!



The Cunninghams



The Stevens



Phil, Mo and Billie

Ross keeps fit by walking every day and by playing golf. He finally beat his age at the beginning of the year – shooting 71 when he was aged 72. He has continued making model ships as a legacy for the grand-children, and this year made three: the Nina, the Harvey and the HMS President. **Kathy** keeps fit by walking, cycling and by doing aquafit. We are very thankful for our health!

Our travels. We began the year by doing two fantastic cruises around New Zealand: one on the 'Radiance of the Seas' and one on the 'Ovation of the Seas'. We loved being tourists in our own country and New Zealand sparkled as a tourist destination. Magnificent! Then at the end of the year we took our longest trip in many years (and one of the best ever!). After visiting the family in Melbourne and stopping over in Dubai we took a cruise around Croatia and the Greek Islands on the MSC Sinfonia. It was lovely to share this cruise with Marit and Roar Berg from Norway. (Marit is Kathy's cousin). We then had a couple of fabulous weeks in Norway visiting with Kathy's amazing family. They looked after us so well; fed us with the finest food, and loved us to bits! Norway obliged with perfect weather, followed by lots of snow in the last few days! Spending this time with our Norwegian family was one of our life's best greatest moments. Afterwards we took our longest cruise to date on the MSC Musica: from France, around the Mediterranean to Spain and Portugal, then across the Atlantic to Brazil and Argentina. Wow! What a great experience! As usual, we made a video of each of our cruises and posted them on our YouTube channel **calros3**. We are getting quite famous on YouTube and get lots of great feedback from people who watch our cruise videos, travelogues and Ross's ship builds.



You can get lots more detail on our activities from our family website: <http://callaghans.yolasite.com>

A star led the way to the Light of the World on that first Christmas. May Jesus shine on every part of your Christmas celebrations this year, and on all you do in 2020. Love from Ross and Kathy Callaghan.

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