



Parish of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart



PARISH PRIEST
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PARISH SECRETARY
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21st February 2021 – First Sunday of Lent

Readings of the day

(Genesis 9:8-15; 1Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15)

Please click [here](#) for the readings. Please note that this link is 'live' and will take you to the actual day you access this page on. To access other days (including Sunday), please look at the menu on the right of the screen. Please explore this page as there are many other prayer resources you can access.

Reflection on Sunday's Gospel:

Easter marks our journey from death to life. Baptism is also about this journey from death to life as we are baptized into the life of Christ. Therefore, Lent is characterized by this same spirit of baptism. In the early Church Easter was the time for baptism, and predominantly it was adult baptism. Lent was chiefly a time of preparation for this. To be reborn in the baptismal waters as a new creation in the image of Christ meant that Lent was the time to be readied for baptism.

From this developed the penitential aspect of Lent – which is not about 'doing' works of penance but rather allowing God's grace to work within us as we undergo interior conversion – the works of penance that we do undertake are all aimed at this goal of conversion. Acts of penance are not an end in themselves. This conversion should enable us to see where we are missing the mark (the meaning of sin) and become reconciled to God; in other words, to become Christian anew.

And so, we follow Jesus into the wilderness for 40 days; it is here that we can find the space to be conscious of God's presence in our lives; to be aware of who we really are.

Now, individuals do not become Christians on their own, any more than they become human beings, on their own. We need to open ourselves in faith to the action of God.

No one becomes a Christian in isolation. Becoming Christian can only happen in a community of fellow Christians who share faith and prayer. While every Christian community has a shepherd, in the end it is sheep that make other sheep.

So, there is more to Lent than giving up things. Our Lenten practices pave the way to celebrate Easter fully aware of God's place in our lives, conscious that Easter is indeed a life changing experience.

In today's Gospel we hear that during his time in the wilderness Jesus was with the wild beasts and was comforted by the angels. This gives us a possible clue that Mark's gospel was written to the Christians of Rome. When Mark wrote his Gospel, Christians were facing the wild beasts in the arena for the sport of Nero and other Roman leaders. Mark's words then are a source of comfort – Jesus too faced the wild beasts in the wilderness, and he was not harmed by their presence. We must face the wild beasts in the world about us. We also have the angels within us just as Jesus enjoyed the presence of the angels in the wilderness. We are a mixture of the angelic and the wild beast.

Lent comes as a time to allow the angel within us to ascend and for the wild beast to be tamed. This can happen by heeding the command we here from Jesus in today's Gospel, "Repent, and believe the Good News."

Repenting and believing in the good news is not a project for the beginning of Lent, or even a project for the whole of Lent. It is a life-long task. We never finish letting go of false beliefs, and we never finish entering the kingdom of God.

To help us on our way Lent calls us back into the wilderness. Lent isn't a time for gloom – it is a joyful season because it offers us an opportunity once again to draw closer to God.

Today's second reading points to Noah being saved from the waters – a reference to baptism and a new beginning. The story of Noah is the story of a second spring coming to the earth; the Flood and the rainbow – the sign of a new beginning. The old ways are put aside and a new day dawns.

As Lent dawns anew, let us try to do more than believe in the Gospel. The real aim is to be the Gospel - to put it into practice even in the tiniest of our actions.

Fr Rob

Lenten Messages from our Bishops

Both Bishop Pat and Michael have prepared a short video for the start of the Lent season.

Bishop Pat - Ash Wednesday <https://youtu.be/bKVjFnYPZ4> ,

Bishop Michael - A Reflection on Lent <https://youtu.be/RzWSDHBEUyA>

Masses Resume Again!

Now that the gathering limit has been raised to 100 people under the Alert Level 2 restrictions we can once again gather for the celebration of Mass (as previously, weekdays only).

Please note - the dispensation from Sunday obligation to attend Mass remains in place.

Once Alert Level 1 returns all Masses will resume as usual and at the customary times. If the alert level changes quickly upwards, as happened with the latest change, there may be insufficient time to post notification of any timetable changes. The change in timetable will happen once the change in level comes into effect.

As previously at Level 2, Masses will be celebrated on weekdays only. This is to manage the 100-person limit. It is requested that people attend Mass in their own parish and not travel unnecessarily to other parishes while the 100-person limit is in force.

We all pray that Alert Level 1 normality may soon be with us.

Masses recommenced on Thursday, 18th February.

The temporary Mass timetable is as follows:

Monday 10am

Tuesday 6pm

Wednesday 10am

Thursday 10am

Friday 12.05pm

No Masses on the weekend (applies to levels other than Alert Level 1)

Sacrament of Reconciliation Tuesday 5.30pm

The 8am Mass time has been suspended due to the administrative needs of recording Mass attendees and church cleaning. Please communicate this timetable to those you know who do not have email or internet access.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held in the Reconciliation Room – please remain behind the curtain.

Please observe the following...

People need to maintain a one metre separation from others (unless you sit as a couple/family). Alternate pews will be closed to facilitate distancing (marked by posters at the end of each pew). Please fill the pews in such a way so that people do not need to clamber pass you to be seated.

Please sign the register for each Mass before you enter the church. This has a twofold purpose of managing the 100-person limit and fulfilling contact tracing requirements.

Please arrive early so that you can be checked in. This will ensure social distancing and avoid last-minute congestion so that you can be seated on time. Mass will commence at the advertised times.

If Alert Level 1 does not return sometime next week the online booking system will be reintroduced.

Please use the hand sanitizer as you enter the church.

Holy Communion will continue to be distributed under one kind (i.e. no chalice).

The sign of peace will continue to be exchanged without physical contact.

We look forward to celebrating Mass again as a parish community soon.

Resources for Praying at Home this Sunday

Celebrating Liturgy of the Word with Family: please click [here](#)

IDEAS FOR HOLY MASS

- DRESS YOUR BEST**
It's so tempting to wear something comfy but Sunday is no ordinary day. It's the day our Lord rose from the dead, so let's rejoice, celebrate & dress for the occasion!
- SET UP AN ALTAR**
If possible, set up an altar wherever you will be celebrating Mass in your home.
- CONNECT WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS**
You may not be able to gather as a community physically but you can connect online. Watch Mass together with family & friends.
- SUNDAY READINGS**
Take a moment during the week or before Mass to read and reflect on the readings together as a family.
- SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**
At this time we cannot receive Christ physically, but we are able to receive Him spiritually. Pray the spiritual communion prayer during receiving of the Eucharist.
- CHOOSE A TIME**
Agree on a time for Mass and stick to it. This will ensure that the day does not drag on or people missing out.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU CAN'T GO TO SUNDAY MASS

- SING A HYMN**
"Singing awakes the soul to listen to the Spirit!"
Pope Francis
"Let us sing to the Lord and sing of him!"
St Augustine
- SAY THE "I CONFESS PRAYER"**
"I confess to Almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I ask blessed Mary ever virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God!"
- READ THE READINGS OF THE DAY**
Check out <http://www.nzcc.org.nz/diocese/whangarei-diocese/for-the-daily-mass-readings>
- LISTEN/READ A REFLECTION ON THE READINGS**
Visit www.nzcc.org.nz or download the "Way As You Go" app.
- PROFESS THE CREED AND SAY PRAYERS OF PETITION**
This could be the Apostles or the Nicene Creed. This would also be a good time to pray for your personal intentions or those in need.
- PRAY THE OUR FATHER**
"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen"
- MAKE A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**
Here's a prayer to help:
"Oh Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen"

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED SUPPORT DURING THIS TIME, PLEASE CONTACT THE BCM TEAM

CELEBRATING THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT HOME

In the Liturgy of the Word, the Church feeds the people of God from the table of his Word. The Scriptures are the Word of God, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the Scriptures, God speaks to us, leading us along the path to salvation.

- PREPARING**
 - Read the outline.
 - Allocate responsibilities.
 - Arrange the gathering space.
 - Prepare the music.
- THE GATHERING SPACE**
 - Arrange seating around a small low table.
 - Prepare with:
 - * Suitable cloth.
 - * Lit candles.
 - * Cross or crucifix.
 - * Other seasonal symbols.
- READER**
 - Share the reader role.
 - Encourage readers to practice beforehand.
 - Allow time for silence.
 - Good liturgy flows.
- FAMILY PRAYER**
 - There are many ways to pray as a family.
 - * Orate before meals.
 - * Family rosary.
 - * Spontaneous intercessions.
 - * Giving thanks.
- RESOURCES**
 - Both the Liturgy Centre and Covid-19 pages of the Diocesan Website provide resources and information to support the journey of faith in these times.

www.nzcc.org.nz

Children's Liturgy for Sunday



Here are some resources to conduct a liturgy for children at home. This is sourced from the Diocesan Liturgy Centre. It has something for the family / children throughout each day of the week - breaks open the word, some songs, videos, recipes and activities. We hope you find this resource helpful.

Please click [here](#) to access the resource.

Notices:

Our Parish - The Week Ahead

Mon. 22nd Feb. 9.15am Holy Rosary in the church. All welcome.

Mon. 22nd Feb. 7.00pm Legion of Mary meet in the church foyer. New members welcome.

"Thinking of Mary, you wander not."

Planned Giving via Online Banking

If you are thinking of doing your planned giving donations online while we are unable to celebrate weekend Masses, you can do so via online banking. Details of our parish account below for reference. Moving forward, if you would prefer to change your way of doing planned giving from envelopes to automatic payments, please contact Chatty in the parish office to arrange this. Thank you for your generosity.

Account Name: RC Bishop of Auckland Parish Account Epsom

Account Number: 02-0100-0120958-22

Reference: Planned Giving <Your Name> <Planned giving number if known>

Coffee Group Meeting Cancelled

The coffee group meeting initially scheduled for Wednesday, 24th February, is cancelled.

[First Holy Communion Programme 2021](#)

First Holy Communion 2021

First Holy Communion will take place this year on **Sunday, 30th May 2021**. Registration is open to children in Year 4 or above, of families who regularly attend Mass at our Church and who consider themselves to be parishioners of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish.

[Candidates and Parents' Meeting Dates](#) (Held in the Community Room)

Please note – It is expected that all children attend the 10am Mass with their parents for the duration of this Sacramental Programme.

PART 1 (First Reconciliation) – Sundays 7th March, 14th March and 21st March at 11.00am

First Reconciliation – Tuesday, 23rd March at 6.30pm.

PART 2 (First Holy Communion) – Sundays 9th May, 16th May and 23rd May at 11.00am

[Children's Meeting](#)

Friday 28th May – after school in Church (*approx. 3.15pm-4pm*)

First Holy Communion Mass – Sunday 30th May 2021 at 12 noon.

***Registration forms** are available in the church foyer or download from our website <https://epsomcatholic.org.nz/>.

Registrations close 28th February 2021.

Gregorian Chant Choir – members invited

A Gregorian Chant Choir (Schola) has been started in the Parish to practise Gregorian (Latin) Chant, with a view to singing during Mass. Our practices will be on Monday mornings in the church after 9.15am Rosary, finishing the practices by 10am. If you are available then, and can carry a tune, you are invited to come along, or contact Richard on 622 2295 or 021 059 0617. No knowledge of Latin is needed, as help will be offered in pronunciation of the language. There will be no practices during primary school holidays, public holidays or Covid restrictions.

NZ Catholic

NZ Catholic has been named as Publication of the Year at the Australasian Religious Press Association 2020 Awards. The February 21 – March 6 issue of NZ Catholic is out now. Some headlines are:

NZ mental health journeys of a priest and a lay woman. Alert level shift changes Ash Wednesday plans. Cardinal preaches on Waitangi Day. Historic organ retrieved from Chch cathedral.

The next issue of *NZ Catholic* will be published on March 7.

Please ensure the money (\$4) is handed to Fr Rob or in to the Parish Office. Thank you.

Caritas Lenten Envelopes

Lenten Giving envelope packs are available in the Church foyer. You can either use the weekly donation envelopes or use a single donation envelope. You may either return your donation envelopes during the parish offertory collection or send them to Caritas directly. A freepost envelope is available for this option. NZ Post specifies that cash must not be sent through the post. Donations received by Caritas in these envelopes by 31 March 2021 will be sent receipts for the 2020/2021 tax year. Donations received by Caritas after April 1st will be sent receipts for the 2021/2022 tax year. Thank you for your generous support.

Bishops Lent Appeal

For this season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, Caritas is making available our Lent Reflection booklets which include the Gospel readings for each week of Lent. These can be reflected on or prayed with on an individual or small group basis in compliance with Covid restrictions. They can be viewed and printed from our website here: https://caritas.org.nz/system/files/resources/2021%20LRP%20English_web.pdf

Urgent Petition Request

Below is a link to a Petition to Parliament asking:

That the House of Representatives amend the law to specify a requirement that children born alive as a result of an abortion be provided immediately with appropriate medical care and treatment.

https://www.parliament.nz/en/petitions/confirm/PET_104575

Background:

During Parliamentary debate on the new Abortion law passed in 2020, an amendment proposed by Simon O'Connor MP was rejected that would have required health professionals to give medical help to babies born alive after failed abortions. Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Pro-Life Group urges support for this Petition.

An alternative to using the link to sign the Petition, is to go to: www.parliament.nz, 'Parliamentary Business', scroll down to 'Petitions', select 'Open for Signatures', scroll down to 'Closing 15 March' and select 'Sarah-Jane Cairns; duty of care to those born alive in a failed abortion'.

Notices from *Titipounamu Study & Joy*

Online Sessions (Evening): The Passion of Jesus Christ with Br Kieran Fenn who has a wonderful way of bringing Scripture alive. 4 Mondays in March, 7-8.30pm. Fee: \$25/session. ZOOM.

All sessions are connected but also stand alone. Start: 01 March

<https://www.studyjoy.nz/events/the-passion-of-jesus-christ-with-kieran-fenn-fms/>

On Site Event at Coptic Orthodox Church, Birkdale: Ancient Rock-Hewn Churches in Ethiopia with Nic Birt.

Saturday, 13 March, 7-9pm. Free. <https://www.studyjoy.nz/events/exploring-ancient-rock-hewn-churches-in-ethiopia/>

For more information and registration: info@studyjoy.nz

February Diocesan Youth Mass | Hosted by The Logos Project Join us for the first Diocesan Youth Mass of 2021!! This will be held at St Patrick's Cathedral, 7pm Sunday the 28th of February. We would love to see you all and to welcome you back. Mass will be hosted by the Logos Project and year 13 school leaders and will be celebrated by Fr Kev Murphy SM. For more info contact Felicity on 022 635 2366 or see our Facebook page @akcym *Please note that due to the current situation with Auckland being in level 3 we will continue to update you about if this Mass can proceed*

Are you interested in facilitating post-abortion healing A training day is available 27th Feb via zoom on the Living in Colour programme which deals specifically with abortion loss. It has excellent workbooks and a facilitator guide for lay people. Queries: Catherine Gillies 021-432-020

FOOD FOR FAITH offers brief daily email encouragements in LENT 2021 for those who sign up at www.foodforfaith.org.nz. Take a few minutes each day of Lent to experience Jesus Christ present with you and experience immediate benefits. This Lent's offerings include a TAKE ONE hour a week invitation to be in contact with others who are on the same journey. More information at www.foodforfaith.org.nz.

Nau Mai Haere Mai "COME AND SEE" Come and explore a vocation with the Sisters of Mercy Saturday 27 March 2021 9.30am to 1.30pm Te Waipuna Puawai 12a Umere Cres, Ellerslie. RSVP 24 March. For more information contact: - vocations@mercy.org.nz Sr Fatima Ph 021 084 29440 Sr Linda Ph 021 263 0439

The Walter Francis Darby Trust Scholarship for Medical Students If you are a 4th or 5th year medical student in 2021, are an active Catholic and normally reside within the Auckland Diocese you may be eligible for the Walter Francis Darby Trust Scholarship. For more information contact Catherine Ryan, Vicar for Education, Catholic Diocese of Auckland. Phone (09) 360 3057 or email catheriner@cda.org.nz

ARE YOU A TERTIARY STUDENT IN AUCKLAND? You are invited to the Auckland Catholic Tertiary Chaplaincy (ACTC) for our 2021 Welcome BBQ. ENJOY delicious food, CONNECT with other Catholic students, and DISCOVER your 'Home away from home' in the city. 5PM-7PM, Friday 5th March ACTC, 110 Symonds St, Grafton. For more info visit: facebook.com/thechaplains.

Did you know that Catholics can make an Act of Spiritual Communion?

It has long been a Catholic understanding that when circumstances prevent one from receiving Holy Communion, it is possible to make an Act of Spiritual Communion which is a source of grace.

Spiritual Communion means uniting one's self in prayer with Christ's sacrifice and worshipping Him in His Body and Blood. The most common reason for making an Act of Spiritual Communion is when a person cannot attend Mass. Acts of Spiritual Communion increase our desire to receive sacramental Communion and help us avoid the sins that would make us unable to receive Holy Communion worthily. When unable to receive Holy Communion, pray the prayer below:

A prayer for Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Eucharist has been celebrated or will be celebrated for:

Recently Deceased: Herman Rahts, Regina Kho, Orlando Uy, Celia Railey, Michael Francis McGeever, Doreen Britto, Ian Law, Francis Chung, Anton Westerhaus, Noreen Helean

Sick: Rita Kelly, D.E.Mijares, Sue Wong, Kathryn Badrick, Millie Pacheco, Leo Cassin, Carol Rogers, Lloyd Jones, Corazon Abulencia, Joe & Nicholas Geor, Tony Porter, Josie Mijares, Evelyn Totanes, Paul Jang, May Chow

Anniversaries: Philip Lobo (Feb 13), Donald Williamson (Feb 18), Edgardo Lim Senior (Feb 20), Brigid Kee (Feb 23), Patricia Malloy (Mar 8)

Readings for Next Week (2nd Sunday of Lent)

1. Genesis 22: 1-2,9-13,15-18
 2. Romans 8:31-34
- Gospel Mark 9:2-10

