

and pastoral support to help communities recover from deadly floods caused by Cyclone Ditwah, which killed more than 600 people and affected millions late last year.

Archbishop Grušas: Pray for peace during Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Amid ongoing threats to peace worldwide, Archbishop Gintaras Grušas, President of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, invites Christians to pray for peace during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, held annually on 18-25 January.

Philippines: Record number of people attend Black Nazarene celebrations. Almost 10 million people attend the Masses and procession for this year's Feast of the Black Nazarene—one of the most popular Christian festivals in Asia—in Manila. (14.01.26)

Pope: Sense of belonging more important than numbers of people in Church. In the January edition of the Piazza San Pietro magazine, Pope Leo XIV encourages a Swiss catechist struggling to get families involved in her parish by saying that "hours dedicated to catechesis are never wasted".

Central African Republic Bishops: Peace is a right, not a luxury. At the end of their Plenary Assembly, the Bishops of the Central African Republic issue a forceful appeal to the new government to safeguard peace in the country, marked by years of violence and divisions.

Pope meets Venezuelan Nobel Prize winner Maria Corina Machado. Pope Leo receives the Venezuelan politician and activist in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace.

In Brussels, Cardinal Parolin urges Europe to rediscover Christian boldness. On the 800th anniversary of Brussels' Cathedral of St. Michael and St. Gudula, the Holy See Secretary of State reflects on the spiritual future of a Europe marked by fragility and a loss of direction

Pope calls for patience and dialogue in Iran and Syria. At the end of the Sunday Angelus, Pope Leo prays for peace in Iran, where protests continue, and Syria, where the army is battling Kurdish forces in the city of Aleppo. He also condemns the recent Russian strikes on Ukrainian civilians.

THE TABLET (<https://www.thetablet.co.uk>):

Young people are becoming more interested in faith and spirituality, according to several reports. Archbishop of Armagh Eamon Martin told Sarah Mac Donald that he is "very taken" with the number of young adults who have stepped up and said they want to talk about their faith in the context of the Irish Synodal Pathway and the Armagh Diocesan Congress. Aili Winstanley Channer reports that not only do young people come out highest in surveys of

spirituality, awe, and gratitude, but that Bible sales have also soared in 2025.

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: '... there is no freedom where there is compulsion, and where freedom is lacking, so too is righteousness.' (From a discourse "On the Contemplation of God" by William of Saint-Thierry)

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HUMOUR: *Question:* 'Doctor, what are some of the advantages of participating in a regular exercise program?' *Answer:* 'I can't think of a single one, sorry. My philosophy is: No pain ... good!'

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| SUNDAY MASS | | | | | |
| Omakau | St Peters (Saturday): 6pm vigil | | | | |
| Alexandra | St John the Baptist: 9am | | | | |
| Roxburgh | Our Lady of Peace: 11am | | | | |
| WEEKDAY MASS | | | | | |
| | Tues | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| Alexandra | 5pm | 9am | 9am | Noon | 9am |
| Roxburgh | | 5:15pm | | | |
| RECONCILIATION (Rite I) | | | | | |
| Alexandra: Saturdays 9:30-10am; or upon request. | | | | | |
| ANOINTING OF THE SICK (Mar, Jun, Sept, Dec) | | | | | |
| Alexandra: First Friday Mass (noon) | | | | | |
| Roxburgh: First Wednesday Mass (5:15pm) | | | | | |
| EXPOSITION and BENEDICTION | | | | | |
| Alexandra: Side chapel, Fridays 11:30-11:50am. | | | | | |
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| PARISH CONTACT DETAILS | | | | | |
| Parish Priest: Fr Brendan Ward. | | | | | |
| Address: 3 Killarney St, Alexandra. | | | | | |
| Phone: 03 448 8202, or 027 975 3272 | | | | | |
| Email: alexcatholic@xtra.co.nz | | | | | |
| Parish Council: Kathleen O'Kane. | | | | | |
| Finance Chair: Pat Cooney. | | | | | |
| St Gerard's Principal: Mrs Julie Flannery. | | | | | |
| Catholic Social Services: 03 4485385 (Mon-Thu).
0800 277 669 (toll-free) | | | | | |
| Parish Website: www.alexcatholic.nz | | | | | |
| Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz . | | | | | |