

08 FEBRUARY 2026

5th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A



**ALEXANDRA
CATHOLIC
PASTORAL AREA**
[St John the Baptist
(1924) Alexandra;
St Peter's
(1928) Omakau;
St Dunstan's
(1903) Clyde;
St Patrick's
(1892) St Bathans;
Our Lady of Peace
(1910) Roxburgh]

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SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY

(1) **Isaiah 58:7-10.** *This passage comes well on in the Book of Isaiah, written when the Jews had returned from exile in Babylon, but still things were not going right for them, still the favour of the Lord did not seem to be upon them. It makes a good examination of conscience: do I invite the homeless poor, share my advantages with others? Am I at peace with my family? Do I seek to dominate by the 'clenched fist', the wounding word, the put-down which can shrivel someone up? Isaiah is contrasting genuine service of the Lord with the merely exterior practices of religion, the conventional ways in which we may seem to be 'holy' people. In fact, however, holiness is all a matter of the heart, and – at any rate in this text – mostly a matter of seeing and serving God in other people. That is the only way our light can really shine in the darkness, and our own wounds be healed over. As in the Beatitudes, God's demands always have a promise attached.*



(2) **1 Corinthians 2:1-5.** *What was the secret of Paul's success? At times he seems boastful. Yet here he insists that he came among the Corinthians in weakness, in fear and great trembling in order to make known the power of the Spirit. In the same way he will later admit that he holds the treasure of the light of Christ in fragile pots made of earthenware (2 Cor 4.7). In the last analysis Paul's power consists simply in his trust in the promises of Christ.*

(3) **Matthew 5:13-16.** *These sayings about salt and about the light of a lamp come in various places in the Gospel. Here in Matthew, right after the opening promises of the Sermon on the Mount, they are surely a challenge to all the disciples of Jesus: food cooked without salt can be bland and tasteless, utterly unexciting. So a half-hearted or shallow proclamation of the gospel wins no converts. Rather, the message of the gospel must be piquant, sharp and challenging. The proclamation of Jesus aroused annoyance and*

opposition; the same will no doubt be the case in the world of today.

The image of a lamp is gentler and wholly positive. At the beginning of the Sermon these two images challenge all disciples to share the salt and the light of the message they will receive with all who have ears to hear. (Scripture commentaries are from the Universalis website.)

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

(1) Ecclesiastes 15:16-21 (2) 1 Corinthians 2:6-10
(3) Matthew 5:17-37 (parts of)

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Died Recently:

Anniversaries about now: Yvonne Tohill; Nancy Millar; Eileen Oswald.

'May they rest in peace.'

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CHANGE OF MASS TIME THIS TUESDAY: The Commissioning Mass along with workshops for the teachers of the Central Otago and Lakes Districts Catholic schools will be at 6pm in Alexandra this coming Tuesday, with Bp Michael presiding. (i.e. This Mass time replaces that scheduled usually for 5pm.) All welcome.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME: Every two years the sacraments of Confirmation, Reconciliation, and Holy Communion are offered in Alexandra parish for children (already baptised) who are aged approximately eight years old at least. Baptism is also offered for any children yet to receive this initial and prerequisite sacrament. Preparatory programmes will be provided as follows:
Baptism: During school term I.
Confirmation: During school term II.
Reconciliation: During school term III.
Holy Communion: During school term IV.
To register interest, adult parents please email Fr Brendan Ward via alexcatholic@xtra.co.nz, or speak to him personally, before **Sunday 22nd February**. An initial meeting providing sacramental programme details will be held in the Alexandra parish church on **Wednesday 25th February at 7pm**. If that time is unsuitable for families please contact Fr Brendan.
For families from Omakau and Roxburgh church communities with members for reception of the sacraments, also please contact Fr Brendan at the details above.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATION APPEAL: "We hold in prayer all the children and young people who have begun the new school year, along with all our teachers in their important vocation.
This Sunday, February the 8th, the annual Education Appeal occurs. Proceeds from the appeal

