

14 December 2025
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, Year A
'GAUDATE SUNDAY'



**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 COMMENTARIES FOR TODAY

(1) Isaiah 35:1-6,10. *This passage from Isaiah rejoices in the coming deliverance. Most of the prophet's writings stem from a dark period of Israel's history, under the threat or the reality of defeat, devastation and deportation. The promises of a Deliverer became all the more important and life-sustaining.*

(2) James 5:7-10. *The Letter of James is full of comforting, homely images, like the farmer waiting patiently for the autumn and spring rains, or – less comforting – the Judge waiting at the gates. The Letter was written at a time when Christians no longer felt that they were in the final generation of world history, and were prepared to settle down and wait for the coming of the Lord. Indeed, for James the delay of the Second Coming is an incitement to patience.*



(3) Matthew 11:2-11. *John the Baptist was expecting a Messiah of judgement, who would cut down the rotten tree and burn the useless chaff. When, in prison, he hears that Jesus is not doing this, he is puzzled and sends messengers to ask if Jesus is really the Messiah. Jesus sends back the message that he is fulfilling the prophet Isaiah: the concept of the task of the Messiah was healing, not punishment. He goes and seeks out those who need healing, both physical and moral. (From the Universalis website)*

Readings for next Sunday, Advent A4)

- (1) **Isaiah 7:10-14** (2) **Romans 1:1-7**
- (3) **Matthew 1:18-24**

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Died Recently:
Anniversaries: Rosalie Harrex
'May they rest in peace'

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CONGRATULATIONS:

*To Patricio and Carmen, who celebrated 37 years of marriage on the 10th December.

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COMING UP:

***Combined Churches Christmas Carols and Picnic:** *When?* This Sunday, 5-6pm. *Where?* Parish church, Alexandra, followed by a picnic in St Gerard's school grounds. Pre-cooked sausages, bread and sauce provided; BYO other food and drinks. All welcome.

***'Thank You' afternoon tea** for all involved in Parish Ministries over the past year, including readers, eucharistic ministers, hospitality, visitation of the homebound, property maintenance, finance and pastoral councillors, choir, ... Next Sunday 21st December, 3pm, at 73 Young Lane, Springvale (home of Kathleen and Brian O'Kane). Please bring a small plate.

***Alexandra Community Christmas Day BBQ Lunch:** 12:30pm, St Enoch's church. To support, volunteer and attend, phone ACAN 03 448 7771.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES and PLACES

- Vigil Masses** (Wed 24th):
 5:30pm, parish church Alexandra;
 7:30pm, parish church, Omakau
- Christmas Day Masses** (Thu 25th):
 9am, parish church Alexandra;
 9am, parish church Roxburgh.

(Please inform family members and friends who will be visiting Central Otago over the Christmas period)

SACRAMENT of RECONCILIATION PRE-XMAS:
 Alexandra church, Thursday 18 December, 7-8pm (Fr's McGettigan and Ward), and Saturdays 9:30-10am (Fr Ward). Elsewhere/otherwise on request.

ST GERARD'S SCHOOL NEWS:

- (1)** Graduation Mass and prizegiving, Wednesday 17 Dec, 5pm, in the Alexandra parish church.
- (2)** This Monday, 10am-2pm, school trip, walk across the Clyde dam, followed by swimming and other activities, including a BBQ. Parents welcome.
- (3)** This Thursday, end-of-year liturgy, 10- 11a.m.

TRAPPED BIRDS IN ALEX CHURCH: Other than for entering and exiting, please ensure that the church foyer internal doors are kept closed, to prevent young birds finding their way in and getting disorientated and trapped.

'TAP-n-GO' FACILITY: For people not on Planned Giving, without cash, or visiting our churches, offerings can now be made by using the paywave 'Tap n Go' facility available in the foyer of the Alexandra

church (at the 9am Sunday Mass), or at St Dunstan's church, Clyde, during the rest of the week. Simply select a displayed amount option and wave a credit over the facility. All donations very much appreciated.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO THEOLOGY COURSES

2026: Papers can be studied in Dunedin or by distance learning on-line. See brochures and flyers in church foyers to enquire into what papers are available to study, and how to enrol. e.g. *Biblical studies; History; Ethics; Sacraments; Pastoral Theology; ...* For details of papers go to <https://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/papers/> Enrol at <https://www.otago.ac.nz/study/enrolment/>; For more information email theology@otago.ac.nz

FEASTDAY OF THE WEEK – Our Lady of Guadalupe (12 Dec):

The shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, near Mexico City, is one of the most celebrated places of pilgrimage in the Americas. On December 9, 1531, she appeared to an Indian convert, Juan Diego, leaving him a picture of herself impressed upon his cloak, and asking him to build a shrine on Tepeyac Hill. Subsequent devotion to Mary increased, and today she is the Patroness of all the Americas. (For more information go to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Guadalupe)



LAUDATO SI' Prayer for Advent (LS 246):

'... Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made. You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother ...and you gazed upon this world with human eyes. Praise be to you! ... God of love, show us our place in this world as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth... Enlighten ...[us all to] care for this world in which we live ... to prepare for a better future ... of justice, peace, love and beauty ...'



CATHOLIC NEWS NZ (www.cathnews.com):

* **Signs of hope for hospices after years of lobbying Governments:** After a decade of palliative care neglect which saw New Zealand slump by world standards, there is new hope for the hospice sector.

* **Closure of Kaikorai church in Dunedin being considered:** Parishioners in the Cathedral and Hill Suburbs pastoral area in Dunedin have had their say on a proposal to close St Mary's Church in Kaikorai.

* **Canadian bishops urge faith protection in hate-speech law,** speaking out against a proposal to remove religious-belief exemptions from their nation's laws.

VATICAN NEWS (www.vaticannews.va) [For full access, click on article headings (emailed copies)]

* **Pope appeals for an end to clashes along Thai-Cambodian border,** and prays for all victims

* **Pope: European identity closely tied to Judeo-Christian roots.** Pope Leo XIV encourages members of the European Parliament to recall the EU's Judeo-Christian roots and uphold the inherent rights of every person, from conception to natural death.

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ADVENT COLLECTION for THE CATHOLIC CARING FOUNDATION (CCF):

Proceeds are used by Bishop Michael to support various charities in our diocese, including our region's hospices, Pregnancy Help and the Night Shelter, Catholic Social Services and the work of our prison, hospital and tertiary chaplains. **Apart from Planned Giving envelopes,** to make an online donation search registered payees for 'Dunedin Catholic Caring Foundation'. Under 'particulars' please use your surname, 'code' your initials, and 'reference' CCF. Please email Pauline at paulinel@cdd.nz so a receipt can be issued.

SUNDAY MASSES

Omakau: 6pm Vigil (Saturday), at St Peters.
Alexandra: 9am, at St John the Baptist.
Roxburgh: 11am, at Our Lady of Peace.

WEEKDAY MASSES

Alexandra:
 Tuesday: 5pm
 Wed, Thurs, Sat: 9am
 Friday: Noon



Roxburgh:
 Wednesday: 5:15pm (in presbytery):

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RECONCILIATION (Rite I)

Alexandra: Saturdays 9:30-10am; Otherwise on request.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

(March, June, September, December)

Alexandra: First Friday Mass, noon.
Roxburgh: First Wednesday Mass, 5:15pm, (in the presbytery)



EXPOSITION and BENEDICTION

Alexandra side chapel, Fridays 11:30-11:45am.

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PARISH CONTACT DETAILS

Parish Priest: Fr Brendan Ward.
Address: 3 Killarney St, Alexandra.
Phone: 03 448 8202; 027 975 3272
Email: alexatholic@xtra.co.nz
Parish Council Chair: Kathleen O'Kane
St Gerard's Principal: Julie Flannery; 03 448 8339
Catholic Social Services: 0800 277 669 (toll-free); 03 448 5385 (Mon-Thu). Also visit the website www.catholicocialservices.org.nz.
Parish Website: www.alexatholic.nz
Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz