

01 DECEMBER 2024



**ALEXANDRA  
CATHOLIC  
PASTORAL AREA**  
[St John the Baptist  
(1924) Alexandra;  
**St Peter's**  
(1932) Omakau;  
**St Dunstan's**  
(1903) Clyde;  
**St Patrick's**  
(1892) St Bathans;  
**Our Lady of Peace**  
(1910) Roxburgh]

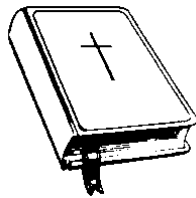
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, Year C

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**SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY**

(1) *Jeremiah 33:14-16*. The prophet Jeremiah (ca 650-570BC) waits and hopes for an ideal descendant of King David who will bring security, peace, and justice to God's people. Christians see Jeremiah's waiting and hoping fulfilled in the divine person of Jesus Christ.

(2) *1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2*. Paul urges the people of Thessalonika in coastal Greece to continue and intensify the life of holiness and mutual love he has taught them as they wait for "the coming of our Lord Jesus".



(3) *Luke 21:25-28,34-36*. Jesus prophesies the signs and portents that will accompany his *Second Coming* and encourages us to be expectant, optimistic, vigilant, well-prepared, and to face the future with confidence in God's providence.

**NEXT WEEK (2nd Sunday of Advent):**

(1) Baruch 5:1-9; (2) Philippians 1:4-6,8-11;  
(3) Luke 3:4,6.

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**Died Recently:** Fr Mervyn McGettigan; Des O'Brien.

**Anniversaries:** Les and Daphne Ward; Clara Hurley; Eileen McMahon; Alice Anderton.

**'May they rest in peace.'**

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**FR MERV McGETTIGAN FUNERAL DETAILS :** (1) Rosary Vigil, 7pm this coming Friday 6 Dec, St Mary's church, Mosgiel. (2) Requiem Mass, 10:30am Saturday, St Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES:** There will be a meeting immediately after the end of the 9am Mass in Alexandra this Sunday, **especially for choir members**, but also for anyone else who would like to attend regarding Christmas times. There will be no homily, to allow adequate time for discussion

before departure by Fr Brendan to Mass in Roxburgh. Christmas service times are required for this Wednesday's meeting of the combined Ministers Association, for publication purposes, plus the diocesan newsletter and website. -Fr.B.

**COMBINED CHURCHES OF ALEXANDRA  
CHRISTMAS CAROLS SERVICE:**

7pm, next Sunday 08 December, at the Alexandra Baptist Church, 6 Gregg Street. The service will be fairly simple, incorporating a mix of sung carols and Scriptural readings. Free entry; all welcome.

**LITURGICAL LANGUAGE:**

Scripture readings and prayers used at all Masses are ideally in accordance with the NZ Catholic Bishops Conference policy document (1997) on the use of Inclusive language in the liturgy. i.e. '... the ways we speak and relate to one another need to reflect our Christian faith. ... It is not a matter of changing the meaning of scriptural or liturgical texts. It is a matter of being faithful to them: when the text intends to include both women and men, then the translation should clearly do the same.'

Language enables us to engage and communicate with others, to express our own thoughts and to receive theirs. It is characteristically dynamic and changing in response to, e.g., new technology (What did 'Bluetooth' or Facebook' mean 30 years ago?), and to developments in understanding of how language impacts understanding of ourselves and our communities and wider society. (NB: 'Inclusive' language and 'Gender Neutral' language are different concepts and are not the same.)

**MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK:**

*Roxburgh:* This coming Wednesday, 5:15pm.

*Alexandra:* This coming Friday, at noon.

'The Letter of James states that the sick are to be anointed in order to raise them up and save them. i.e. Great care and concern should be taken to see that those of the faithful whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age receive this sacrament. ... On the other hand, it may not be given indiscriminately or to any person whose health is not seriously impaired.' (Pastoral Care of the Sick – Rites of Anointing and Viaticum).

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK – ADVENT**

Advent has a short, medium and long-term, and a past, present, and future focus. 'That' we need to stay awake to these emphases is perhaps not so problematic as to 'how' we can stay awake. The time-honoured ways to do this are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. But how to stay awake to Christ's coming has been put in other ways too. One ancient spiritual author has written, '**Live as if Jesus died yesterday, rose this morning, and is coming back tomorrow.**' How would we respond if we knew for certain this to be the case? Another author, John Powell, writes: "**God sends each person into this**

**world with a special message to deliver, a special song to sing, a special act of love to bestow.**" Powell's comment raises the question for each of us: What sort of message will I send, song I sing, and act of love bestow, this Christmas, for the good of another? And how can I best respond to receiving such gifts?

**BIBLE DIARY 2025:** This daily prayer resource with thought-provoking reflections, including Saints of the Day, covering 2025 can be ordered through Sr Leona Garchow (021 209 5811) or Jill Paulin (021 254 3739), by Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December please.

**THE GOD DEBATE:** In early June of this year a televised public discussion occurred in New York between Richard Dawkins (renowned atheist) and Ayaan Hirsi Ali (previously a very close atheist colleague of Dawkins et al, who converted to Christianity in late 2023). To view the discussion, especially Ali's personal witness comments, Google search 'Richard Dawkins vs Ayaan Hirsi Ali, The God Debate'. Well worth viewing.

**VATICAN NEWS (www.vaticannews.va):**

- \* Interfaith summit in the Philippines calls for stronger action against human trafficking
- \* 'Empathy over systems': Korean peace forum urges unity amid challenges
- \* Pope renews call for solidarity with Ukraine and Holy Land
- \* UK faith leaders sign joint letter against assisted suicide bill
- \* Cardinal Sako: Christian unity is only path out of current crises in Churches of the East

**CATHOLIC NEWS NZ (www.cathnews.co.nz):**

- \* Caritas says "wipe out Pacific nations crippling climate debt"
- \* Renowned theologian says reshaping the Church is unavoidable
- \* On women deacons, the Catholic Church has to remember its own history
- \* Montreal burns but NZ media is quiet
- \* The laity should have a greater voice in choosing bishops
- \* Religion: vital to democracy

**CATHOLIC CARING FOUNDATION ADVENT APPEAL 2024:**

Today we have a special collection for our Catholic Caring Foundation Advent Appeal. The Caring Foundation exists to support the outreach of the Church and our local community. This year's proceeds will go to support the Southland and Otago Hospices, Dunedin Night Shelter, and to help establish Catholic Social Services in Invercargill. Donations can be placed in an envelope with your name and address and included in the Offertory collection this week or next week, or by going



online to [cdd.org.nz/donate](http://cdd.org.nz/donate), or by scanning the accompanying QR code.

**COLUMBAN CALENDARS 2025:** Are available for purchase from church foyers. \$15 each; please place in envelope supplied. Great Christmas presents. Pages by month exhibit classic religious art with an accompanying explanation.



**'KINTSUGI'** is a Japanese artistic tradition that repairs broken pieces of pottery with lacquer dusted with fine gold dust. It is based on the idea that in embracing flaws and imperfections a more beautiful and valuable piece of art can be created. Applying that to theology, Makoto Fujimura writes: 'It's through our brokenness that God's grace can shine through. Jesus came not to 'fix' us, and not just to restore us, but to make us something new. Kintsugi illustrates the biblical narrative of Creation ⇒ Fall ⇒ Redemption ⇒ New Creation. (From recent clergy retreat, by Fr Michael Smith SJ)

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**SUNDAY MASSES**

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

**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 presbytery)

**EXPOSITION and BENEDICTION**

**Alexandra** side chapel, Fridays 11:30-11:50am.  
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**PARISH CONTACT DETAILS**

**Parish Priest:** Fr Brendan Ward.  
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**Phone:** 03 448 8202, or 027 975 3272  
**Email:** [alexcatholic@xtra.co.nz](mailto:alexcatholic@xtra.co.nz)  
**Parish Council:** Mr Pat Cooney; 027 768 9918  
**Finance Chair:** Mr Phil Peguero; 027 499 0277  
**St Gerard's Principal:** Mrs Julie Flannery;  
 034488339  
**Catholic Social Services:** 0800 277 669 (toll-free);  
 03 448 5385 (Mon-Thu).  
**Parish Website:** [www.alexcatholic.nz](http://www.alexcatholic.nz)  
**Diocese Website:** [www.cdd.nz](http://www.cdd.nz)

