

15 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]

**3rd Sunday of Advent, Year C**

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**SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY**

(1) *Zephaniah 3:14-18*; In today's first reading, the prophet Zephaniah encourages Jerusalem and Israel to shout out for the joy of their expected deliverance by the Lord.

(2) *Philippians 3:4-7*; St. Paul echoes the message of joy, even from the most difficult of circumstances, for his letter is written from imprisonment: "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again, rejoice..."



(3) *Luke 3:10-18*. John the Baptist explains the secret of Christian joy as wholehearted commitment to God's Way by the doing of God's will. John challenges people to generosity and a sense of fairness so that others may have reason to rejoice. According to John, happiness comes from doing our duties faithfully, doing good for others, and sharing our blessings with others in need. John's call to repentance is a call to joy and restoration. *Repentance* means a change in the purpose and direction of our lives. John tells the people to act with justice, charity, and honesty, letting their lives reflect their transformation.

**NEXT WEEK (4th Sunday of Advent):**

(1) Micah 5:1-4; (2) Hebrews 10:5-10; (3) Luke 1:39-44.

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**Died Recently:** Br Graeme Donaldson  
**Anniversaries:** For those whose anniversaries occur about now. 'May they rest in peace.'

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**ST GERARD'S GRADUATION MASS and PRIZEGIVING:** The graduation Mass is this Monday at 5pm. Prizegiving is at 10am Tuesday, also in the Alexandra church.

**CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES**

**Alexandra:**

\*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>, vigil Mass at 5:30pm. (A children's Mass.)  
\*Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>, 9am.

**Omakau:**

\*Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>, vigil Mass at 7:30pm.

**Roxburgh: (5 Liddle St).**

\*Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>, 11am.



**NB:** Some Mass times have changed from those of past years. i.e. Please notify people you know who often holiday in the Alexandra-Omakau-St. Bathans-Clyde and Roxburgh areas over the Christmas holiday period of the changes, in whatever ways possible.

**For the 5:30pm vigil Mass in Alexandra children are invited to attend dressed as a favourite Christmas person. e.g. Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, Magi, Inn Keeper, ...**

**RECONCILIATION (RITE I), in preparation for Christmas:**

This coming Thursday, 7-8pm, in the Alexandra church. Fr McGettigan and Fr Ward present.

Church teaching encourages us to prepare to celebrate Christmas, and other significant events in our lives, by partaking of the sacrament of Reconciliation. Just as with our physical homes it is a healthy practice to undergo 'Spring cleans' occasionally, so it is with regard to our inner selves. Hence we take time to pray, to ask God to help us see the ways by which the light of the Holy Spirit becomes obscured in our lives, and how the brightness can be restored. In particular we can reflect on the Beatitudes (*Matthew 5:1-10*), the Ten Commandments (*c.f. Deuteronomy 5:1-21*), the Last Judgement Scene (*Matthew 25:31-46*), and the Fruits of the Holy Spirit (*Galatians 5:22-23*) to help us critique our thoughts, words and actions, our motivations, and our openness to the stirrings and movements of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

**A penitent's prayer:** 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, for the wrong I have done and the good I have failed to do, have mercy on me, a sinner, and help me not to sin again. Let my weakness not be my excuse to justify my sins, but reason for you to justify your mercy.'

**2025 JUBILEE PRAYER CARDS:** The 2025 Jubilee 'Year of Hope' will officially open on December 24,

2024 at 7pm in Rome, with the rite of Opening of the Holy Door of the Papal Basilica of St. Peter by Pope Francis. Here in NZ Jubilee prayer cards are available from church foyers, for free, to use over the coming year in support of the jubilee.

To be aware of other resources and events associated with the jubilee go to the website <https://www.cdd.nz/ministries/jubilee-year-2025-pilgrims-of-hope>.

**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.

**CARITAS RESOURCES ON THE TREATY PRINCIPLES BILL:** View Caritas resources on the Treaty of Waitangi and on the Treaty Principles Bill by going to the website <https://www.caritas.org.nz/advocacy/treaty-principles-submissions>.

**ALEXANDRA COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DAY BBQ LUNCH:** 12:30pm 25th December, St Enoch's Church Grounds, Corner Dunorling Street and Centennial Avenue. All welcome, free event. Register to support, volunteer & attend by going to [www.alexchurch.org.nz/christmas](http://www.alexchurch.org.nz/christmas). (Alexandra Clyde Lauder Union Parish)

**PILGRIMAGE AOTEAROA** is a guidebook to over 100 pilgrimage sites across NZ, blending history, culture and spirituality, rich stories, photos and maps to explain why these places are significant. To purchase a copy go to [www.pilgrimage.nz](http://www.pilgrimage.nz). RRP \$49.50, + p&p.

**VATICAN NEWS ([www.vaticannews.va](http://www.vaticannews.va)):** (NB: For those receiving emailed digital copies, clicking on the headings below gives Internet access to the full article.)

*\*After Assad, Syria's Christians hope for 'rebirth' of country.*

*\*Pope to theologians: 'Ideology kills reality and manipulates people'.*

*\*Pope pays homage to Mary at statue of Immaculate Conception.*

*\*Latin American bishops join campaign to save human rights defenders.*

*\*Pope Francis: May inmates on death row in the US be graced. He appeals for their sentences to be commuted.*

*\*Pope appeals for ceasefire 'on all war-fronts' by Christmas* Pope Francis issues an appeal to state leaders and to the international community to ensure a ceasefire before Christmas may be reached in countries suffering from war.

**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.

**CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE (CEC):** The CEC is the NZ Bishops agency that provides resources, written and on-line, for anyone seeking to enquire about the Catholic faith. The contact details are:  
**Address:** Level 5, 204 Thorndon Quay, Wellington 6011.  
**Ordinary mail:** PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140.  
**Email for resources:** [john@catholicenquiry.nz](mailto:john@catholicenquiry.nz).

**HEALTH CENTRAL URGENT CARE CENTRE:** This is a walk-in medical service for locals and visitors. Open 7 days, 8am to 6pm, for non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries. 105-107 Tarbert St, Alexandra. See the flyer on the church foyer noticeboards for more information.

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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.  
**Address:** 3 Killarney St, Alexandra.  
**Phone:** 03 448 8202, or 027 975 3272  
**Email:** [alexatholic@xtra.co.nz](mailto:alexatholic@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.alexatholic.nz](http://www.alexatholic.nz)  
**Diocese Website:** [www.cdd.nz](http://www.cdd.nz)

