



**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]

18 August 2024

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

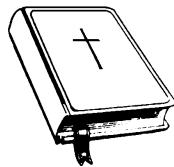
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SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY

- (1) *Proverbs 9:1-6*. Lady Wisdom, representing God, offers wisdom and understanding in the form of a rich banquet to all who are willing to come.
- (2) *Ephesians 5:15-20*. Paul encourages the Gentile Christians to show their gratitude to God for calling them, along with the Jews, to Christianity, and for giving them a share in Christ's life.
- (3) *John 6:51-58*. Jesus asserts that eating the Living Bread, himself, allows us to participate in his life and to grow in our eternal life with God.

READINGS NEXT SUNDAY

- (1) *Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18*
- (2) *Ephesians 5:21-32*
- (3) *John 6:60-69*





DIED RECENTLY: Fr Jim Nicholas (Chch); Michael CAHILL.
ANNIVERSARIES: Eileen LYNCH; Patrick GIBBONS; Bob SKELTON; Verna LUYTON; Doreen WHELAN; Bob WHITE.

SACRAMENT of CONFIRMATION

Preparatory presentation for parents and candidate children after the 9am Mass this Sunday 18th August, in the side chapel of the Alexandra church.

'From Pentecost onwards the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ's will, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism.' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Clause 1288)

ANOTHER FREE FRIDGE-FREEZER: See Fr Brendan if you, or someone you know, could do with one.

CHRIST, THE 'BREAD OF LIFE' (today's Gospel reading): Gathering together for the 'breaking of bread' was one of the four identifying characteristics of the early Christian community (*Acts 2:42*). As it was then, so it remains for us today. In receiving Holy Communion (the Eucharist) we celebrate Christ united with us to nourish and sustain us in body and soul, under the form of the consecrated (blessed) bread and wine. How can we understand this because, superficially, it doesn't seem to make much sense.



There is a saying, "There is more to us than meets the eye." i.e. We are more than just our outward appearance. Likewise with respect to the Eucharist; our senses outwardly see simple bread and common wine, but the reality is Christ made present to us today as he was in Palestine nearly two thousand years ago to his first disciples **but in a different form**.

At the Last Supper Jesus was present in his human physical body, yet he also spoke of the 'bread' he offered as his body and the 'wine' as his blood. i.e. Present, but in two different ways, (physically and sacramentally), at the same time. Reflecting on this, St Ambrose (339-397AD) wrote: "You have read that in the creation of the whole world 'God spoke and they came to be; he commanded and they were created' (*Ps 33:9*). If God could by speaking create out of nothing that which did not yet exist, can we say that he is unable to change existing things into something they previously were not?"

YOUTH 2000 DUNEDIN RETREAT, SEPTEMBER 13-15, 2024: Open to all young adults aged 18-35, this retreat features a range of activities including workshops, praise and worship sessions and opportunities for deep prayer and reflection and fellowship. To learn more about the activities planned and to register and secure your spot, scan the QR code on the notice in the church foyer. Join us for a weekend that promises to nourish your soul and strengthen your faith!

DIOCESAN-WIDE PLANNED GIVING CAMPAIGN
 Following on from last Sunday, this Sunday and next there will be a 2-minute video message from Bp Michael encouraging us to consider how we can support our parish and diocese with our financial giving. This Sunday there is also a brochure which provides specific information about the finances of individual parishes areas. Thank you for giving this your attention.

SOLEMNITY OF THE ASSUMPTION (15 August, last Thursday): *Further to last week* - There is no direct scriptural basis for Mary's Assumption in the New Testament, although the reference to 'the woman clothed with the sun' in the Book of Revelation (Ch 12) is interpreted as a significant pointer. The Old Testament cites three references to holy people being assumed to heaven, namely the patriarch Enoch (Genesis 5: 24), the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 2:1), and Moses (Deuteronomy 34: 5-6).

The Assumption was decreed formally only in 1950, just five years after the end of the Second World War, the most destructively violating event in human history. Pope Pius XII promulgated the doctrine of the Assumption to firstly, highlight the value of an individual human life and the value of all life. Second, the Assumption highlights the inter-relatedness of all humanity by reminding us that, as brothers and sisters of Christ, we have Mary as our mother in faith too, because she was Christ's mother. As God has brought her to himself, we celebrate that we too can emulate what she already knows, because of her 'Yes' to God, and because of God's 'Yes' to her.

Unless perspective be lost, Vatican II noted: (1) Mary's assumption is not akin to, and is quite distinct from, Christ's ascension. Mary was a mere creature and was therefore 'taken up' into heaven by divine power, and did not 'ascend' as Christ did through that power within him. (2) Vatican II stressed Mary's complete dependence on her Son. She is not divine, not God! (3) The integrity of this dogma reminds Christians of the undaunted faith of this woman, free in her love for God and others through the power of grace. She is the first and foremost disciple of Christ, a model of excellence in discipleship.

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Mary, Patroness of Aotearoa-New Zealand, assumed to heaven, pray for us.

MANA ATUA is a recently released documentary that highlights the transformative power of God in people's lives. Lucky Te Koha was a man plagued with anger, addiction, violence and crime. His story looked like it would follow the same path as his fellow gang members. But after being prayed for in a church by the very same policeman who arrested him the night before, Lucky's life turned around. This gritty documentary captures some of Lucky's story and his mission to bring healing and hope to the community he knows best, the gangs of Aotearoa. Check out the trailer below: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UouHZ1hl7UQ>.

The Christian Churches of Alexandra are together supporting screenings of this powerful documentary at Central Cinema in Alexandra on the following days/times: 2pm Tuesday 27 August; 7:30pm Friday 30 August; 7:30pm Friday 06 September; 11am and 7:30pm Tuesday 10 September. Tickets are free, but must be booked online via the following link:

<https://alexchurch.org.nz/index.php/mana-atua/>

If you sign up but your plans change, please pass on your ticket to someone else. Donations towards the cost of screening are welcome. More info is available at Fantail Studios via the link <https://www.fantailstudios.com/funding/mana-atua>

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Humour: Roadside traffic safety sign: *'Honk if you love Jesus; Text while driving if you want to meet him soon!'*

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| SUNDAY MASSES | Weekday Mass |
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| St John the Baptist, Alexandra, <u>9am</u> | <u>Alexandra:</u>
Tuesday 5pm.
Wed, Thur & Sat 9am. |
| Our Lady of Peace, Roxburgh, <u>11am</u> | Friday, noon.
<u>Roxburgh:</u> |
| St Peter's, Omakau, <u>6pm</u> vigil (Saturday) | Wednesday, 5:15pm |

ANOINTING OF THE SICK: March, June, September, and December, first Friday (noon) in Alexandra, and first Wednesdays (5:15pm) in Roxburgh. Otherwise upon request.



RECONCILIATION (Rite I): Saturdays 9:30-10am in Alexandra. Otherwise upon request.

EXPOSITION and BENEDICTION: Fridays, 11:30-11:50am, side chapel, Alexandra.

| PARISH CONTACT DETAILS | |
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| Parish Priest Fr Brendan Ward.
<u>Ph:</u> 03 448 8202, or txt 027 975 3272.
<u>Office Email:</u> alexcatholic@xtra.co.nz. | |
| Parish Chairperson
Mr Pat Cooney;
027 768 9918. | Finance Committee
Mr Phil Peguero;
027 499 0277. |
| Catholic Social Services 0800 277 669 (toll-free); 03 448 5385 (Mon-Thu) | St Gerard's Primary Principal Mrs Julie Flannery; 03 448 8339. |
| Parish Website: www.alexcatholic.nz
Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz | |