



**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]

08 September 2024

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

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SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY

(1) *Isaiah 35:4-7.* God's eyes are constantly focused on the helpless, caring especially for "the frightened, the blind, the deaf, the lame, the mute," encouraging the powerless to "be strong and fearless."

(2) *James 2:1-5.* The apostle James exhorts Christians to show no partiality based on external appearance and to practice God's "preferential option for the poor." He warns the faithful against scorning or shaming the poor while showing special consideration to the rich.

(3) *Mark 7:31-37.* Jesus, by healing a deaf man with a speech impediment, fulfils Isaiah's Messianic prophecy, "The eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped." The ailments listed by Isaiah are symbolic of interior illnesses: i.e. Blindness to the needs and ailments of one's neighbour; unwillingness to hear God's voice; and the inability/unwillingness to speak words of praise, apology, forgiveness, and gratitude.

READINGS NEXT SUNDAY

- (1) *Isaiah 50:5-9;*
- (2) *James 2:14-18;*
- (3) *Mark 8:27-35*



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Died Recently: Bishop Dennis BROWNE; Hunter DENNISTEN
Anniversaries: Kath KENNEDY; Gerald GITTENS; Daphne MONTEITH; May MCCARTHY; Alister MOWAT.
May they rest in peace.

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**NO 5pm MASS THIS COMING TUESDAY
IN ALEXANDRA**

MISSING PERSONS (from Fr Brendan): The isolation caused by the Covid pandemic has cast a long shadow over awareness of people who are home bound and isolated. If you are aware of anyone who has not been able to be part of the Sunday parish community in recent times but would like to be and are still residing locally, please contact Fr Brendan or a member of the Parish Pastoral Council (see church foyer notice boards for contact details). Thank you. *Fr Brendan.*

St GERARD'S SCHOOL NEWS:

*The Student Council are holding Wig Wednesday next week to raise money in support of the Cancer Society.

*Board of Trustees meeting, Tuesday 10th Sept, 7pm.

*School photos next Friday 13th Sept.

SAINT OF THE WEEK – St John Chrysostom (feast day 13 Sept):

Born 349 AD in Antioch (c.f. modern-day coastal Turkey near the Syrian border). After a broad and thorough education he took up the ascetic life. He was ordained to the priesthood and, in particular, became a fruitful and effective preacher. He was elected Patriarch of Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) in 397, and was energetic in reforming the ways of the clergy and the laity alike. He incurred the displeasure of the Emperor and was twice forced into exile. When the second exile, to Armenia, had lasted three years, it was decided that he should be sent still further away, but he died on the journey in 407 AD, worn out by his hardships.

His sermons and writings did much to explain the Catholic faith and to encourage the living of the Christian life: His eloquence earned him the surname "Chrystostom" (meaning "golden mouth" in Greek).

SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEK (8-14 September):

The overarching theme for Social Justice Week 2023-2025 is: 'Imagine Peace For All / Pohewatia te Rangimārie mō te Katoa' The unique focus for 2024 is: 'Choose forgiveness, know peace / Kōwhiria te murunga hara, kia mōhio ki te rangimārie'

Catholic social teaching sees peace as an essential component of social justice, which is based on the principles of respect for human dignity, the pursuit of the common good, and the protection of human rights.

It calls for a transformation of social structures and systems that perpetuate violence, inequality and injustice, and for the promotion of a culture that values dialogue, reconciliation, and nonviolent conflict resolution, building a path to lasting peace.

UNDERSTANDING THE MASS: See USA National Eucharistic Congress presentation by Fr Mike Smiltz at <https://youtu.be/l2QtWaEFq3E>.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS (www.vaticannews.va):

(1) **Pope Indonesian visit.** Comprised of almost 17,500 islands, Indonesia is home to over 1,300 ethnic groups and about 719 different languages. Catholics comprise about 3% of the 280 million-strong population that is overwhelmingly Muslim. With freedom of worship guaranteed by the state, Catholics also coexist alongside Protestants (7%), Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucianists. The Indonesian government, in partnership with the local Catholic Church, has launched a series of commemorative stamps expressing the themes “Faith, Fraternity, Compassion,” reflecting the key message of the pontiff’s visit from September 3 to 6.

(2) **Pope to Italian youths:** “Never be resigned to war!” “Never resign to the idea that war can solve problems and lead to peace”, because war only brings “death and destruction”.

(3) **UN denounces new Nicaraguan human rights violations:** In a new report, the UN Human Rights Office notes ‘undue restrictions’ on religious freedoms by Ortega’s government, as well as arbitrary detentions, intimidation, ill-treatment in prisons and attacks on indigenous peoples.

NATIONAL NEWS: (<https://cathnews.co.nz>)

(1) **NZ End of Life Choice Act:** Dr John Kleinsman from the Nathaniel Centre for Bioethics says the assisted dying law needs to be changed because the current legislation lacks:

- a formal assessment for coercion
- a requirement for an independent witness during the assessment phase
- adequate screening for depression and other mental health issues
- no cooling-off period after a request is made.

(2) **UN denounces new human rights violations in Nicaragua.** In a new report, the UN Human Rights Office notes ‘undue restrictions’ on religious freedoms by the government of Daniel Ortega, as well as arbitrary detentions, intimidation, ill-treatment in prisons and attacks on indigenous peoples.

(3) **Faith in God must lead to care of creation:** The Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople and Pope Francis have jointly spoken of the conversion necessary to leave behind “the arrogance of those who want to exercise dominion over others and nature itself”. They called for people to embrace “the humility of those who care for others and for all of creation. ... This radically changes the way we think: from ‘predators’ we become ‘tillers’ of the garden.”

SITUATION VACANT: Chief Operating Officer: The Christchurch Diocese is seeking a Chief Operating Officer to lead a passionate and committed team and contribute to shaping the future of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch. This role’s primary objective is to support the bishop in his pastoral mission for the diocese through the management and leadership of resources, staff, and the delivery of outcomes. For a full position description please email applications@cdoc.nz. Applications close on 25th September at 1pm.

HUMOUR: While a Jumbo Jet was landing on the airport runway the pilot’s voice inadvertently came over the intercom: "Whoa, big fella. WHOA!"

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RECONCILIATION (Rite I)

Alexandra church.
Saturdays 9:30-10am,
Otherwise upon request.



MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK (March, June, September, December)

Alexandra: First Friday (noon).
Roxburgh: First Wednesdays (5:15pm)

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

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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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PARISH CONTACT DETAILS

Parish Priest: Fr Brendan Ward.
Address: 3 Killarney St, Alexandra.
Phone: 03 448 8202, or 027 975 3272
Email: alexcatholic@xtra.co.nz
Parish Council: Mr Pat Cooney. 027 768 9918
Finance Chair: Mr Phil Peguero. 027 499 0277
St Gerard’s P’pal: Mrs Julie Flannery 034488339
Catholic Social Services: 0800 277 669 (toll-free); 03 448 5385 (Mon-Thu).
Parish Website: www.alexcatholic.nz
Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz