

05 JANUARY 2025



**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]

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

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 **All Sunday Masses in Omakau, Alexandra and Roxburgh this weekend are offered in particular in honour of Senior Sergeant Lyn Fleming who lost her life in the line of duty in Nelson last Wednesday. We also pray for the safety and wellbeing of all members of the New Zealand Police in their efforts and commitment to provide a safe and secure society for all in this nation of Aotearoa-New Zealand.**

that there is nothing in our lives that will keep God from bringing us to Christ. There were three groups of people who reacted to the epiphany of his birth. The first group, headed by King Herod the Great, tried to eliminate the Child; the second group, the priests and scribes, ignored him; the third group, represented by the shepherds and the Magi, came to adore him.

NEXT SUNDAY: The Baptism of the Lord

(1) *Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11* (2) *Titus 2:11-14,3:4-7*
(3) *Luke 3:15-16,21-22.*

Next Sunday marks the end of the Christmas season, after which the Church cycle of readings and liturgical emphases enters what is termed 'Ordinary Time' (i.e. the weeks of the year outside of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost).

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NO WEEKDAY MASS in Alexandra, Monday-Wednesday, this coming week. i.e. Thursday 9am will be the next weekday Mass.

VANUATU EARTHQUAKE RELIEF APPEAL:

\$2192 was raised through last Sunday's Masses at the Omakau, Alexandra, and Roxburgh Masses. Thank you to all who contributed; a great effort, especially at short notice. The funds are to be forwarded this coming week to Caritas NZ for use by their relief agencies on the ground in Vanuatu.



Died Recently: Senior Sergeant Lyn Fleming (Nelson); Fr Kevin Purcell (Wellington); Fr Frank Maguire (Wellington).

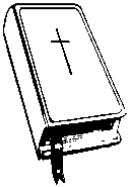
Anniversaries: Bill Chapman; Patrick Tohill; Margaret Welnoski. ***'May they rest in peace.'***

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SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY

(1) *Isaiah 60:1-6.* The oracle of Isaiah prophesies that the nations of the world would travel to the Holy City following a brilliant light and would bring gold and incense to contribute to the worship of God.

(2) *Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6.* Paul's letter to the Church of Ephesus expresses God's secret plan in clear terms: *"the Gentiles are...co-partners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel."*



(3) *Matthew 2:1-12.* The Magi – foreigners and pagans – recognize and give Jesus proper respect as the King of Jews. So we should know

LOVE OF GOD AND NEIGHBOUR:

'Love God and your neighbour - We must always ponder these words, meditate them, hold them in our minds, practise them and bring them to fruition. As far as teaching is concerned, the love of God comes first; but as far as doing is concerned, the love of our neighbour comes first. Whoever sets out to teach you these two commandments of love must not commend your neighbour to you first, and then God, but God first and then your neighbour. You, on the other hand, do not yet see God, but loving your neighbour will bring you that sight. By loving your neighbour you purify your eyes so that they are ready to see God, as John clearly says: If you do not love your neighbour, whom you see, how can you love God, whom you do not see?' (From a treatise on John by St Augustine)

THE. QUESTION OF CONSCIENCE:

"Follow your conscience, not your ego", said Pope Francis in an Angelus address in which he said Jesus does not want "remote-controlled"

Christians who are not free. He gave the example of his predecessor, Benedict XVI, as a model of attention to the voice of one's conscience. "When the Lord had made it clear, in prayer, what was the step he had to take, he followed, with a great sense of discernment and courage, his conscience, that is, the will of God speaking to his heart," Pope Francis said.

The Pope said Jesus wants neither selfish Christians, who follow their egos and do not speak with God, nor weak and "remote-controlled" Christians, who have no will and are incapable of creativity, "who seek ever to connect with the will of another, and are not free. ... Jesus wants us free, and this freedom — where is it found? It is to be found in the inner dialogue with God in conscience. If a Christian does not know how to talk with God, does not know how to listen to God, in his own conscience, then he is not free — he is not free. So we also must learn to listen more to our conscience. Be careful, however: this does not mean we ought to follow our ego, do whatever interests us, whatever suits us, whatever pleases us. That is not conscience.

Conscience is the interior space in which we can listen to and hear the truth, the good, the voice of God. It is the inner place of our relationship with him, who speaks to our heart and helps us to discern, to understand the path we ought to take, and once the decision is made, to move forward, to remain faithful."

(<https://www.popefrancishomilies.com/conscience>)

ISN'T IT AMAZING (William O'Malley S.J.)

Isn't it amazing that every single object in the universe circles something else? Is this just 'accidental'? But if so, how do you get order and predictability out of an accident? Are the laws of physics just an accident? How do you get 'law' out of 'luck'?

Isn't it amazing, that if I had ten cards, the probability of drawing them in consecutive order, from Ace up to ten, is one in a billion? Is it likely, therefore, that the human being, infinitely more complex in the number of permutations and combinations possible from the millions of genes that comprise us, could have evolved by pure 'luck'?

Isn't it amazing that if the earth's crust was 3 meters thicker, there would be no atmosphere?

Isn't it amazing that if the earth was not tilted at 28 degrees, there would be no seasons?

Isn't it amazing that our intelligence, unique to the human species, creates hungers in us

that we cannot find in other species? e.g. We want to know 'why?'

CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE (CEC): The CEC is the NZ Bishops agency that provides resources, written and on-line, for anyone seeking to enquire into the Catholic faith. The contact details are: *For posted mail:* CEC. PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140. *To email for resources:* john@catholicenquiry.nz. All enquiries treated confidentially.


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.
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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
Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz