

08 March 2026

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR A



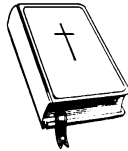
ALEXANDRA CATHOLIC PASTORAL AREA
[St John the Baptist (1924) Alexandra;
St Peter's (1928) Omakau;
St Dunstan's (1903) Clyde;
St Patrick's (1892) St Bathans;
Our Lady of Peace (1910) Roxburgh]

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THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

(1) **Exodus 17:3-7.** *The people are journeying through the desert to the south of modern Israel, whose very name (Negeb) means 'dry', and they are consequently 'tormented by thirst'. Obviously their faith in the LORD and in Moses' leadership failed. On this occasion the LORD allows Moses to remedy the situation.*

(2) **Romans 5:1-2,5-8.** *Paul has outlined a world sunk in evil. Then he meditates on Abraham's unwavering trust in God's promises, that God will come to our rescue. And God has, through the obedience of Jesus to the Father's will, which outdoes the disobedience of the whole human race, represented in Adam's sin. It is not the gore and suffering of the cross which are in themselves salvific – like a price paid for human delinquency – but the total extent of the love shown by Christ in his unflinching obedience to the Father's will. It was love for the Father, allied with love for us, that the salvation of humanity, even in the face of its perennial and ongoing disobedience, is assured.*



(3) **John 4:5-16,19-26,39-42.** *In this lively dialogue Jesus almost seems to be teasing the Samaritan woman. Undaunted, she gives as good as she gets, replying with a cheeky series of sarcastic questions, gradually edging nearer to the truth, and finally acknowledging him as the Messiah. It's a lovely and reassuring example of Jesus' willingness to engage with people as they are, allowing grace to engage with and build upon nature, not impose itself from on high transcendentally, separate from and outside of nature. (Commentaries adapted from Universalis.com)*

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

(1) 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13; (2) Ephesians 5:8-14; (3) John 9:1,6-9,13-17,34-38

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Died Recently: Fr Pat Maloney.

Anniversaries about now: Diane King; Pat Flannery; Dennis Flannery; Margaret



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

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MASS IN SPANISH: 6pm next Sunday, 15 March, at Our Lady of Peace church, Roxburgh. Fr Pat McGettigan presiding.

LENT

***Almsgiving:** (i) The CARITAS Lent appeal envelopes are available to collect from church foyer tables. Also, donations can be made online by going to the Caritas website caritas.org.nz.

(ii) Support the parish through use of the 'Tap 'n Go' donation facility available beside the baptism font near the internal foyer doors of the church in Alexandra on Sundays', or at St Dunstan's, Clyde, the rest of the week. Simply use your finger to tap on one of the four amount options, then hold your paywave-capable phone or bank card over the machine to make your offering.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME 2026

(i) **Baptism preparation meeting – This coming Wednesday 11 March, 7-8pm**, in the Alexandra church, presented by Fr Brendan. **Please note: Attendance is necessary and required for parent(s) and children participating in the sacramental programme who have yet to be baptised.**

LOSS AND GRIEF: Many people are grieving the loss of a loved one. A time of information and reflection, discussion and sharing, will be offered on **Tuesday 24 March at 3.30 pm in the Alexandra church**, facilitated by Sr Leona Garchow RSM. All welcome, from any and all backgrounds. Invite a friend.

RESPONSES TO BP MICHAEL'S QUESTIONS:

(1) See on the attached sheet a collation of responses received to Bp Michael's recent questions. Take them with you, discuss the responses with others (e.g. over coffee, while travelling, etc) and share outcomes with your parish pastoral councillors, for them to take to the next pastoral council meeting. (Their names are at the bottom of the sheet.)

(2) Bp Michael has asked that all church communities in a pastoral area consider being combined under one parish title, instead of multiple, for ease of legal, administrative, and identity purposes. i.e. Next Sunday there will be opportunity before the Offertory collection to:

(i) indicate on a questionnaire if there is agreement to combine the three parishes of St Bathans-Omakau, Alexandra-Clyde, and Roxburgh, under one parish name (while retaining current individual church names). A choice of 'Yes' will then require:

(ii) suggestions as to what a combined parish name could be.

Replies will be collated and presented the following Sunday for people to discuss for a few weeks and seek consensus over by the Sunday after Easter, or later if need be.

THE 'HOPE PROJECT' BOOKLET DROP: For anyone willing to help deliver the inter-church Hope booklets to residential letterboxes, for about 2 hours, at a time that suits people over the two weeks prior to Easter, please inform Fr Brendan asap. It would be good to have six volunteers from the parish; (at the moment there are four, 👍).

LENTEN PRAYERS FOR PEACE: We pray Lord:
-For the throwing down of the walls of hatred between peoples and nations, and clearing of the way for those who work for peace;
-Enable all who unjustly fuel conflict to see in your son's cross the collective guilt of our sin and so accept a common need for your forgiveness and mercy;
-Rescue and free us from all that binds and afflicts us;
-Bring just resolution to unresolved conflict;
-Free us from the harbouring of resentful and vengeful thoughts that tell of our lack of forgiveness towards others.

VATICAN NEWS (www.vaticannews.va):

* **Lebanon's Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops call for peace.** Amid ongoing violence in the Middle East, the Assembly of Catholic Patriarchs and Bishops in Lebanon releases a statement warning that escalation threatens human dignity and calling for dialogue, national unity, and renewed international efforts for peace.

* **Cardinal Cupich: 'We must embrace principles to avoid wars'**. Cardinal Blase Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, calls for restraint to avoid unnecessary military escalation abroad and prevent things from quickly spiralling out of control. He also urges overcoming polarization and protecting the human dignity of all peoples ... Once you open the door with attacks, it's very hard to close it, and things can get out of control very quickly.

* **ITC: Humanity's future lies in relationship, not technology:** The International Theological Commission publishes "Quo vadis, humanitas ("Humanity, where are you going?"): The epochal challenge of Christian anthropology in the era of artificial intelligence and posthumanism."

* **Holy See: Christians are most persecuted religious community in world** . Archbishop Ettore Balestrero, the Holy See's Permanent Observer to the UN in Geneva, highlights the persecution that Christians face across the world and emphasizes that nations must ensure religious freedom.

CATHNEWS (https://cathnewsnz.com)

* **Participants in the second International Conference on Catholic Indigenous** have been struck by the similar experiences and a common resilience shared by all. Delegations from the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have taken turns to lead one day of the proceedings, outlining significant suffering and traumatic practices and policies, but also sharing stories of resilience, faith and hope.

* **NZ congregational leader Sr Denise Fox RSM** says Mercy Sisters' mission still strong and active, inspired by Venerable Catherine McAuley, and are widespread and achieving much good today.

HUMOUR: Ever notice how some nurses spend 5 minutes looking for a blood-vein, while a mosquito can locate one within five seconds, in the dark, while humming a tune? 😊

SUNDAY MASS
Omakau St Peters (Saturday): 6pm vigil
Alexandra St John the Baptist: 9am
Roxburgh Our Lady of Peace: 11am

WEEKDAY MASS

	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Alexandra	5pm	9am	9am	Noon	9am
Roxburgh		5:15pm			

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

ANOINTING OF THE SICK (Mar, Jun, Sept, Dec)
Alexandra: First Friday Mass (noon)
Roxburgh: First Wednesday Mass (5:15pm)

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

PARISH CONTACT DETAILS
Parish Priest: Fr Brendan Ward.
Address: 3 Killarney St, Alexandra.
Phone: 03 448 8202, or 027 975 3272
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Parish Council: Mrs. Kathleen O'Kane.
Finance Chair: Mr. Pat Cooney.
St Gerard's Principal: Mrs. Julie Flannery.
Catholic Social Services: 03 4485385 (Mon-Thu).
0800 277 669 (toll-free)
Parish Website: www.alexatholic.nz
Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz.