

09 March 2025

1st Sunday of Lent, Year C



**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]

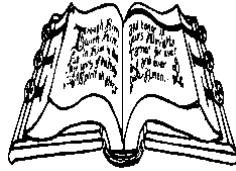
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SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS SUNDAY

(1) *Deuteronomy 26:4-10*. The reading describes the ancient Jewish ritual of presenting the first fruits and gifts of the harvest festival to God in order to thank Him for liberating His people from Egypt and for strengthening them during the years of their trials and temptations in the desert.

(2) *Romans 10:8-13*. St. Paul warns the early Christians converted from Judaism not to yield to their constant temptation to return to the observances of the Mosaic Laws. He emphasises that acknowledging the risen Jesus as Lord and Saviour is the only means by which they can be saved.

(3) *Luke 4:1-13*. The graphic temptations of Jesus described by Matthew and Luke in their Gospels are the pictorial and dramatic representations of the inner struggle against a temptation that Jesus experienced throughout his public life.



NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

- (1) Genesis 15:5-12,17-18
- (2) Philippians 3:17 - 4:1.
- (3) Luke 9:28-36

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Died Recently: Fr Paul O'Connor AA (Wellington)

Anniversaries: Peter Chote; Kathryn Lucas

'May they rest in peace.'

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THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK:

'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of. For what are men and women better than sheep or goats that nourish a blind life within the brain if, knowing God, they lift not their hands in prayer, both for themselves and those who call them friend?' From 'Morte D'Arthur' by the English poet Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-92),

'Prayer is to the soul what air is to the lungs.'
(Anon)

Regarding today's Gospel reading and the temptations of greed, envy, and the quest for power which Christ faced, the great Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) wrote concerning them: *"They govern the whole of human history and underline the contradictions in each of us."* Dostoevsky's words beg the question: "How do we address our contradictions and face our demons?"

"The greatest victory in the world is that of self-conquest" (Plato, Greek philosopher, c.a. 427-347 BC).

"Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom." (Anon)

"Live one day at a time; make it a work of art." (J. Gilhooley)

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MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK: This coming Wednesday 12 March, 5:15pm, in the Roxburgh presbytery.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS: During Fridays of Lent, 5:15-5:40pm, St John the Baptist church in Alexandra. All welcome.

NEXT MASS IN SPANISH: Sunday 30th of March, 6pm, at Our Lady of Peace church, 138 Scotland St, Roxburgh. Fr Pat presiding.

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LENT

***Regarding prayer and fasting**

These may be fulfilled, for example, by taking extra time for:

- a) family prayer; attending a weekday Mass; the reading of scripture; silent reflection before the Blessed Sacrament/tabernacle; offering a Rosary or the Stations of the Cross for someone in need; listening to inspiring hymns; contemplating religious art; reflecting on the inspiring life of a saintly person; ...
- b) by abstaining from meat or some other food;
- c) by abstaining from alcoholic drink, gaming or some other form of amusement;
- d) by donating what is saved by fasting to help the hungry at home and abroad;
- e) by making an extra effort to write to, phone or visit somebody who is sick or isolated;

***Regarding almsgiving** (from Mena Antonio, CEO of Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand): *"Caritas is the world's second largest humanitarian network,*

helping in times of international disaster and emergency across many countries. In this year's Bishops' Lenten Appeal we are encouraging supporters to donate online where possible, either through our website (<https://www.caritas.org.nz>), or via direct deposits, or by using the freepost single giving envelope which are attached to parish newsletters this Sunday or are available from church foyers.

On behalf of Caritas and the many people whose needs you enable us to support, thank you for your kindness and generosity."

CATHOLIC NEWS NZ (www.cathnews.com):

***Caritas Lent appeal launched amid growing crises:** Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand is calling on Kiwi Catholics to support its annual Lent Appeal, as the need for humanitarian aid increases worldwide.

***Prayers from other faiths for Pope Francis' recovery,** who is in his third week in hospital being treated for double pneumonia.

***St Joseph's primary school in Oamaru is to move to the St Kevin's College site,** with construction of the new primary school facilities to hopefully begin at the end of this year.

***Notre Dame welcomes record crowds after reopening.** There has been a large influx of visitors to Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris in the three months since its reopening.

VATICAN NEWS (www.vaticannews.va): (NB: For emailed copies, click on the headings to obtain Internet access to articles in full.)

***Letting go of hurt in our families.** In his prayer intention for March, Pope Francis invites us to pray that by receiving the grace of forgiveness, families might discover healing as well as the blessings that God has given to each member of the family.

***EU Bishops: Ukraine's struggle 'will be decisive for the fate of Europe and the world'.**

***Arab leaders discuss postwar Gaza.** Arab leaders are meeting in Cairo to discuss the adoption of Egypt's counterproposal to U.S. President Trump's call for the Gaza Strip to be depopulated and transformed into a beach destination.

***Pope calls parish in Gaza as his condition remains stable on Ash Wednesday.**

***Pope: Ashes 'bring us back to reality'.** In his homily prepared for Mass on Ash Wednesday, Pope Francis says that the imposition of ashes reminds us to "look within ourselves" and remember our fragility – "from dust we are created, and to dust we shall return."

***Pope to Brazilian Catholics: Allow nature to rest from our greedy exploitations,** encouraging the country's Catholic community to combine an inner conversion with handling the current ecological crisis.

***Pope donates 1 million euros to Rome Diocese for housing crisis.**

***Questioning rearmament in a world increasingly incapable of diplomacy.** The "ReArm Europe" plan proposes 800 billion euros of arms spending in the Old Continent. But would this really guarantee security?

***Nigeria: Archdiocese of Kafanchan priest kidnapped and found murdered on Ash Wednesday.**

***Patriarch Pizzaballa: Lenten forgiveness is stronger than violent words of hatred.**

***Day of the Righteous: Celebrating Polish nuns who saved Jews during Holocaust.** March 6 marked the European Day of the Righteous, remembering and celebrating those who risked their lives in the 20th century to oppose totalitarian regimes.

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PLANNED GIVING ENVELOPES: For those who still use envelopes to make donations in support of the church's work, Planned Giving envelopes for the coming year are now available at weekend Masses in Omakau and Alexandra from tables in the church foyers.

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 P'pal: Mrs Julie Flannery; 03 4488339
Catholic Social Services: 0800 277 669 (toll-free); 03 448 5385 (Mon-Thu).
Parish Website: www.alexcatholic.nz
Diocese Website: www.cdd.nz