



# Parish Newsletter Pānui i te Pārihi

Catholic Parish of New Plymouth  
Te Parihi Katorika Ki Ngamotu

21 December 2025 Fourth Sunday of Advent



"Lord, you have accomplished all we have done." The Holy Spirit can be felt in our parish family when we gather and in the planning. I have seen more growth this year than ever before. Thank you to all those missional disciples of Jesus who have been open to the Holy Spirit leading us toward the new evangelisation – "new in ardour, new in method, new in expression.". Pope St John Paul II

65 people did Alpha this year. We could sense the Holy Spirit among us. The Alpha team received as much as the participants. Our Annual Parish Get-Together (AGM) has never had so much participation, nor has the Christmas concert last Wednesday morning. It was good to celebrate this year Tom Lawn's 50th year anniversary of ordination, alongside the anniversaries of Fr Brian Vale and Mons Brian Walsh, all Taranaki boys.

The Hope and Renewal Summit filled the hearts of 27 of us with renewed vigour for what is possible in a parish. A big thank you to the people who have stepped down from forms of service in the parish allowing others to use their gifts as disciples. Some people have given generously, many hours. You are all so appreciated! No ministry is for a lifetime, there are many who have strengths to share with the faith community. Thank you to those who have accepted roles on the new Parish Pastoral Council, and the Councils for Youth, Young Families and Music ministries. The Community Dinners on Tuesday evenings have become an embedded outreach to the city community for those who need this.

Our mission is to transform lives empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Lord is accomplishing this. It is wonderful to see families joining the parish on Sundays and elsewhere. Merry Christmas everyone! God bless Fr Simon.

## Important Dates

**This colour edition has been made possible by a generous parishioner, donating funds specifically for a full colour paper edition of the Christmas newsletter.**

### Friday 19 December

Rite 1 Reconciliation  
St Joseph's Church  
5.00pm to 7.00pm  
(Several priest will be seated around the church for individual confession)

Weekday and Saturday morning Mass from Friday 26 December to Saturday 24 January will be at 8.30am St Joseph's church only. There will be no Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians

### OFFICE HOURS.

The Office will be closed from 400pm Wednesday 24 December until 9.00am Monday 19 January. Please continue to call the office phone number 06 757 3682 during this time for all queries and follow the voice prompts

Preference interviews will begin Thursday 22nd January. Appointments necessary.

The staff Christmas lunch with staff of four other Taranaki parishes.



## OUR PARISH VISION

A COMMUNITY CALLED BY GOD FOR MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP  
GATHERED AROUND JESUS CHRIST FED WITH THE EUCHARIST AND  
SENT TO TRANSFORM LIVES EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT



# GENERAL NOTICES

## JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP:

Our weekly Advent reflections will journey through the four weeks of Advent. End 21 st December.

This week our Caritas Advent Reflection service focuses on "LOVE". We will begin with this quote from Pope Leo.

**"A church that sets no limits to love, that knows no enemies to fight but only men and women to love, is the Church that the world needs today. Pope Leo XIV, Dilexi Te Deum n120"**

Come to Our Lady Help of Christians Church 24 Clinton Street Fitzroy 7.00pm to 7.30pm Monday 21st December. Join with the Catholic Parish of New Plymouth Peace and Justice group to see, hear, reflect on, and pray about this message and the scriptures for the week. Our St Anthony of Parduia choir are helping with the singing.

All Welcome. Supper will follow the service.



**FOOD FOR FAITH ADVENT:** For daily readings, podcasts, prayer requests and Advent encouragements go to Food For Faith. Sign up at [www.foodforfaith.org.nz](http://www.foodforfaith.org.nz) to prepare for Christmas by receiving daily email encouragements with Fr John O'Connor.

## Simbang Gabi 2025

A FILIPINO CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Catholic Parish of New Plymouth and Couples for Christ Taranaki warmly invite you to a 9-day Novena Mass in preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ.

Schedule:

Friday 19 Dec — 7:00 PM  
Saturday 20 Dec — 7:00 PM  
Sunday 21 Dec — 5:30 PM  
Monday 22 Dec — 7:00 PM  
Tuesday 23 Dec — 7:00 PM

Venue:

St Joseph's Church, New Plymouth

**CHRISTMAS CARDS:** Please pick up your Parish Christmas card from the foyer today. Take one as well please, for your relations, friends, neighbours, and anyone who you think may welcome a card. The Christmas and January Mass times are in the card.

**SUNDAY MISSALS FOR YEAR C:** Our supplier Pleroma, reports that delivery of these missals is delayed in USA. The missals should be in the office mid January.

## CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO DRESS UP FOR CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES:

Will you be at 9.00am Mass at St Joseph's or Our Lady Help of Christians on Christmas Day, or Mass at Bell Block with carols at 10.15am and then Mass? If so we invite children to dress as an angel, or a shepherd or a king. The Priests need to have shepherds and angels and kings to help them with the homily. Can you help? If you have any queries, please just call us in the Parish Office 06 757 3682 or email [office@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:office@catholicparishnp.nz)



If you would like to volunteer to be Mary or Joseph during the homily at any of these Christmas morning Masses, please contact the Parish Office.

**COMMUNION TO THE SICK:** Ministers, we have our traditional Christmas treat packs in the foyers to be taken to those you visit, today or Sunday 21 December. We thank the students of St John Bosco School and Sacred Heart Girls College for the heart warming cards they have created to be taken as well. We thank too, the very, very generous donors of the fruit mince pies, Yarrows, the Bakers.



**PAYWAVE MACHINE:** At last we have a replacement paywave machine in the church foyer. It is in the wooden stand near the inside doors at St Joseph's church. This machine can be used to make an easy and swift donation to the church. Simply swipe, or tap or slot in your credit or debit card or your eftpos card, select the amount you wish to donate (\$5, \$10, \$20 or select another amount), and press enter. So easy. If you have any queries please contact Cynthia in the Parish (email address page 12)



**TŪMANAKO**  
United in Hope • I te Tūmanako o te Kotahitanga

**TŪMANAKO** The newsletter for the diocese of Palmerston North: **Issue 10 is available.**

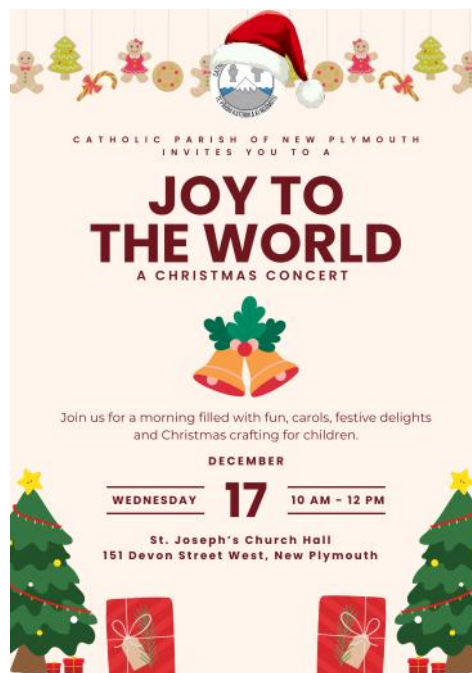
For those who wish to have a printed copy they are available in the Church foyers today, but to read online view the material in newsletter online at either

[tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz](http://tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz) or [cathnewsnz.com](http://cathnewsnz.com). Or you can join up to receive monthly an emailed copy of Tūmanako at [www.pndiocese.org.nz](http://www.pndiocese.org.nz).





## THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN COLOUR



Parish Concert photos courtesy of  
Hennis James. Thank you Hennis



**THE SEEDLINGS** brought Christmas joy to Rhapsody rest home this year, by carolling for the residents there again. We always love giving to others with our music at this time of year - spreading the message, joy and excitement of the season. Residents sung along with big smiles on their faces, and have already booked us again for 2026!



The Seedlings also did some Christmas Carolling in Centre City again, bringing Christmas music to all those shopping, and raising money for the Nurturing Families charity. It is always fun carolling amongst the hustle and bustle of Christmas shoppers, and it is always well-received! We thank Centre City for allowing and supporting us to carol there.



I want to give a big thanks to Milan (original member of The Seedlings!), Devi and Christa for their years of singing with The Seedlings! It has been great having you singing! They will all be in Year 9 next year, so we might see them in The Mustard Seeds!!

The Seedlings will be next singing at the Christmas Vigil Mass, along with some of our adult song leaders. They are then on summer holiday break from Christmas Day, starting rehearsals again from 15 February 2026. For any enquiries about joining The Seedlings, please contact Amelia, [musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz) The Seedlings wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



**LITTLE ANGELS:** Our pre-school group, Little Angels, has had a great year of music, playing, and conversation all alongside delicious morning tea! A huge thankyou to those who support this group and make it possible, and thankyou to those for the extra 'cleaning-up' help given in term 4! You are all amazing and your help is much appreciated!!

Little Angels is on a break now until 16 February 2026. For any enquiries about Little Angels, please email Amelia at [musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz).

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone from Little Angels!!



The St Vincent de Paul Helpers prior to serving the meal.

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL COMMUNITY DINNER:** The last dinner for the year was held Tuesday 9 December and this was celebrated in true Christmas style. There was a fantastic atmosphere among the diners (63 adults, 15 teenagers and children). Everyone was happy. The menu was sausage rolls, meatballs, chicken, ham, coleslaw, potato salad. Puddings just flowed from the table onto plates. There was a fabulous fruit salad, pavlovas, trifles, ice cream, Christmas cake, biscuits, mint balls and Russian fudge.

Each table had a Christmas themed cloth, there were flowers and platters of nibbles on each and every table. Diners were given a Christmas cracker and a lucky draw ticket and the gift bags, the contents of which parishioners had so generously donated over the weeks of Advent.

It was a happy end to a year of providing a meal every Tuesday at 5.30pm to anyone who comes to the door.





**THE MUSTARD SEEDS:** The Mustard Seeds have had a very good, full year of music making, supporting Parish Masses, School Masses, Confirmation camp and Mass, and holding Worship and adoration nights. Thank you to all the members for your talent and commitment to the band. You are so much appreciated and valued by the Parish and me. Looking forward to all your music in 2026! A very special thank you and farewell to Sienna Asi, Tessa Manoj and Cooper Grainger, who are all leaving for University next year. It has been amazing having you in the band and we will miss you! I know you will take all the musical experience you've gained, and the skills you've developed in the band to other parishes you attend in the future. You are true missional music disciples! The band wish you all the very best with your future studies! I want to thank Sienna for being a wonderful band leader during the year, and acknowledge the support Elliana and Marth-Rose gave her. Elliana and Martha-Rose will now become our new band leaders for 2026. I look forward to planning and working with you both! For any enquiries about The Mustard Seeds, please email [Amelia.musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:Amelia.musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz)



The Mustard Seeds will provide music for Midnight Mass before going on summer break. We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

A personal thanks to all who sing, play, give their support to and volunteer in the Music Ministry. There is a lot of work that goes on in the background, and I am very grateful for those who have supported the Ministry with this. It is a team effort! The Catholic Parish of New Plymouth is unique in that it has a rich tapestry of music groups from many parts of the world. I thank these groups for supporting Music Ministry with their beautiful sacred music.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Amelia Luke Music Coordinator

St Charava Community Catechism Children's Christmas Party 2025



St Charava Community, our Syro Malabar community celebrated the Children's Catechism Christmas on Sunday 14 December. The morning was filled with music, dance and the Nativity play, plus a visit from Father Christmas. Each Sunday during the school terms Catechism class is held in the hall mainly for children from Year 1 to Year 12, who are part of the Syro Malabar community. There are over 120 children in these classes so the Christmas party was full on fun.

**NEWS FROM BELL BLOCK CATHOLIC CENTRE COMMUNITY**  
138 Parklands Avenue Bell Block (September to December 2025)

**Children's involvement at Mass:** In September at the First Sunday of the month Mass at Bell Block Catholic Centre, we celebrated a Children Led Mass. Teenagers and youngsters looked after the readings, the Prayers of the Faithful, the Offertory procession, altar serving and some of the music.. This gave children not at Catholic schools an experience of being involved in ministries at Mass. Using the simpler Children's Lectionary translations, made the reading and gospel easier to understand.

In September, a **special morning tea** was held at Bell Block Catholic Centre to celebrate Fr Bruce England's birthday. This was an opportunity for Fr Bruce to get to know some people in his new community. Fr Bruce, who grew up in Eltham, has recently retired to Taranaki after being part of the Archdiocese of Wellington for many years.

At October when we celebrated Liturgy of the Word with Communion on the third Sunday of the month, the two Bell Block members who attended the **Hope and Renewal Summit** in Palmerston North, shared their enriching Summit experiences and encouraged the Bell Block community to become a more mission-focused community, reaching out to others.

In November, a **community fish & chips tea and social evening** was very well supported. This was a relaxing evening and a good opportunity to get to know some of the many new people who have moved to Bell Block.

After the **Anointing Mass** at the Bell Block Catholic Centre in November, Fr Sobin anointed residents in the 4 Bell Block rest-homes and unwell people in their homes. Throughout the year, Bell Block Eucharistic Ministers take Communion regularly to rest-home residents and to unwell people unable to come to Mass.

**Bell Block Prayer Support Group** members pray for prayer intentions emailed to them from the coordinator each Friday. These include prayers for those in need and prayers for the needs of our world. If you have a request for prayer, please just email the coordinator Barbara at [ivanbarb2014@gmail.com](mailto:ivanbarb2014@gmail.com)

**Holy Hour** (Exposition) is held at Bell Block Catholic Centre from 4-5pm, on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month. This is a time of quiet prayer in the presence of Jesus in the monstrance on the altar.

**Children's Liturgy:** With a growing number of young children now coming to Mass, preparations are being made to begin Children's Liturgy at the Bell Block Mass Centre in the New Year. Children will leave Mass at the Liturgy of the Word to take part in a Children's Liturgy, returning to Mass after the Creed.

**Kriskindle:** At the beginning of Advent, Bell Block community members were invited to pray each day during Advent, for the person in the community whose name was on a paper they were given. People are encouraged to tell their Kriskindle (Christ-child) that they are praying for them.

In December, a **Praise and Worship Evening** was held at Bell Block Catholic Centre. This was well attended and was appreciated by those who came. These evenings will continue next year.

**Visiting:** During Advent, some Bell Block people are visiting those who are not so mobile in the community and those who would appreciate a visit. During Advent we delivered 30 of the fruit mince pie gifts, wrapped for those who take Communion to the Sick and housebound. These were gratefully received.

**An Advent Giving basket** and container for donations is on the Bell Block Centre porch table for anyone who would like to donate goodies to be given to those who would appreciate some special Christmas treats.





At the recent **Bell Block Christmas Story and Carols Evening**, children and adults acted the Christmas story which was interspersed with Christmas hymns and carols. Adults were just as excited about dressing up as the children! 15 yr olds, Grace Meafua and Paul Escarlan, were Mary and Joseph. John (an ex hotelier), and Paul (an ex-policeman), innkeepers in the play, and Fr Bruce, a Wise Man, were at home in their roles in the Christmas Story. The carols sung in Samoan, Hindi, Maori and Filipino, as well as English, created a special atmosphere as people sang in their home language. The carols ended with dance and song items from Samoan and Filipino families A delicious shared tea and socialising concluded the enjoyable evening. **Christmas Mass:** On Christmas day, at 10.15am, Christmas carols in different languages will precede Christmas Mass at Bell Block Catholic Centre, at 10.30am. Everyone will be warmly welcome.



3 Young Shepherds resting from their shepherding duties



Mary and Joseph (Really Grace and Paul)



The Christmas Story: The cast

**WHATS HAPPENING WITH THE ROOF:** Work on the new roof at St Josephs church began last month. It seems that the small piece near the tower is finished and the roofers are making their way around the church, starting on the Devon Street side & working anti clockwise to the front of the church. We expect the roofers to be here until March, all being weather dependent . This means that the scaffolding is still up and the parking is still reduced. Please leave the disabled parks for those with disability stickers. It might mean a little walk, but there is always plenty of parking in Powderham Street.



Today from the church frontage



Last week above Devon Street

### ST PATRICK'S OKATO 36 Cumming Street Okato

The St Patrick's Church float was awarded a deserved first prize in the recent Okato Christmas Parade. Thanks to Kate Briscoe (Joseph) and her children Sarah, Blake and Grace (Angels & Shepherd); Alexandra MacBeth (Mary) and her son Theodore (Baby Jesus) and Charlotte, Jack and Carter Miles (Angels, Wiseman and Shepherd) – all who contributed to the nativity scene. Marie and Peter Appert and family for creating the stable and other enhancements positioned on the back of their farm ute. The float is pictured left.

The prize, a Christmas cake and a voucher for the local fish and chip shop. We plan to use some of this voucher after the Children's Led Vigil Mass this Saturday 20 December at St Patrick's Okato 6.00pm. Everyone is welcome at this Mass. The Christmas cake will be cut after our Christmas Eve Vigil Mass. which begins with carols at 6.45pm followed by Mass at 7.00pm.







# THE DAWN FROM ON HIGH SHALL BREAK UPON US


LUKE 1:78

Christmas is not a time for negative thoughts; however, what difficulties there have been around the world during this past year. We have, of course, witnessed wars in Ukraine, Gaza and in other places. We have seen political collapse in many parts of the world. In general, the political landscape in many places seems to be trending towards a growing sense of sectarianism among us.

We recognise the tremendous potential technology and science bring to humanity, what marvellous possibilities there are, and yet we are also learning what destructive power can be unleashed by these things. The economy in many parts of the world has been depressed and tilts backwards. Many people in this country have found their personal circumstances to be difficult.

Yet, in the midst of all this, we approach this season of Christmas with great anticipation and joy. Why is that? What is this expectation that permeates so many facets of life at this time?

The riddle of Christmas is not something requiring forensic analysis. No, the truth is that our deepest longings as human people are found in the reality of a little baby, born one cold night in the squalor of a Middle Eastern stable. Yes, 'the dawn from on high' breaks upon us, not in the might of human endeavour, but in the very gift of life itself.



On behalf of the staff who work at the Catholic Diocese of Palmerston North I wish you, and those you love, a blessed and peace filled Christmas. May Jesus, who is Mighty God and 'Prince of Peace', enter more fully into your lives as you join the wise men and the angels in offering homage to Him.

+ John Adams  
15 December 2025

**LITURGICAL POSTURE:** The Catholic Diocese of Palmerston North is embarking on a discussion about liturgical posture, with a focus on the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass. The Council of Priests of the diocese has asked Bishop John to decide how we, as a diocese, might adopt a common posture, and our participation in these discussions is an important part of that discernment. Bishop John's presentation on this topic can be watched on You Tube using this link (press control also if necessary) <https://cathnewsnz.com/2025/12/09/palmerston-north-diocese-to-discuss-liturgical-posture/> The transcript of the You Tube video is on the next page of this newsletter.

Following these discussions, Bishop John is asking for feedback from individuals or parish groups to assist him in reaching a well-informed and pastorally sensitive final decision for the diocese. Feedback can be sent to [bishop-pa@pndiocese.org.nz](mailto:bishop-pa@pndiocese.org.nz), or in writing to Bishop's Office, P O Box 5279, Terrace End, Palmerston North 4441, by Wednesday, 18 February 2026.



## Bishop John Adam's Transcript on Posture - Dec 2025.

Hello everyone, and thank you for your time today and your willingness to engage with this rather complex issue before us as a diocese: liturgical posture. I'm addressing this not out of personal urgency, but because many have expressed concern that we lack a sense of unity during Mass. This particularly relates to kneeling—what the Church asks of us? What has been our diocesan practice? And what a more universal approach might look like.

Here's the situation: in our diocese, some people kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer, while others stand. And of course, if space is limited or you're unable to kneel, sitting is an option—though the least desirable one. So, why this variation? Historically, our diocese has favoured standing for the Eucharistic Prayer, and that is indeed correct: the proper posture for the Eucharistic Prayer is standing. However, the Church is equally clear—this is stated in paragraph 43 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*—that during the consecration, we ought to kneel. That's crystal clear. I encourage you to read and investigate this for yourselves.

So, what should we do? One thing is certain: we should strive for a common posture that expresses unity. Our bodies matter in worship. We don't just come, sit, and leave; our faith is lived physically. Praying with our bodies has always been part of the Catholic way, and posture is important.

Historically, if we look back to the Council of Nicaea, it suggests standing for the entire Eucharistic Prayer. But the Catholic way has never been to simply adopt past practices as the norm for today. The Church develops doctrine. While kneeling once symbolized subservience, it now signifies worship and adoration—essential attitudes when we come to Mass.

What am I asking of you? Please read about this issue, and if you're in parish groups, even better—discuss it together. That synodal process will be helpful. Share your thoughts with me. Ultimately, I will make a determination, but only after hearing from you. Should we maintain our tradition of standing for the entire Eucharistic Prayer? Or should we adopt the practice common in other dioceses in New Zealand, Australia, and much of the Western world: kneeling for the consecration?

There's another question: if we kneel, when do we stand? Personally, I believe we should stand for the Great Amen, which makes the timing of standing after kneeling significant.

Two further points to consider:

First, the word *indult*—a permission granted for certain liturgical actions not in the original instruction. One such indult allows kneeling from the "Holy, Holy" through to the Great Amen, rather than just during the consecration. We could choose to follow this or kneel for a shorter time.

Second, kneeling is deeply biblical. Jesus knelt to pray to the Father, and many fell to their knees before Him. So don't assume standing is the only biblical posture when encountering the risen Christ—which is precisely what happens at Mass. At the consecration, Christ is present on the altar—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. What should be our bodily response to that reality?

I invite you to reflect, read, pray, and discuss this issue individually or in groups. Please share your thoughts with me through the bishop's office here in Palmerston North, by emailing [bishop-pa@pndiocese.org.nz](mailto:bishop-pa@pndiocese.org.nz) or in writing to Bishop's Office, P O Box 5279, Terrace End, Palmerston North 4441, by Wednesday, 18 February 2026.

Hard copies of the transcript are available in the church foyer.

See also [CathNews 9th December 2025](#)



# ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2025

## RITE 1 RECONCILIATION

<b>ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH</b> Saturday 20 December 11.30am to 12.00 noon  Tuesday 23 December- 11.00am to 11.45am before 12.05pm Mass  <b>ST PATRICK'S CHURCH OKATO</b> Saturday 20 December- 5.15pm to 5.45pm prior to the Vigil Mass at 6.00pm	<b>ST JOSEPHS CHURCH EVENING</b> <b>Friday 19 December 5.00pm to 7.00pm</b>  RITE 1 RECONCILIATION: Several priests will be available sitting throughout the church for Rite 1 Reconciliation .  <b>BELL BLOCK CATHOLIC CENTRE</b> Saturday 20 December 9.00am to 10.00am	<b>OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS</b>  Each Saturday 4.45pm to 5.15pm before Vigil Mass at 5.30pm  Tuesday 23 December after Mass 9.40am to 10.30am  Wednesday 24 December after Mass 9.40am to 10.00am
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## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE

ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH 106 Powderham St New Plymouth	OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS Clinton Street Fitzroy New Plymouth	ST PATRICK'S OKATO 36 Cumming Street Okato	BELL BLOCK MASS CENTRE 138 Parklands Ave Bell Block
<b>Wednesday 24 December - VIGIL MASS</b>  Carols - 7.30pm Mass - 8.00pm  <b>MIDNIGHT MASS</b> Carols 11.30pm	<b>Wednesday 24 December VIGIL MASS</b>  Carols - 6.30pm Mass - 7.00pm	<b>Wednesday 24 December VIGIL MASS</b>  Carols - 6.45pm Mass- 7.00pm	
<b>Thursday 25 December Mass</b> 9.00am	<b>Thursday 25 December Mass</b> 9.00am		<b>Thursday 25 December - Mass</b> Carols - 10.15am Mass - 10.30am



COUPLES FOR CHRIST



## CHRISTMAS DAY SPECIAL COLLECTION:

We are deeply grateful to all parishioners who have supported the Christmas Dues/Offerings Special Collection in the past. Your kindness helps sustain the Clergy Trust Fund, which cares for and supports the priests who serve our Diocese throughout the year. How You Can Share the Joy:

- Use the planned giving envelope marked for Christmas Day.
  - Pick up a specially marked Christmas envelope in the church foyer.
  - Or make a direct credit to the parish bank account 02 0630 0288002 03 The Catholic Parish of New Plymouth (include your name as payee and "Dues" as reference).
- Today we have Christmas Special Collection envelopes attached to the newsletter.

Your generosity ensures our clergy can continue their ministry in our community. May the light of Christ fill your home with peace, joy, and love this Christmas! Monsignor Brian Walsh (Chairman, Clergy Trust Fund)



# YOUTH GROUP

WE MEET ON SUNDAYS  
DURING THE SCHOOL TERM AT  
ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH HALL.

**SHINE**

**JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP**  
FOR YEARS 4 TO 8  
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

**ILLUMINQ**

**YOUTH GROUP**  
FOR YEARS 9 -13  
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

“

Youth Group is currently on **SUMMER BREAK**, but we're excited to announce our return!

Join us on **Sunday, 7 February 2026**, at our usual time and hangout spot!

”

ENJOY A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR AT THE FARM!

## A Day at the Farm

TUESDAY, 6 JANUARY 2026  
11AM - 4PM

THE JOYCE'S FARM | 563 PLYMOUTH RD, OAKURA

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" **Luke 2:11**

## Merry Christmas

The very first words, then, that I would like to say to every young Christian are these: **Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!**  
CHRISTUS VIVIT (CHRIST IS ALIVE) - PARAGRAPH 1- POPE FRANCIS



**We pray for our deceased family and friends:** Corry van Hattum, Sharon Jackson, Theodorus Hoogeboon, Shirley and Pat Scott, Terry Dudley, Alison Cox, Fred Cox, Moya Thompson, John Hermanns, Mary Ballentyne, Sister Vincent, Judy Scott, Trisha Smith, Deceased family and friends of the Flynn and Martin families, Peter Martin, the Deceased members of the Nallon, Clark and Stevens Families, Dave Newland, Vera, Darcy and Mike Old, Grey Dow, Malcolm Cotter and Anne Thompson.



FAMILY DAY 6 DECEMBER 2025

## COUPLES FOR CHRIST FAMILY DAY 2025

was held Saturday afternoon 6 December. The theme was Safari and the day organised by Brenda and John. The theme Safari explained why so many people were wearing jungle and leopard and giraffe and camouflage patterned attire. The afternoon started significantly with Praise and Worship. Following on through the afternoon we had presentations (dancing and singing) from the household groups and individuals, hilarious competitions, and raffles. Lots of bags of rice were won. The slide show of Couples For Christ activities during the past year, showed that the pace didn't stop over the months. And at the end of the evening along came Fr Christmas. Fr Christmas has visited the hall at least four times in the last fortnight.





DEC

# WEEKLY MASS SCHEDULE FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

22  
MON

8.00am St Joseph's Church

23  
TUES

8.00am St Joseph's Church  
9.10am Our Lady Help of Christians Church  
12.05pm St Joseph's Church

24  
WED

## Morning Masses

8.00am St Joseph's Church  
9.10am Our Lady Help of Christians  
*See inside for complete list of Christmas Eve Vigil Mass times at Okato, Our Lady Help of Christians & St Joseph's*

25  
THU

9.00am St Joseph's New Plymouth  
9.00am Our Lady Help of Christians  
10.30am Bell Block Mass Centre Carols start 10.15am

26  
FRI

8.30am St Joseph's Church

27  
SAT

8.30am St Joseph's Church  
5.30pm Our Lady Help of Christians Church Vigil Mass  
6.00pm St Patrick's Church Okato (Vigil Mass)

28  
SUN

9.00am St Joseph's Church  
10.30am Our Lady Help of Christians Church  
5.30pm St Joseph's Church

**OFFICE HOURS:** The Office will be closed from 400pm Wednesday 24 December until 9.00am Monday 19 January. Please continue to call the office phone number during this time for all queries and follow the voice prompts

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 11.30am to 12 noon at St Joseph's Church OR 4.45pm to 5.15pm at OLHC prior to the 5.30pm Vigil Mass. Reconciliation is also available by appointment with the priests, phone the Parish Office (06) 757 3682.

**MORNING PRAYER OF THE CHURCH:** From 26 December before morning Mass, on Monday, Tuesday, Friday Saturday 8.10am in the Parish Office, via the back door of the office building.

## KINGDOM KIDZ CHILDREN'S LITURGY:

### Our Lady Help of Christians Church:

Each Sunday at 10.30am Mass Children's Liturgy in the St John Bosco School Breakout Space. No Children's liturgy 28 December.

**St Joseph's Church** Children's Liturgy will resume in the new school term 2026.

## LITTLE ANGELS MUSIC AND PLAY GROUP FOR PRESCHOOLERS

at Our Lady Help of Christians will resume in the 2026 school term. For more details for 2026 please contact Amelia at [musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:musiccoordinator@catholicparishnp.nz)

**QUIET YOUR HEART** ~ Music with Kadisha will resume in 2026.

## SUNDAY READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

Feast of the Holy Family 28 December

**1ST READING:** Sirach 3.2-6, 12-14

**PSALM:** 128

**2ND READING:** Colossians 3.12-21

**GOSPEL:** Matthew 2.13-15, 19-23

## CONTACT US

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Email – [office@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:office@catholicparishnp.nz)  
Office closed 25 December to 19 January  
**Emergency Phone – 027 224 2100**

## PRIESTS:

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Tom Lawn [tom@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:tom@catholicparishnp.nz)  
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FOLLOW US

For updates on parish, diocese,  
and national events.



**Catholic Parish of New Plymouth**



**ADORATION IN ALL  
OUR MASS CENTRES  
WILL RESUME IN  
FEBRUARY.**

Watch the newsletters for  
exact dates.

## HOLY HOUR

God dwells in our midst  
in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar  
St. Maximilian Kolbe

**EUCCHARISTIC  
ADORATION**

**STRATEGIC LEADER** Giniya  
[sl@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:sl@catholicparishnp.nz)

**FINANCE OFFICER** Cynthia  
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**MUSIC COORDINATOR** Amelia  
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**PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM**  
[ParishLeadershipTeam@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:ParishLeadershipTeam@catholicparishnp.nz)

**JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP**  
[justiceandpeace@catholicparishnp.nz](mailto:justiceandpeace@catholicparishnp.nz)

## ST JOSEPH'S

106 Powderham St  
New Plymouth



## OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

24 Clinton St, Fitzroy

**BELL BLOCK  
CATHOLIC CENTRE**  
138 Parklands Ave  
Bell Block

## ST PATRICK'S OKATO

36 Cumming St  
Okato



## WEEKLY DIOCESAN UPDATES

for the Fourth Sunday of Advent 15-21 December 2025

### **Dwell Advent Series | Third Week of Advent**

The Dwell Advent Journey continues. Week 3, Gaudete Sunday, invites us to notice the quiet joy that rises from recognising God's goodness in our lives, following Mary, whose Magnificat overflowed with gratitude.

How might you open your heart to the quiet joy God wants to give you?

May this season draw each of us closer to Christ. Download the pdf at <https://tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Dwell-Third-Week-of-Advent.pdf>

### **Rite of Election and Enrolment of Names | Save the Date**

Bishop John invites all members of the Diocese of Palmerston North to this important event.

Sunday, 22 Feb 2026, 12:30pm at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

Please RSVP to Donna Brown, Sacraments & Evangelisation Coordinator, by Friday 13 Feb 2026.

### **Catholic Enquiry Centre – Three Part-Time Roles**

The Catholic Enquiry Centre (an agency of the NZ Catholic Bishops Conference) is expanding its digital outreach in 2026 and is seeking passionate, faith-filled people to join the team:

- Digital Ministry Specialist (Content & Platform) – oversee CEC's website and social media, creating content that helps people explore faith.
- Digital Ministry Specialist (Media Production) – create short videos, testimonies, and reels introducing Catholic faith and traditions.
- Resource & Enquiry Support Officer – respond to enquirers and coordinate the dispatch of printed resources across Aotearoa.

All roles are part-time (0.4 FTE) and may be remote or Wellington-based. Expressions of interest to [carly@catholicenquiry.nz](mailto:carly@catholicenquiry.nz) by Friday 9 January 2026. Roles may be filled sooner for the right candidates.



## **Christmas Dues Special Collection**

We are deeply grateful to all parishioners who have supported the Christmas Dues/ Offerings Special Collection in the past. Your kindness helps sustain the Clergy Trust Fund, which cares for and supports the priests who serve our Diocese throughout the year.

How You Can Share the Joy:

- Use the planned giving envelope marked for Christmas Day.
- Pick up a specially marked Christmas envelope in the church foyer.
- Or make a direct credit to the parish bank account 02 0630 0288002 03 The Catholic Parish of New Plymouth (include your name as payee and “Dues” as reference).

Your generosity ensures our clergy can continue their ministry in our community. May the light of Christ fill your home with peace, joy, and love this Christmas!

Monsignor Brian Walsh (Chairman, Clergy Trust Fund)

## **Scripture Focus this Advent | Living the Word**

You are invited to prepare for Sunday Mass by reading and reflecting on the Scripture we will hear that weekend. Marist priest Fr Frank Bird has for several years been helping people make those preparations through his Living the Word project. As the name suggests, Living the Word is an invitation for Catholics and others to allow the Word of God to shape their lives. You can download the resources, and access other rich content, at

[www.livingtheword.org.nz/pray](http://www.livingtheword.org.nz/pray)

## **Food For Faith for Advent 2025**

Daily reflections for those seeking greater maturity of Christian Faith in preparation for Christmas. Sign up to receive daily emails during Advent at [www.foodforfaith.org.nz](http://www.foodforfaith.org.nz)

## **Catholic Kiwi Podcast**

Six episodes of the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference’s new podcast series have now been released, sharing stories of faith, ministry and mission of Kiwis and visitors to our shores. Guests in the opening episodes include Carmelite Sister Lauren of the Cross, broadcaster and policy expert Tim Wilson and Wellington Archbishop Paul Martin SM. More episodes will be released before Christmas to complete season 1, with season 2 set for 2026. Search “Catholic Kiwi Podcast” on YouTube or Spotify now.



## **Catholic Diocese of Christchurch: Chief Finance Officer**

The Christchurch Diocese is looking to recruit a Chief Finance Officer (CFO) to lead a passionate and committed team and be a key strategic partner in shaping the future of the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch. For a full Candidate Brief please email [applications@cdoc.nz](mailto:applications@cdoc.nz) To apply, click on the following link <https://www.seek.co.nz/CFO-jobs/in-Christchurch-Central-Canterbury?jobId=89003868&type=promoted> or attach your cover letter and CV to [applications@cdoc.nz](mailto:applications@cdoc.nz) with 'Chief Financial Officer Job Application' in the subject line.

Applications close 11.59pm Thursday 15 January 2026. For more information please phone Annette Pugh on 03 378 3647.

## **ACAY Missions Philippines | Guest Speakers Event**

An event hosted by ACAY Missions Philippines will feature guest speakers Sr. Rachel Luxford, Program Manager of the School of Life, and Angelane, a participant in the program. The presentation will provide insights into the mission's work supporting young women in the Philippines and the impact of its rehabilitation and empowerment initiatives.

Sunday, 11 January 2026, 12:30 PM in the Diocesan Manawatū Conference Rooms, 33 Amesbury Street, Palmerston North.

A stall will also be available showcasing handicrafts made by girls in the program, with opportunities to support through purchases or sponsorship.

## **Catholic Mass Times App**

As we approach the Christmas season, many individuals who do not regularly attend Mass, or those visiting family around the country, will be searching online for Christmas Mass times and locations.

One of the most common platforms people use is the Catholic Mass Times app. Travellers, seekers, and returning Catholics find this a quick and convenient way to find the nearest parish.

The app is free to download and update via Apple and Android app stores, or at <https://catholicmasstimes.com/>

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