



## Priest Ministers

Fr Joe Grayland (Pastor)

Fr Kevin Neal

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## OLOL MASSES

5:30pm Vigil (Saturday)

9.30am Sunday

Mon & Thurs Liturgy of Word & Communion

Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat 10:00am

**SACRED HEART RONGOTEA**

9:00am: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month

## ST MARY'S FOXTON MASSES

10:30am Sun

10:30am Thurs

## ST JOSEPH'S SHANNON MASSES

9:00am 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

## RECONCILIATION—OLOL

Sat 10:30am—11:00am

and on request

## EUCCHARIST ADORATION—OLOL

Fri: 10:30am—Noon

## 4th Sunday of Advent — 23rd December 2018; Year B / Weekdays Year 2

## From the Pastor's desk

At this time of year Advent and Christmas fold into each other as the preparation becomes expectation and then fulfilment. The presents are thought about, purchased, wrapped and, finally, given and received. Advent has done its work.

Now Christmas will work upon us with messages of peace and good will to all, ringing in our ears, as we welcome the Christ-child, the icon of peace, charity, faith and hope. The shepherds are called to the stable, the first witnesses of God's humanity. They are poor agricultural workers, representing the people of Israel. Then the kings will arrive and offer him worship. They recognise the child's kingship. These men of the East represent the Gentile peoples. Then finally God will be revealed to the Christian Church in the baptism of Jesus. In this feast we see his humanity and his divinity with a new clarity and we are invited into the life of God through priesthood, prophecy and kingship given in baptism.

This threefold revealing of God to the Jewish nation, to the Gentile nations and to the Church is celebrated at Christmas, Epiphany and Baptism of the Lord. As in so many things, the Three are in fact, ONE festival of revelation.

This time is interspersed with the feasts of the Holy Family, the Mary's Motherhood of God, the Holy Innocents, St Stephen the first martyr, St John the Evangelist and Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen.

Mary's Motherhood of God celebrates a key development in doctrine, namely that Mary is the Theotokos, the God-bearer. We can only say Mary of Nazareth is God-bearer because, first, we have said that Jesus is God. Here is God become human, born of a woman in history. In this moment, the divine and human worlds become one, in a way that other religions do not imagine.

Christianity's truth removes the false dualism between human and divine and the false dualism between faith and living. With this gone, faith and living become ONE experience of living in the divine-human reality we call eternity. Within this divine-human eternity we are saved.

The divine-human eternity of God celebrates the ordinariness of life. God sanctifies the ordinary, the human, the usual, making it all holy by becoming part of it. God does not stand aside from human life

with its needs and sufferings, its threats and fears, its joys and hope.

Sadly, many "holy" Christians find the ordinariness of salvation too lacking and they embrace the false dualism, making it the basis of their faith life. For them, the Incarnation of God is too "ordinary" and they need to maintain the juxtaposition of divine and human as two realities that can never be in relationship. For many such people this world, and their fellow humans, are not good enough for them, and so they create a perfect religious world that only they can inhabit. In this private world division is nurtured and religion becomes oppositional. Such thinking is the source of the deep antagonisms that drive religious division and bigotry and enables division to grow within the Body of Christ. This is exactly the type of believing, and thinking, God, in Jesus Christ, has come to free us from, through the mystery of the Incarnation.

The feasts of the Christmas Octave and into early January attest to the meaning and the purpose of the Incarnation. They celebrate the coming of God amongst us in poverty, in powerlessness, in vulnerability, in a dirty, smelly, little stable. In this singular act of divine intervention we have the *Mysterion* of Christianity made known: God is one-with-us; one-amongst-us. This event of God has changed human history! Nothing has been the same since this event! People, now are challenged to speak as Christ spoke, to live as Christ lived, to encounter others as Christ encountered the stranger.

## Joe Grayland

**We Pray for the Sick:** Ryan Marsden, Mark Richards, Bridget Dorn, Fr Tom O'Connor sm, Sheila Evans, Fred Winter, Vinnie Carroll, Fr Joe O'Sullivan, Trevor Wilson, Tony Keenan, Barbara & Graeme Younger, Michael Eades, Louis Heynen, Michael Quirk, Colin Quirk, Gary Meyer, Joan Lambourne, Evie Feierabend, Mary Jefferies, Marie Hubbard, Mikulas Oros, Ann Fairclough, Toshi Sekizaki, Braxton Prentice, Katherine Denby, Anne & Bill Bethune, Oliver Gillespie.

## Died Recently

**William Harrison, James Munn**

**Mass has been offered for**

**Busta Jefferies, Fr Sean McNamara, Sr Bridget McNamara, Howard & Mary Conlin, Tom O'Connor & relatives.**

*Requiescant in Pace*

**All the sick including Maureen McGilleen**

At the end of the year it's time to acknowledge all the people who have participated in the life of our pastoral communities. To everyone who has worshipped, prayed, contributed their time, donated their money, cared for others, donated food, spoken to strangers, walked with the sick and the dying, brought children, infants and adults to baptism and instructed those for sacraments I offer my thanks.

To those who have ministered in our schools, Our Lady of Lourdes, St Mary's and St Peter's College, through word, sacrament and education we say thanks. Without your generosity these would be barren places, but you have each contributed to make them places of life, where the young and teenagers, their parents and friends, have a place to call home.

To those who have ministered as Lay Presiders of Worship, Lay Homilists, Readers, Musicians, Ministers of Communion and to the Sick, Sacristans, Greeters, Flower ladies, Servers, Cleaners, Parish Secretaries, Sound and Projectionists, to those who have served on the Parish Councils, Finance Committees, Liturgy Committees, looked after notice boards and to all who have helped in any, and every way, thank you!

It has been a busy year and we have welcomed new parishioners and farewell others to different places, we have baptised many and buried others. In all of this God has been with us and continues to be with us, a community of sisters and brothers, bound to each other in baptism and in a common Gospel.

Each one and to your families I extend the blessings of Christmas and wish you all safe, relaxing holidays, and in the new year of 2019 the desire to follow God's will.

*Joe Grayland.*

## Christmas Mass Times

**Monday, 24 Dec 6.00pm Vigil Mass OLOL**



Family/Children Mass

(no Carols before this Mass)

8:00 pm Vigil Mass Shannon

Midnight Mass—OLOL

(Carols 11:30pm)

**Tuesday, 25 Dec CHRISTMAS DAY**

9:00am Mass—Rongotea

9:30am Mass—OLOL

10:00am Mass—Foxton (NB—time)

I wish to express my thanks to Lorraine Wilson, Kate Bell, Kathleen Field and Kerry Hocquard, who have broken open the Word of God for us throughout the year. It is important that we hear our own voices in worship and that we become used to listening to the wisdom of each other.

It's no easy task to stand before the community of faith and break open God's Word, so I acknowledge the courage and the generosity of Lorraine, Kate, Kathleen and Kerry. I ask you to join me in wishing them the blessings of Christmas. *Joe Grayland*

**Local SVDP** members express their gratitude to the Parish and Parishioners for their such generous Christmas donations. Throughout December donations were way above expectation, enough over the past 10 days to enable over 50 families to benefit with delivery of Christmas food parcels and children's presents.

Thank you so much, Merry Christmas to all families, safe travels during the holidays and God Bless. **From SVDP PN Members.**



Kia ora tātou

Recently I celebrated Mass in English at the Cathedral in Vientiane, the capital of Laos.

The congregation was particularly international. It is interesting how our circles of familiarity broaden when we travel – spotting a couple of Papua New Guinean families, I felt 'at home'!

In that context, I was also struck afresh by the words we pray in the third Eucharistic Prayer: Listen graciously to ... this Family you have gathered here before you... whakarongo pai mai rā ki ngā īnoi a tēnei whānau kua karangatia atu ki tōu araro.

Perhaps we become so familiar with those words, the awe they evoke begins to fade. In Christ, we are one family, one whānau, brothers and sisters in faith. So, anything that divides that unity – prejudice, exaggerated nationalism or tribalism, every form of exploitation or manipulation etc etc – wounds our Christian identity.

The Christ child born in Bethlehem is the universal saviour of the world. God enters human history to make of us one human family. This wondrous truth of Christmas is the foundation of our hope. Jesus reveals the purpose of our being made in the image and likeness of God. Peace and goodwill are possible. They are not so much achievements or goals, but fruits or effects of who we are in Jesus.

God bless you and your whānau this Christmas, including the sick or troubled wherever they may be. May we strengthen our resolve to be peace-makers in our families and communities and world.

And thank you for what you do to make our Diocese a vibrant family of faith, an iwi whakapono.

+ Charles



**CHRISTMAS BAKING** donations of Christmas cakes and shortbread are needed for the hospitality which follows our Christmas Liturgies. Donations may be brought along to either weekday or Sunday Mass and left in the box provided in the foyer. All donations will be greatly appreciated and enjoyed by the masses after the Masses!

**PRACTICE**, for children involved in the 6:00pm Vigil Mass on Christmas Eve, will be today, at 10.40am in the Church.

**ADVENT PRAYERS, OLOL, Sundays of Advent 3:00pm-3.30pm**  
Prayer intention Week 4—for personal conversion and peace.

**Please note: No Liturgy of the Word at OLOL**  
**on Monday 24th December at 10:00am.**

**Christmas Ministry and Hospitality etc., sign-up sheets for all Masses are available in the gathering area. We need lots of volunteers so please take the time to see where you can help out during this Christmas Season. Thanks.**

**Readings Dec 30th: 1 Sam 1:20-22, 24-28, 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24, Luke 2:41-52.**

**ROSTERS: Dec 24<sup>th</sup>—30th (excluding Christmas Masses)**

**Church Cleaning:** O'Connor family.

**Greeters: Vigil 5:30pm** Denise Bailey and Kathy Morton  
9:30am Dianne Jordan.

**Readers: 5:30pm** Rosalie McCann, Judith Wall, Kerry Hocquard  
9:30am Janey Bishop, Maree O'Donoghue, Diane Baucke.

**Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:**

5:30pm Volunteers 9:30am Volunteers

**Altar Servers: 9:30am** Volunteers please.

**Hospitality: 9:30am** Theo van Duin.

**Linen:** (Dec) Maria Lukkassen. **Lawns:** (Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>) Denise Mallon

**SVDP Basket:** (Dec) Barrie Angland. (Jan) Oline and Roger Ball.