OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH NEWSLETTER

Second Sunday of Advent **07 December 2025**

John the Baptist

John the Baptist is at the centre of today's liturgy. He was the last and greatest of the long line of prophets who prepared the people for the coming of the Messiah. Like Elijah, John was an outsider, living in the desert. And, imbued with the spirit and power of Elijah, he brought many Israelites back to God.

There are five lessons we can learn from John the Baptist.

His ***lifelong dedication and trust in God*** to begin with. Bridging the gap between the Old and New Testaments, his story begins 700 years before he was born as the prophet Isaiah foretells the "voice of one calling" to prepare the way for the Lord. He lived a life of self-discipline and self-sacrifice. This made him a credible witness for Jesus. We can learn from his humility. He did not seek to be the star of the show. He was content to be in a supporting role recognizing that Jesus was more important than he was. He was committed heart and soul in preparing the way for Jesus.

From wandering in the desert to wearing clothes of camel hair and living off locusts and honey, John the Baptist was ***not afraid to be different***. In a world that is rapidly changing, our faith can sometimes feel at odds with people around us. It is important to remember that our lives as Christians can often call us to go against the grain, but we can take courage from the example of John the Baptist to live life as we are called, not how society expects.

Following the call. Each of us has a role to play in building up the kingdom of God. Whether we are called to Holy Orders or as a parent, a healer, a teacher, John the Baptist also had a role. He understood that his role consisted of preparing Israel for the coming of the Messiah. The idea of preparing a way for others can teach us a valuable lesson. It is not to be centre stage but to use our gifts and strengths to allow the skills and talents of others to shine through all the brighter.

Rejoice. The amazing description of John the Baptist leaping for joy in his mother's womb when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting (Luke 1:41) is an image every Christian should carry in their heart. His joyous leaping calls us to remember through Christ's death and resurrection, we have cause for the greatest joy. We too should remember to greet the Lord with happiness and gratitude.

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PARISH NEWS

Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mass Mon 08 Dec 9am

By making Mary immaculate, God didn't keep her for himself but gave her to us as a spiritual mother and queen. Just as God made Mary pure, he offers us a path to purity through Baptism and Reconciliation.
Mary's life is a model of saying "yes" to God's will, even when it is difficult to understand. The Immaculate Conception emphasizes Mary's unique flawless, and sinless nature which makes her a model of purity and holiness for all believers.

DIOCESE NEWS

St Francis Retreat Centre

Time Out Days ~ for those who seek a day retreat—**Wed 10 Dec 9.30am to 2.30pm** ($35 incl lunch).
For more info and to book go to:
www.stfrancisretreatcentre.org.nz

Celebration Mass St Patrick's Cathedral

This special event marks the end of our year-long journey with the young leaders of the Diocese of Auckland. We are excited to celebrate the many ways they have served in 2025 and present the Tu Kahikatea Awards to them. These awards recognize young people who have made an outstanding contribution to the Diocese.
Bishop Steve will celebrate the mass, present the awards and give a special blessing to all our youth and young adult ministry leaders ~ **Sun 07 Dec 4.30pm.** *Don't miss it, all welcome!*

Food for Faith

Daily reflections in preparation for Christmas. Sign up to receive daily emails during Advent at:
www.foodforfaith.org.nz

Meeting with Pope Leo XIV

Bishop Steve met with Pope Leo XIV in November 2025 during his pilgrimage to Rome.
He described his meeting with the Pope as a *"graced moment"* to bring to the Holy Father the prayers of the Catholic community in New Zealand.
Additional information can be found in the December issue of the NZ Catholic. Pick up your copy from the church foyer.

Mass Times

Monday:	9am
Tues/Wed/Thurs	6.30pm
Wed: Novena	6pm
Friday:	9am
First Friday:	6.30pm
Saturday:	5pm Vigil
Sunday:	9am,10.30am,5pm

Reconciliation by appointment.
Please contact the parish office

Please pray for our sick parishioners:

Violet Furtado, Mary Holmes, Ethan Peter Lelo, Rosalen Ahearn, Saulius David Balsys, Kalameli Tauta, Pauline Caffell, Louisa Baptist, Robert Shearman, Siufaga Maileoi Lilii, Lee Dunn, Alex Soniega, Aaron Ablan, Priscilla Fernandes, Nellie Lemusu-Kea, Joy Rapcsak, Gerard Hoover

30 Nov - 21 Dec: "Come Lord Jesus"

The second candle of Advent is Peace (also known as the Bethlehem Candle) commemorating Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

During Advent, we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth through prayer and reflection.

If you wish to place a notice in our parish newsletter, please email the parish office by Wednesday

Last Week's Collection:

House - $1,644.90
Parish - $2,798.60

Thank you for your generosity.

Readings For The Upcoming Week

Mon 08 Dec: Gen 3:9-15, 20
Lk 1:26-38 Eph 1:3-6, 11-12
Tue 09 Dec: Is 40:1-11
Mt 18:12-14 Ps 95:1-3, 10-13,
Wed 10 Dec: Is 40:25-31
Mt 11:28-30 Ps 102:1-4, 8, 10
Thu 11 Dec: Is 41:13-20
Mt 11:11-15 Ps 144:1, 9-13
Fri 12 Dec: Is 48:17-19
Mt 11:16-19 Ps 1:1-4, 6
Sat 13 Dec: Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Mt 17:10-13 Ps 79:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Sun 14 Dec: Is 35:1-6
Ps 145:6-10 Mt 11:2-11
James 5:7-10

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Speak out for justice and truth. John the Baptist's extraordinary life came to an end when he decided to challenge Herod over this decision to divorce and marry his brother's wife. After confronting Herod, he was arrested and eventually beheaded. His unapologetic decision to speak out for what he believed and for the laws of God eventually cost him his life, but his determination and unwavering integrity gives us the courage to stand up and speak out against injustices in our world. People in our diocese and around the world suffer the impact of injustice every day of their lives, but John gives us the courage to challenge these injustices and bear witness to justice and truth.

Source: Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford, UK

Parish Foodbank

As we reach the last month of the year, the Foodbank team would like to thank all parishioners for their donation and support throughout 2025. Your generous support has enabled us to provide 364 food parcels so far to families with emergency.

It is through the kindness of people like you that we can make a real difference in our community and ensure that no one goes hungry.

If you would like to donate but you are not sure what to donate and/or how to donate, kindly refer to the posters on our *noticeboard* and the *parish website* for guidance. The parish office accepts food parcels on weekdays during office hours. Thank you.

God bless.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC CHURCH
7 Glendale Rd, Glen Eden
Ph: 818-6325
Office hours: 9am to 3pm (Mon-Fri)
E-mail: ourladyoflourdes@xtra.co.nz
Web: www.glenedencatholic.org.nz
Facebook: Glen Eden Catholic Church

Priests Contacts:

Parish Priest: *Fr Paul Helsham OFM Cap*
E:*paulhelsham@gmail.com*

Asst Parish Priest:
Fr Praful Kerketta OFM Cap
E: *kerkettapraful20@gmail.com*

Deacon: *Robert Mitchell*
E:*robertmitchell1410@gmail.com*