OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH NEWSLETTER

Fourth Sunday of Lent **15 March 2026**

It's The Heart That Matters

Israel needed a king. The first king of Israel, Saul, on whom such great hopes and expectations had been placed, had proved a failure and had been rejected by God. The prophet Samuel was commissioned by God to look for a new king. Samuel's search led him to Bethlehem and the household of Jesse. There, one by one, he was introduced to seven of Jesse's sons. All of them possessed outstanding physical attributes and Samuel was impressed. Yet he wasn't quite satisfied. So he continued his search.

He was looking for something else, something not so obvious, but which he felt he would recognize if and when he saw it. As he knew that there was one more to be seen, David was then introduced to him. A mere youth, he was still physically underdeveloped, he did not have a lot going for him. Today the image that you project has become more important than the reality and most times appearances can be deceptive. Everything that makes up the kernel of a person's character is hidden from us. In the memorable words of the Little Prince, '*What is essential is invisible*.'

While David didn't cut a good image, he did have something going for him. Samuel, a wise and perceptive man, noticed it at once. David had a good heart and he had a strong intimate connection to God.

As soon as Samuel saw David he knew that his search for a successor to Saul was over. David made a good king and is one of the most important figures in the Old Testament. That doesn't mean he was perfect. He sinned and sinned grievously but he always repented. Several times in the Gospel Jesus is referred to as '*Son of David'.*

David's heart was good. When all is said and done it is the heart that matters. Emptiness of heart is the greatest poverty of all.

In the Gospel story we see that the hearts of the Pharisees were in darkness. Not even Jesus, 'the light of the world' was able to bring light to them. As for the blind man, not only his eyes became bright but his heart was filled with light as a result of his encounter with Jesus.

While we tend to look at appearances, God looks at the heart. God sees what is in the heart. That is why only God can truly judge people.

Flor McCarthy SDB

PARISH NEWS

RCIA Information Evening

The RCIA is hosting an *Information Evening* **Mon 16 Mar 6.30pm** (hall) for adults and young people 13 years and over wishing to receive the sacraments of *Baptism*, *Confirmation* and *First Holy Communion*.
Anyone interested in joining, serving or learning about the Catholic Church is also welcome. Language assistance will be available and we will answer all your queries.

Solemnity of St Joseph

Thursday 19 Mar
mass 6.30pm

This feast honours the husband of Mary and earthly father of Jesus.
Joseph was a model of obedience, he followed God's instructions in dreams to take Mary as his wife and to protect Jesus from Herod.
His powerful intercession and role in protecting the Holy Family were admirable.

Lenten Reconciliation

Parish Lenten Reconciliation **Tues 24 Mar 7pm**

Palm Sunday

Blessing of the palms at all masses weekend **28/29 Mar**. Please bring your own palm to be blessed.

There will be a procession (**Sun 9am mass only**) around the church with palms preceding the mass.

RCIA Catechumens & Candidates

Holy Father, bless these catechumens and candidates who will receive the sacraments this season of Easter. We pray that they feel God's love, joy and peace as they enter full communion with the Church. Amen.
Vanessa, ***Matthew***, ***Blake***, ***Nathan***, ***Phillip***, ***Joel***, ***Christina***, ***Jessica***, ***Kristian***.

DIOCESE NEWS

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary Acies ceremony will be held **Sun 22 Mar 2pm** at Christ the King Parish, Owairaka, led by Bishop Steve.

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

Bible Diaries 2026

Spend some quiet time with God today!

Beautifully designed to deepen your faith journey every day with God. It acts as a bridge between biblical truth and personal experiences, helping you apply scriptures to your current situation. A display is available in the church foyer.

To purchase a copy ($20) please email Christian Malaitai (Legion of Mary): cmalaitai@gmail.com

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

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

Last Week's Collection:

House - $1,920.60
Parish - $2,964.10

Thank you for your generosity.

Readings For The Upcoming Week

Mon 16 Mar:	Is 65:17-21		
Jn 4:43-54	Ps 29:2, 4-6, 11-13		
Tue 17 Mar:	Acts 13:46-49		
Jer 1:4-9	Lk 10:1-12, 17-20		
Wed 18 Mar:	Is 49:8-15		
Jn 5:17-30	Ps 144:8-9,13-14,17-18		
Thu 19 Mar:	Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22		
Mt 1:18-21	Ps 88:2-5, 27, 29		
Fri 20 Mar:	Wis 2:1, 12-22		
Jn 7:1-2,25-30	Ps 33:16,18,19-21,23		
Sat 21 Mar:	Jer 11:18-20		
Jn 7:40-52	Ps 7:2-3, 9-12		
Sun 22 Mar:	Ezek 37:12-14		
Ps 129	Rom 8:8-11		
Jn 11:1-45			

The Upper Room

The Upper Room is a night of formation and fellowship for younger adults.
Guest speaker James Bergin will be doing a presentation **Wed 18 Mar 6.30pm** at Good George, Mission Bay on *Digital Integrity* where we will delve into how we can be authentically Catholic in a digital world.
Tickets $10 please register at:
www.events.humanitix.com/the-upper-room-march-2026

Palm Sunday Candlelight Vigil

To conclude their *Lenten 40 Days For Life* campaign, the Family Life International NZ is holding a Candlelight Vigil for the unborn **Sun 29 Mar 7.30pm** at Potter's Park, Balmoral.
Come and join us for this prayerful event where we will hold a candle focusing on the sanctity of life.
For more info please contact **Simon 021 400 729** or email **simon@fli.org.nz**

Medjugorje Pilgrimage 2026
05-18 June

Experience Our Lady's presence on a *Medjugorje In-Depth* pilgrimage and a fulfilling 10 nights stay in the holy valley. Bookings are now open.
Please contact Patricia: **info@mirpilgrimages.co.nz** or call **027 3525 217**

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