OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH NEWSLETTER

The Ascension of the Lord **17 May 2026**

Presence and Absence

St Luke's account of the ascension seems to emphasize the fact that Jesus is *going away*. This means that he will no longer be with the apostles, or with us. However, the story is not so much about Jesus leaving as about Jesus *being glorified*. That is where the emphasis is and that is what this great feast is all about.

It is true that on Ascension Day Jesus withdrew his physical presence from the apostles. The ascension marked the termination of his earthly appearances. Physical appearance is a great thing, but it isn't everything. Many of our disappointments in life are caused by the fact that seeing and touching do not always create the closeness we seek. Two people can be physically close, and yet live separate, lonely lives because there is no meeting of minds and hearts. On the other hand, people can be separated by thousands of miles and yet feel close to one another. When people think of each other with love, a spiritual bond is created between them and they enter into an intimate relationship. For those who love one another there is no such place as far away. If we are able to be fully present to our friends when we are with them, our absence too will bear fruit. The memory of that presence, the warmth of it will continue to nourish them. Thus, not only our presence but also our absence becomes a gift.

Jesus' ascension was a journey back to the Father to be glorified. We must not think that he has abandoned us, that he has gone back to where he really belongs after his time on earth. If this were so then Christianity would be no more than a remembrance religion.

Today's Gospel ends with Jesus' promise to remain with his disciples right to the end of time. The ascension represents his liberation from all restrictions of time and space. During his earthly ministry he could only be in one place at a time. But now that he is united with God, he is present wherever God is present…..and that is everywhere.

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PARISH NEWS

Parish Foodbank

Many thanks for your generous support throughout the month of April. For the month of May could I request the following: **Long life milk**, **cooking oil**, **pasta sauces**, **flour**, **cereals**, **grains** (all types), **soups** (tins or packets) and **coconut milk/cream**. Anything you can donate is a special gift. *In God's love, thank you, Anne*.

DIOCESE NEWS

Mass of the Neophytes

Bishop Steve invites all those who were initiated into the Church at Easter, their families and friends to the *Mass of Welcome* **Sun 24 May 4.30pm** at St Patrick's Cathedral. This is an opportunity to give thanks for the gift of faith and share with the Bishop in the celebration of the Eucharist.

The Upper Room

Join us **Wed 20 May 6.30pm** at Good George, Mission Bay, for a night of faith and fellowship. James Bergin will talk about his remarkable journey from serving as a Methodist minister to entering the Catholic Church at Easter this year. Tickets on sale at: **www.events.humanitix.com**

Rise Up and Shine Festival

Taste the World, Celebrate the Culture!

Join us at the Migrant Chaplaincy Festival **Sat 30 May 10am-3pm** at Malaeola Community Centre, 16 Waokauri Place, Mangere. Thanksgiving Mass starts at 10am followed by social entertainment until 3pm. Music, Zumba, food stalls and cultural shows are on the agenda. *Keep our spirits up and celebrate our oneness in Christ*.

St Francis Retreat Centre

Time Out Days ~ For those who seek to take a day off **Tues 09 Jun and Thurs 13 Aug** 9.30am - 2.30pm ($35 incl lunch).

Franciscan Vocation Dinner ~ Join the Franciscan Friars for a night of prayer, food and faith **Wed 27 May 6pm**. It will be an opportunity for men (18 to 40) to ask questions about the Franciscan religious life. For more info please contact **Br Philip OFM 021 041 4642** or **Br Yornes OFM 022 525 9931**

The Mystery of Love ~ Designed for young adults (18-35) where we will explore the book written by Pope John Paul II *Love and Responsibility* **every Wednesday** (last 17 Jun) 6.30pm-9pm.

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

Ars Celebrandi Workshop

The NZ Catholic Bishops Conference warmly invites clergy, parish liturgy teams, and all involved in the preparation of the sacred liturgy to this special workshop with international liturgist *Fr Paul Turner* **Sat 25 July 10am-2.30pm** at Christ the King Church, Owairaka. Mass is at 9am, all welcome. Morning tea provided, please bring your own lunch. Koha welcomed. This workshop will explore the *ars celebrandi* - the art of celebrating the liturgy with reverence, understanding, and fidelity to the mind and heart of the Church. Register now.

Poster on the noticeboards

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, Pratima Hollomon

Last Week's Collection:

House - $1,821.70
Parish - $3,020.20

Thank you for your generosity.

Readings For The Upcoming Week

Mon 18 May:	Acts 19:1-8
Jn 16:29-33	Ps 67:2-7
Tue 19 May:	Acts 20:17-27
Jn 17:1-11	Ps 67:10-11, 20-21
Wed 20 May:	Acts 20:28-38
Jn 17:11-19	Ps 67:29-30, 33-36
Thu 21 May:	Acts 22:30, 23:6-11
Jn 17:20-26	Ps 15:1-2, 5, 7-11
Fri 22 May:	Acts 25:13-21
Jn 21:15-19	Ps 102:1-2,11-12,19-20
Sat 23 May:	Acts 28:16-20, 30-31
Jn 21:20-25	Ps 10:4-5, 7
Sun 24 May:	Acts 2:1-11
Jn 20:19-23	1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13
Ps 103:1, 24, 29-31, 34	

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The first Christians understood this very well. They knew that Jesus was still with them, even if not in the same way as before. They believed that they encountered him when the Scriptures were expounded and the bread was broken (in the Eucharist). And they believed that death would mean being united with him in glory for ever.

Jesus gave the apostles a great task to preach the Gospel to the world. That task has been handed on to us. We draw strength from the conviction that the risen and glorified Christ is with us as he was with the apostles.

Flor McCarthy SDB

May - Month of Mary

May is traditionally dedicated as the *Month of Mary.*
A time to honour her as the mother of Jesus.
Pope Francis has emphasized Mary as a model of fidelity, obedience and a "mother who prays for us".

Engaged? or know of someone who is thinking of marriage? Did you know the Diocese of Auckland runs a superb pre-marriage course.

CONTACT: **Gerry Smith phone: 09 360 3025**

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