

CATHOLIC PARISH OF WHANGANUI - NEWSLETTER

Sunday 8 February 2026



PALMS Please bring any of last year's palms to the office for Ash Wednesday. Thank you

PARISH RENEWAL Last year we began talking about the renewal of our parish here in Whanganui. A group of parishioners attended the Hope and Renewal conference in Palmerston North and we have already almost completed our first ALPHA programme. A vital aspect of this process of renewal is prayer. On the back page you will find a prayer for our parish. I encourage you to pray it regularly/daily. Please pray it with your family. It only takes 46.27 seconds!

WORLD DAY FOR MARRIAGE World Marriage Day honours husbands and wives as the foundation of the family, the basic unit of society. Today we are invited to acknowledge the beauty of couples' faithfulness, sacrifice and joy as they care for one another and their family. We can begin by remembering and thanking God for our own parents who gave us the gift of life. In a homily given last year, Pope Leo reminded us that marriage is not an ideal but a striving for authentic love. The following is a prayer for couples



*Heavenly Father,
source of all love and goodness,
we come before You to seek Your blessing on our marriage.
Strengthen our bond and guide us as we journey together through life.
Lord Jesus, You taught us that love is patient and kind.
Help us to embody these virtues in our relationship.
Inspire us to remain faithful to each other and to our vows.
Lead us away from temptation and help us to forgive each other's faults.
May we be a true reflection of Christ's love,
always putting each other first and
nurturing a home filled with peace and respect.
Bless our family and all those whom You have entrusted to our care.
Grant us strength in times of challenge and joy in times of celebration.
Teach us to rely on Your grace when faced with difficulties and
to remember that with You, all things are possible.
May Your holy presence be always with us,
guiding our decisions and enriching our lives together.
Through Christ our Lord, Amen*

WORLD DAY OF THE SICK This Wednesday 11 February is the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes and the World Day of Prayer for the Sick. At midday Mass, we will pray in a special way for all who are sick. This will be accompanied by the Sacrament of Prayer for the Sick, also known as the Sacrament of Anointing. All are welcome to attend this Mass. This sacrament is for all who are sick, either physically, emotionally, spiritually or mentally. The prayer is for healing and strength and peace. If you are not sick please come and pray for those who aren't so blessed.

LENT will soon be upon us. Traditionally the season of Lent has focussed on *giving something up* to strengthen one's self control - an excellent spiritual exercise. The other option is *building oneself up* through doing something extra. This year we are offering you some different options. As usual, you are invited to give alms by supporting the work of Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand. You are also invited to fast from food, in solidarity with the 1 in 11 people globally, who go hungry every day. We are also encouraging the online Lenten Reflection programme *Crux* for small groups. More about this next week. There is also the Caritas Lenten programme. Another option is making use of the Lectio Divina process to reflect on the Sunday readings. More on this next week.

PRAYER FOR PARISH RENEWAL

Jesus, Son of God
You are the way the truth and the life
and you invite us to follow you.
With humble hearts,
we pray for the renewal of our parish.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us in new ways
and fill us with the fire of your love.

Inspire us to serve joyfully,
to welcome others with open arms,
and to bear witness to the Gospel
in our daily lives.

May we become more fully
your missionary disciples,
following the example of the first Christians.

Guide our leaders with wisdom,
courage and creative vision
as we undergo this process of renewal.

May our parish become a beacon of light,
to all who seek your grace and peace
and a dwelling place of your love.

Amen

