



# Catholic Parish of Whanganui

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

### 21 December 2025



#### NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR



Monday 22 December  
9.00am C/s Holy Family

Tuesday 23 December  
9.30am Mass Holy Family  
12.05pm Mass St Marys  
6.00pm Mass Ranana

#### CHRISTMAS EVE

Wednesday 24 December  
7.00pm Mass St Mary's  
9.30pm Mass Holy Family

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

Thursday 25 December  
9.30am Mass St Mary's  
10.00am Mass Kaiwhaiki

Friday 26 December  
9.00am Mass St Mary's

Saturday 27 December  
9.00am Rite I St Mary's  
9.30am Mass St Mary's  
5.30pm Sun Vigil Mass  
Holy Family

Sunday 28 December  
9.30am Mass St Mary's  
5.30pm Mass St Mary's



#### January timetable

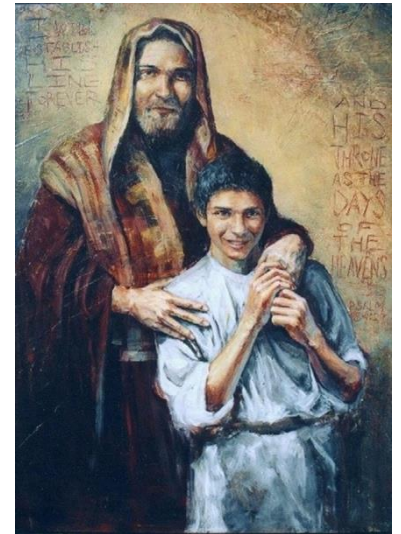
Monday  
9.00am C/s Holy Family  
Tuesday-Friday  
9.00am Mass St Mary's Church

#### PARISH CONTACT DETAILS

Parish Office  
Jo Boulton 06 345 3872  
[admin@cpow.co.nz](mailto:admin@cpow.co.nz)  
Parish Priest  
Fr Craig Butler 021 272 4401  
Assistant Priest  
Fr John Roberts 027 634 6877  
Hospital Chaplain  
Norma O'Connor 027 233 4557  
Youth Minister  
Rain Shore 021 256 0608

#### JOSEPH - A SAINT FOR ALL OF US

Joseph, the husband of Mary and stepfather of Jesus was more than just a good man. Joseph gives us a wonderful model of humanity as God envisioned it, showing us how to face the uncertainties of life with faith and courage. When he learned that his wife (to be) was pregnant, Joseph could have saved his own reputation and divorced Mary publicly, but he chose not to. Joseph decided to divorce Mary quietly so she would not suffer embarrassment (or worse). Having made this decision, Joseph is visited by an angel in a dream, who reassures him to "not be afraid" and to take Mary as his wife and the unborn child as his own. We don't know much about Joseph, following Jesus' birth, but what we do know is that he did what was asked of him by God, providing a safe and secure home for his wife and child. In doing so, he did so much more that's not immediately evident. Joseph shows us how a person can be good and holy in the face of deep uncertainty, beyond his human understanding. I don't know about you, but it seems to me that there is so much to our lives that is shrouded in mystery. Every day, I find myself dealing with the unexpected and being surprised by it. People don't always behave in the way I think they should and surprise surprise, I don't always say or do what others expect of me! As for God - God certainly doesn't always do what we think he should but Joseph's story reminds us to trust. In these days leading up to Christmas, I encourage you to look to Joseph and ask him to help you through the challenges and uncertainties of life trusting that God will make all things well - if we do our part.



I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you all for your goodness. Our parish is blessed with many people who generously give of their time and share their talents to celebrate meaningful liturgies, teach our young, visit the sick, care for the vulnerable, and help others in times of grief and celebration. Much of this work is carried out unseen and unacknowledged. The Kingdom of God grows quietly and surely. I would like to particularly acknowledge Fr John, Rain and Jo. We are all indebted to them for their good work throughout the year. We are blessed with an increasingly varied congregation made up of people from all parts of the globe worshipping under our roof. I think it's fair to say that we are a changing and richer Body of Christ. In these few days leading up to Christmas, my prayer for you and your families is one of real joy and deep peace. The kind of joy that only the Christ child can bring. Christmas is a wonderful time of the year with families travelling to be with loved ones and gift giving - as an expression of love. In the midst of all your preparations, I encourage you to make some time *each day* for the Lord. Maybe just a few moments in the evening, with your loved ones, to thank God and to pray for all, who are in any kind of need. May our good God bless you this Christmas.

Fr Craig

As the year comes to its close and the rush to prepare for our celebration of the Nativity of the Lord ends I am very conscious of all the good and beautiful things that have happened this year. They are wonderful gifts from the Lord God who loves and cares for us. I am also very aware of the many good things parishioners have done for God and for me. I am truly grateful and humbled by the goodness and holiness which surround me. I have wonderful memories of the celebration: of my birthday.

I will remember you all at the Masses of the Night and of the Day as we rejoice again in the Saviour's birth. I hope you and your families will enjoy a wonderful time together. God bless you and keep you safely this holiday season. And may He bless and help you in 2026.

Father John.

**This is the last newsletter for the year until the end of January.**

**The office will be closed from Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December until Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January.**

**Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Jo**

### CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

#### Tuesday 23 December

St Mary's Rite I Reconciliation	5.30pm
Ranana Christmas Mass	6.00pm (Carols 5.30pm)

#### Wednesday 24 December

St Mary's Rite I Reconciliation	11.00am
St Mary's Christmas Eve Mass (Carols 6.20pm)	7.00pm
Holy Family Christmas Eve Mass (Carols 9.00pm)	9.30pm

#### Thursday 25 December

St Mary's Christmas Day Mass	9.30am
Kaiwhaiki Marae Christmas Day Mass	10.00am



**CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH**- No one needs to be alone on Christmas Day. There will be a shared lunch on Christmas Day from 12pm to 2pm in St Marys Hall for any parishioners who will be spending Christmas Day on their own.

Please share this with anyone who you feel would benefit from joining us. If you could email Mary at [thomasandmarythomas@gmail.com](mailto:thomasandmarythomas@gmail.com) or ring/text Mary on 027 4649487 and RSVP your spot and what you will be bringing so we can ensure we have a variety of food.

**Singers for Christmas Masses** are invited to practice at St Mary's at 7 pm on Sunday 21st Dec. All welcome.

**Christmas Dues Special Collection** We are deeply grateful to all parishioners who have supported the Christmas Dues/Offerings Special Collection in the past. Your kindness helps sustain the Clergy Trust Fund, which cares for and supports the priests who serve our Diocese throughout the year. How You Can Share the Joy: · Use the planned giving envelope marked for Christmas Day. · Pick up a specially marked Christmas envelope in the church foyer. · Or make a direct credit to the parish bank BNZ St Marys Wanganui 02 0630 0288029 01(include your name as payee and "Dues" as reference). Your generosity ensures our clergy can continue their ministry in our community. May the light of Christ fill your home with peace, joy, and love this Christmas! Monsignor Brian Walsh (Chairman, Clergy Trust Fund)

**DWELL ADVENT SERIES** Dwell Advent Series | Fourth Week of Advent. The Dwell Advent Journey draws us into the final days of preparation before Christmas. Week 4 invites us to welcome Christ with the same simplicity and trust shown by Mary and Joseph — preparing a place for Him in the ordinary, humble spaces of our lives. What small act of love or hospitality can help you prepare a place for Jesus? Download the pdf at <https://tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Dwell-Fourth-Week-of-Advent.pdf> May this season draw each of us closer to Christ.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Lucas Buchanan and his family. Lucas was baptised on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November at St Mary's Church.

**JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP - WILL RETURN 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**  
**SENIOR YOUTH GROUP – WILL RETURN 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY 2026**



**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Jackie La Pouple, Joan O'Leary

**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:** Eileen Hoskins, Doris Lewis, Elizabeth Palmer, Brian Hyland, Angeline Haami, Valarie Smith, Neil Macdougall Joy McGonigle, Faith Haddock, Bernadette Thompson

**TODAY'S READINGS** First: Isaiah 7.10-14 Second: Romans 1.1-7 Gospel: Matthew 1.18-24

**NEXT SUNDAY 28 December** First: Sirach 3.2-6.12-14 Second: Colossians 3.12-21 Gospel: Matthew 2.13-15,19-23