



Catholic Parish of Whanganui

First Sunday of Advent

30 November 2025



PREPARING TO MEET THE LORD

Today marks the beginning of the church year and the First Sunday of Advent. We are invited to use this season to prepare to celebrate the first coming of Christ in his birth in Bethlehem and anticipate the promised Second Coming of Christ at the end of time. For this, we need to be well prepared! The scripture readings chosen for the next four weeks highlight the themes of watchfulness and vigilance, the fulfilment of prophecy, and the call to prepare our hearts for the Lord. The church invites us to reflect on how we can make even more room for Christ in our lives. Today's readings don't pull any punches so, having read a variety of reflections, I have chosen to reproduce the following. Brace yourself!

The First Reading and the Gospel talk about justice and judgment. In the Gospel, Jesus warns people not to be so consumed with the pleasures and anxieties of the world that they find themselves not ready for his coming.

So what does that mean? What do we need to do exactly to get ready? The Second Reading explains it this way. At Christ's return at the end of time, we are called to be blameless in holiness. So what is that? If you are blameless under law, then no one can blame you for any violation of the law of the land. You weren't speeding, for example, or cheating on your income tax, or violating any other law of the city or country in which you are. If you are morally blameless, then no one can blame you for any violation of the moral law. You weren't lying, for example, or cheating on your spouse, or violating any of the universal moral laws that apply to all people no matter who they are. But what is it to be blameless in holiness? The answer is in the Second Reading: in order to be ready for Christ at his coming, Christians need to "increase in love and abound in it". So here's the thing. You can keep all the laws of the land and still not be blameless. And the same truth holds for the moral law. You can be a righteous but you need so much more in order to be ready for the Lord. That more is love.

If you want what is bad for your neighbour, if you curse him or her in public or even in your heart, if you wish they would just go away, if you tell them in your thoughts or to their face to "go to hell!" - you do not love them. And you are blameworthy with regard to holiness if you don't. It doesn't matter how moral or legal your conduct is otherwise. To be blameless in holiness then, takes being truly loving. And being loving is what makes us ready for the return of the Lord. Eleonore Stump

NEXT WEEK'S CALENDAR

Monday 1 December

9.00am C/s Holy Family

Tuesday 2 December

9.30am Mass Holy Family

12.05pm Mass St Marys

Wednesday 3 December

12.05pm Mass St Mary's

Thursday 4 December

12.05pm Mass St Mary's

Friday 5 December

10.00am Mass St Joseph's
Cullinane

11.20am Reconciliation
St Mary's

12.05pm Mass St Mary's

Saturday 6 December

9.00am Rite I St Mary's

9.30am Mass St Mary's

5.30pm Sun Vigil Mass
Holy Family

Sunday 7 December

9.30am Mass St Mary's

5.30pm Mass St Mary's

Upcoming Events

Sunday 7 December

11am Parish AGM

Wednesday 10 December

2pm Anointing Mass

Thursday 11 December

7pm Rite II Reconciliation

PARISH CONTACT DETAILS

Parish Office

Jo Boulton 06 345 3872

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



PARISH COUNCIL Following on from the recent Parish Survey, the Parish Council held an initial Strategic Planning meeting last weekend and identified key themes for renewal, including strengthening faith formation, fostering our liturgy, and deepening our sense of community. We discussed ways to better connect parishioners, support pastoral care, and strengthening links with our Catholic schools. The Council also highlighted the importance of youth engagement, care and concern ministries, and honouring our bicultural and multicultural parish identity. Improved communication and clearer structures to support parish ministries were noted as priorities. Overall, a shared vision is emerging of “growing the good” already present in our parish and building a vibrant, connected community of Missionary Disciples.

CONGRATULATIONS to Kendall Peralta and her family. Kendall was baptised at St Mary’s Church on Saturday 22nd November.

CONGRATULATIONS to Keanu Anderson and Jaques Macadangdang have been appointed Tuakana (leaders) at Cullinane College for 2026.

AMENDMENT TO PRE-SCHOOL MUSIC GROUP DATE Our last day is on **8th December**. We will have a shared morning tea at 10.00am for anyone who would like to attend at Marist Rugby Club, Hatrick Street. God bless you all.

PARISH AGM This year’s Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 7 December following the 9.30am Mass (10.45am) in the parish hall. We are currently in the process of compiling the Parish Report which will be distributed.

CULLINANE COLLEGE is urgently seeking host parents for their 2026 cohort of international students. We have placements available for two terms or a full year and are especially looking for families without pets. If you’re interested in welcoming a student into your home, please contact Miss Martin, International Student Dean: kmartin@cullinane.school.nz.



SVDP The Holy Family Conference of St Vincent de Paul will be selling their Christmas Raffle before and after all Masses for the next three weeks. There are several lovely prizes. Tickets are \$2 for one or \$5 for three. We would like to thank the Parishioners who have supported us throughout the year and for supporting this raffle as well.

SPRING CLEAN- Holy Family at 9.00am and St Mary’s from 8.00am on Saturday 13th December. Please let us know if you can help. Also could someone offer to make scones for the workers 😊

BIBLE DIARIES 2026- will be available to purchase in December at Holy Family 6th and 13th Dec. St Mary’s 7th and 14th Dec. They contain all the gospel readings for every day of the year with accounts of the lives of the Saint for day, daily prayers. Hard cover only \$20 each cash. Please see Kathleen Orsborn

Annual Sick & Retired Priests Special Collection | Sunday, 30 November 2025

DWELL ADVENT SERIES | First Week of Advent. Advent begins this Sunday, and the Dwell Advent Journey is now available. This simple weekly resource is designed to help us slow down, pray with Scripture, and make room for Christ in the busyness of December. Each week includes a short Gospel reflection, a Marian prayer, and a gentle invitation to live our faith in everyday moments. Week 1 invites us to begin with stillness and attentiveness — opening our hearts to the Lord who comes to dwell with us. You can download the pdf at <https://tumanako.pndiocese.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Dwell-First-Week-of-Advent.pdf> How might you welcome Jesus more intentionally as Advent begins? May this season draw each of us closer to Christ.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS THIS ADVENT| Living the Word. You are invited to prepare for Sunday Mass by reading and reflecting on the Scripture we will hear that weekend. Marist priest Fr Frank Bird has for several years been helping people make those preparations through his Living the Word project. As the name suggests, Living the Word is an invitation for Catholics and others to allow the Word of God to shape their lives. You can download the resources, and access other rich content, at www.livingtheword.org.nz/pray

FOOD FOR FAITH ADVENT 2025 Daily reflections for those seeking greater maturity of Christian Faith in preparation for Christmas. Sign up to receive daily emails during Advent at www.foodforfaith.org.nz

BOOKS in the foyer are available for anyone to borrow, take home and read.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS 2026 are available at the office. \$15 each

HOMELESS HUB OUTREACH - The SUMMER roster for next week is Joan Sullivan’s Team. Further information contact Maureen 027 491 2168 or Pat 027 491 9637

JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP – If you are year 5-8. Come along at 4-5.30pm on a Sunday at Saint Mary's Church Hall.

SENIOR YOUTH GROUP – If you're year 9-13 come along on a Sunday night 6.30-8.30pm Saint Mary's Church Hall.

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP Our meetings are on Thursdays 7-9pm. 8 Glasgow Street Whanganui



RECENTLY DECEASED: Neville Hirni, Vincent Keating, Janet Fawcett, Fiona McIntyre, Betty Kiff

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES: Victor Silveira, Bob Wilson, John Wicky, Blair Gleeson, Andy Mora, Pat Smith, Leo White, Charles Phillips, Owen Hessian, Glenn Quayle

TODAY’S READINGS First: Isaiah 2.1-5 Second: Romans 13.11-14 Gospel: Matthew 24.37-44

NEXT SUNDAY 30 November First: Isaiah 11.1-10 Second: Romans 14.4-9 Gospel: Matthew 3.1-12