



Catholic Parish of Whanganui

Te Pārihi Katorika ki Whanganui (2015)
Diocese of Palmerston North, New Zealand



ST MARY'S CHURCH
1 Campbell Street

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH
22 Tawhero Street

ST ANNE'S CHURCH
47 Raine Street

TE RONGO O TE POI
(Beat of the Poi to the Gospel)
584 Kaiwhaiki Road
Kaiwhaiki Marae

NGAKAU TAPU (Sacred Heart)
4491 Whanganui River Road
Rānana (London)

HĀTO HŌHEPA (St Joseph's)
600 Whanganui River Road
Hiruhārama (Jerusalem)

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas

24th December 2023; Year B / Weekdays Year 2

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Monday 25th December

9:30am **Christmas Day Mass**
St Mary's
10.30am **Christmas Day Mass**
Kaiwhaiki Marae

Tuesday 26th December

9.00am Mass St Mary's

Wednesday 27th December

9.00am Mass St Mary's

Thursday 28th December

9.00am Mass St Mary's

Friday 29th December

9.00m Mass St Mary's

Saturday 30th December

9.00am Mass St Mary's
5.30pm Mass Vigil Mass
Holy Family

Sunday 31st December

9.30am Mass St Mary's
5.30pm Mass St Anne's

January Mass Times

Monday

9.00am C/S St Marys

Tuesday– Saturday

9.00am Mass St Mary's

Saturday

5.30pm Vigil Mass Holy Family

Sunday

9.30am Mass St Mary's
5.30pm Mass St Annes

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 08.30am
(or any time by appointment)

Sunday Readings: 2 Sam: 7.1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Rom: 16.25-27; Lk: 1.26-38

Next Week: Gen: 15.1-6, 17.3b-5, 15-16, 21.1.7; Heb: 11.8, 11-12, 17-19; Lk: 2.22-40



Some years ago I read about a family whose story touched me deeply. A couple had a child. This baby boy had suffered a very difficult birth including being deprived of oxygen during the birth. The result was a beautiful new born baby, except for one thing, he could do nothing himself, including breathe, because of the damage to his brain.

The parents were very young, not in a relationship and could easily have let the child slip away. There was no reason to make the child suffer, but they couldn't do it. They couldn't bring themselves to write off this tiny personality and just get on with their lives. They were struck with love for the tender, vulnerable and beautiful child that had been gifted to them.

They gave him a name, baptised him, rented a machine to help him breathe and then took him home.

During the six months of his life, one of the parents had to remain close enough to him at every moment. They had to work together to care for the child. At the same time, the couple were neither afraid nor burdened by their round the clock care for their son. It was exactly the opposite - they were both very calm and at peace. They were under no illusion, knowing that death was on its way. Despite this knowledge, they continued to love the child.

Over time, their home became a sacred place and everyone who visited, experienced it. People could sense the holiness. It was so palpable, with visitors sensing love emanating from the child. God was truly present in the love between the child and his parents.

The journey we call life can be short and harsh, yet sacred. Love and human life are meant for each other. The Christmas story which we celebrate at this time reinforces this belief. Being born

in a cave with no room at the inn, surrounded by animals, star signs and strange visitors messages from the divine. This same strange and wonderful holiness filled the manger and the stable on Christmas night 2000 years ago. Jesus, that tiny soul, filled with love, was born to two young parents, both of whom had said yes to God, with no knowledge of how things would work out.

In our own time, we face struggles, sometimes seemingly overwhelming but with the knowledge that God is Emmanuel - God is with us and that everything is going to be ok even when it's not ok. With everything happening in the dark and dangerous places throughout the world and in the darkness of uncertainty that many people live with here in our own beautiful country, the light of Christ gives us hope and courage and peace and love. We too are in a holy place.

May our good God bless you and all your loved ones this Christmas. In the midst of all the joys and sorrows of life, may you be at peace with everything and everyone in the knowledge that you are loved deeply by our Lord and always will be. Fr Craig

I am truly grateful for the wonderful things so many undertake in our parish and city. It is a wonderful encouragement to me. I hope you will all enjoy a truly blessed Christmas with every good gift from our God. I shall be remembering you at Christmas Masses and will pray for those of you who are travelling. Enjoy a blessed celebration of the Lord's birth. Father John.

OFFICE CLOSED

From Friday 22nd December and will reopen Monday 15th January. Have a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year :)

Died Recently

Fiona Stobie, Fr Jock McLaughlan,
Susan Simpson

Anniversaries

Philomena Kingstone, Maria Watts, Wendy McGarva, Joyce Poka, Sr Catherine Ryan, Faith Haddock, Bernadette Thompson

Eternal Rest Grant to them O Lord

CHRISTMAS is a season which has a particular meaning for us as Christians - as disciples of Jesus the Christ. It is also a season in which families and friends who may or little or no faith gather together and celebrate, eating, drinking and giving gifts. For others still, this is a particularly difficult time of the year, because of unrealistic expectations, family hurts and bereavement. Christmas is also a time to give thanks to those we love and appreciate, our, our family and friends, our work colleagues, our neighbours and so on. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who actively contributes to the life of our parish and the wider community because of our shared faith in Jesus. Your contribution makes all the difference and I enjoy working with you. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year in Whanganui, getting to know you and making this my home. I'm proud to be called a "Whanganui-ite" and I'm looking forward to the new year. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a joyful and holy Christmas. May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the courage of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the Magi, and the peace of Christ. With every good wish and blessing. Fr Craig

SCAM ALERT A few weeks ago I wrote about a scam in which some nefarious individual in the United States is pretending to be me, sending people texts and emails asking for help (in the form of iTunes cards). Please ignore these requests, but let me know. I already feel bad enough that my name is being used but I've done all I can to limit the damage. Unfortunately, the police cannot do anything because the person behind this scam is based overseas. Again, if I do need anything from you, I will speak to you directly. Fr Craig

PARISH OFFICE Jo will be taking a well-earned break in January and the office will be closed until Monday 15 January. Having said this, I will be in and out of the office and, if there is anything that you need and I can help, please feel free to try me on my mobile. Fr Craig

January hospitality—due to the holiday season if you would like a cup of tea after mass, please bring along some milk. Tea coffee biscuits supplied.

**SENIOR YOUTH GROUP
YOUTH GROUP ON
HOLIDAY**



There will be no Youth Group in the summer holidays. Youth Group will be back on the 4th of February 2024.

For more info contact Rain on 0212560608 or email youth.cpow@gmail.com

STAY UP TO DATE WITH OUR YOUTH SPACE

Do you want to keep in touch with what's happening for young people in our parish??


Find us on social media:
Facebook - Life Teen Whanganui
Instagram - Lifeteen_Whanganui

LIFE TEEN SUMMER CAMP AOTEAROA 2024

Life Teen Summer Camp is a national Catholic camp for teens. It's held between 16th-20th of January in Cambridge. 5 day of epic fun, faith, inspiring speakers, praise and worship, sports, messy games, team building and so much more!! If you are a teen or know a teen who would be interested in attending this please get in touch with Rain on 0212560608 or email youth.cpow@gmail.com

SPONSOR A TEEN TO ATTEND CAMP

Life Teen Summer Camp costs \$250 for a teen to attend which is a barrier for some families especially when more than one teen from the same family is attending. We're inviting the wider parish community to support our young people by sponsoring or part sponsoring a young person to attend. Sponsorship forms will be available in the Church foyer with more details.

ON SALE NZ Catholic \$4 

BISHOP PETERS BOOK—Of the 55 copies of Bishop Peter's autobiography called Knowing my Place, I have just 2 left. Phone Sue Seconi on 3437384 to snap a copy up at \$20 each.

POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER— For persons with disabilities Let us join the Holy Father in praying that people living with disabilities may be at the centre of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS—are available at the office. \$15.00 each.**AND....**

SUNDAY MISSALS— are now available from the office \$16.00 each

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION—

Join us each Thursday morning (7-8am) for Scripture Reflection and lively discussion ☐ St Mary's church. All welcome. Coffee provided ☐. Contact Kate Lynch 027 2430430 or Helen Dougherty 027 4136273

Christmas Dues Special Collection

Many thanks to parishioners who in the past have contributed to the Christmas Dues/Offerings Special Collection. The Special Collection planned giving envelopes gifted on Christmas Day are for this collection. The money is sent given to the Clergy Trust Fund to support the priests of the Diocese. There are also specially marked envelopes in the foyer, or alternatively please pay by direct credit BNZ 020630 0288029 01 your name as payee, and 'Dues' as reference. Your support and help is always appreciated! Fr. Brian Walsh (Chairman of the Clergy Trust Fund)

NEED EXTRA PRAYER ??

The Prayer Vine is made up of a group of 14 Parishioners who will pray for you or your family, and or friends who need extra prayer. Any request is prayed for. Christian names only are used, so it is confidential. Please call either Maureen Ph 345 5480 or Barbara Ph 342 5812

THE PRAYER TREE

Details: contact Anne Smith text 021 0488635 with Christian name of person to be prayed for.

St Marcellin School

Principal: Belinda Backwell
7a Totara St, Wanganui
06 349 0023

stmarcelin@welearn.school.nz
www.stmarcellin.school.nz



St Mary's School

Principal: Mrs Jacqui Luxton
DRS: Mrs Cath Daignault
30 London St, Wanganui
06 343 1227

school@stmarys.ac.nz
www.stmarys.ac.nz



St Anne's School

Principal: Mrs Ann-Maree Manson-Petherick
DRS: Mrs Jo Gichard.
45 Raine St, Wanganui
06 343 8389

office@stannes.school.nz
www.stannes.school.nz



Cullinane College

Principal: Mr Tony McBride
DRS: Ms Helen Dougherty
15 Peat St, Wanganui
06 349 0105

office@cullinane.school.nz
www.cullinanecollege.school.nz



Parish Priest

Fr Craig Butler
021 272 4401
craigbutler@xtra.co.nz

Assistant Priest

Fr John Roberts
027 634 6877
jroberts@inspire.net.nz

Parish Secretary

Office hours: 8:30am-3pm
Jo Boulton
06 345 3872
admin@cpow.co.nz

Youth Minister

Rain Forest
0212560608
youth.cpow@gmail.com

RCIA Parish Catechist

Tony Hore
thecoot1944@gmail.com

Parish Care & Concern Network

Contact Parish Office

Hospital Chaplain

Norma O'Connor
027 233 4557

Prison Chaplain

Sean Ryan
06 349 6887