

Catholic Parish of the Good Shepherd

Hurunui District, Catholic Diocese of Christchurch



Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ 29 May 2016

the Blessed Sacrament

In 2005 to mark the centenary of Christchurch's Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Michael Hanrahan wrote *A Suitable Temple* - the history of the building and life of our Christchurch Cathedral. We could never have imagined that just five years later the Cathedral would stand in ruins facing an uncertain future.

The efforts being made to investigate saving the nave of the Cathedral (which is the only section still standing albeit in badly damaged form) is welcome news. While it is appropriate for a community to start again when they intend to build better (as Catholics had twice before on the Barbadoes Street site), today we know that while the prevailing secular mindset in our city has not questioned budgets of \$85 million for the new Christchurch library, \$127.5m for the restoration of the Town Hall and \$500m for a sports stadium, it is unlikely that people would be willing to provide an appropriate budget to build a new and suitable Cathedral for the diocese.

The "Jesus was born in stable therefore..." argument is often proffered by Catholics who oppose spending on church building and restoration. But it bears pondering that our ancestors while living in poverty in simple and cheaply constructed homes would give with extraordinary generosity to ensure that the dwelling place of God in their midst was a suitably magnificent temple. These people understood that a Catholic Church was literally God's house, and therefore the inscription above our Cathedral doors appropriately reads "Ecce Tabernaculum Dei Cum Hominibus" (Behold! The dwelling place of God is among people).

At the same time as people promote the construction of low-cost, even multi-purpose buildings to serve as churches, it is common for modern homes to be built using quality materials, with hard-wood flooring high-spec fittings, stone, marble and slate with high ceilings and columns, the materials and styles once reserved for churches. Ironically today a cathedral ceiling is more likely to be found in a private home than in a church. It was normal for a church built a century ago to cost the price of dozens and even hundreds of homes. Today we tend to budget the price of half a dozen cheap homes when we come to build a new parish church.

The problem is that many Catholics have forgotten that a church is a divine dwelling. While a Catholic church is (like all Christian churches) a place where people gather to worship God, a Catholic church is also a temple, and a temple is primarily a place of sacrifice to God.

In another of his local Catholic histories "*Built in Faith*", Michael Hanrahan begins the introduction to his book quoting the Irish-born author Patrick O'Donovan (d.1981):

"They do it every morning...their utensils stand on stones that contain calcified fragments of those who are believed to have been killed because they refused to live a lie... A man bends over a piece of unleavened bread and over a silver gilt cup with a little wine and water in it and he pronounces a formula more terrible than the sound of guns. Hoc est enim, it runs in part, corpus meum. And the majority of Christians believe that God Himself is immediate and present, not in the way that He is everywhere anyway, but in the same way that a man is there in the same room."

This is the event that we call the "Blessed Sacrament." Whenever the Mass is celebrated, God is truly present in the form of bread and wine and this divine presence is the ultimate reality.

Sixteen hundred and one years to the day before the dedication of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, on 12 February 304, forty-nine Christians were on trial in the North-African town of Abitanae for celebrating the Mass despite the explicit prohibition of the Emperor

Diocletian. As the 49 were sentenced to death, one of the group, Emeritus, explained their disobedience announcing "without the Eucharist, we cannot live."

The local Christchurch newspaper (Star) on 20 March 1899 reports the delight of Pope Leo XIII when Bishop Grimes met with him to tell him of the Cathedral plans: "*The Pope was deeply impressed on being told that the present*

church was dedicated to the Holy Sacrament of the Altar." Six years later at the dedication Mass of the Cathedral, Archbishop Kelly (Coadjutor of Sydney) in his homily emphasised the "Blessed Sacrament dedication for its *"sublimity, the tenderness, and the blessedness...under which this Cathedral-Basilica was made over to the worship of God - that of the Most Blessed Sacrament - in other words, Christ ever present under the appearances of bread and wine, perpetuating the sacrifice of Calvary on behalf of mankind without distinction, imparting to the faithful His own Flesh and Blood in communion of substances and of spirits, as our solace in exile and our attic to eternity. This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us be glad and rejoice therein."*

Now I am not sure how many readers have made it this far reading through two columns of history and theology. But this broad context is important, especially since most Catholics who were born after 1960 have little knowledge of the significance beyond a shared meal of faithful Christians.

Our local Hurunui ancestors in faith built six beautiful and suitable temples to be the dwelling places of God in the Hurunui. For well over a century these temples have been havens, sanctuaries of peace for those who seek encounter with God. Our faith-full ancestors saw sacrifice as the heart of Catholic life, not because they were adding "sacrifice" to their life's experience and vocabulary, but because every healthy loving human life is essentially and necessarily a sacrificial existence: the loving parent sacrifices for the child, the loving spouse for the husband or wife, the martyr for the cause.

Today's feast of this most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, calls us in our complex present earthly realities to live and breathe in every moment the event by which Jesus has saved us. We who receive Jesus into our lives in the Blessed Sacrament of Communion at Mass, are opening our lives to the abundance of divine life which this sacrament contains. J.O.C

Pope Francis on the Feast of Corpus Christi 2013

'So let us ask ourselves, in adoring Christ who is really present in the Eucharist:

- + Do I let myself be transformed by him?
- + Do I let the Lord who gives himself to me, guide me to going out ever more from my little enclosure, in order to give, to share, to love him and others?

Brothers and sisters, following, communion, sharing. Let us pray that participation in the Eucharist may always be an incentive: to follow the Lord every day, to be instruments of communion and to share what we are with him and with our neighbour. Our life will then be truly fruitful.'

New Weekday Mass Timetable

Mass at Amberley Church
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday at
9.00am

Community of the Beatitudes
Wednesday at 12noon

Confessions

Tuesday 8.40am at Amberley
Wednesday after Mass at Beatitudes
Saturday 10.00am - 10.30 at Amberley
& anytime by arrangement with a priest.

Mass times and other parish information is
available on the parish website at
www.catholic Hurunui.nz

Thinking Diocesan Priesthood? Speak to any priest or contact Vocations Director Fr. John O'Connor vocations.chch@gmail.com

Rangiora Town Hall for one night only, "Francisco 'The Man behind the Pope'" 4pm Sunday, June 5th. Support this World Youth Day fundraiser and purchase a ticket for \$20. Tickets available from Waimakariri parish. 03 313 6285 www.waimakariricatholic.org.nz. Google "Papa Francesco Trailer" to get a taste of the movie.

WYD in Christchurch. On July 29th to August 2nd Catholic Cathedral and Marian Colleges are hosting a Companion event to the World Youth Day in Krakow for the Secondary School Colleges in the South Island. We are anticipating 240 students of Catholic Colleges will attend this event that includes Pilgrimage, Service, Catechesis and Worship. This is a unique opportunity for the Youth (16-18years) of our Catholic communities to come together and share their faith experiences.

The Catholic Shop is now in its new location 373 Manchester Street (next to St Mary's). Parking available. Phone 366 2853, email catholicshop@chch.catholic.org.nz Open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Gift cards, candles, rosaries, First Communion and Baptism gifts.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal You are invited to join with those in the Renewal on the first Friday of each month as we come together to celebrate Mass at 7.30pm, Christ the King Church, 90 Greers Rd, Burnside, followed by supper in the Parish Centre. Next Mass: Friday 3rd June. For more information about the Catholic Charismatic Renewal go to: www.catholic.org.nz/ccr

ACTIV8 Pro-Life Internship Monday 4 - Friday 8 July Ferndale Lodge, Carey Park Christian Camp Auckland Full details and online registration can be found here www.family.org.nz/internship2016

Let us continue to pray

*for the happy repose of the soul of
Bishop Barry Jones.*

*Pray too that all those involved in the
process of appointing his successor will be
open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*



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www.foodforfaith.org.nz
read, watch & listen
with Fr. John O'Connor
& on Facebook & Twitter

eating & drinking

One of the healthy marks of people of faith is that they enjoy eating and drinking together. During the week the Parish Council, Finance Committee and Building Committee meet for dinner at the presbytery. On Thursday a number of ladies of the parish gathered for what is becoming a regular lunch. Such social gatherings are a celebration of the friendship that we develop when we work together in service of God.

I often recall that this was especially important for Jesus, who always seemed to be eating and drinking. The provision of food and good wine was among the most memorable of his miracles.

In November of this year the parish will gather for Mass and dinner to celebrate 150 years since the opening of the Amberley church.

A highlight of each year on the Catholic Calendar for the diocese John Paul II Centre for Life Race Night. Refer to the notice in this newsletter for more information.

'The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that our church doors should always be open, so that if someone, moved by the Spirit, comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. There are other doors that should not be closed either. Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church; everyone can be part of the community, nor should the doors of the sacraments be closed for simply any reason. This is especially true of the sacrament which is itself "the door": baptism. The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness. Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems.'

Pope Francis. The Joy of the Gospel n.47

a prayer intention

I am always happy to receive the prayer requests and Mass intentions of parishioners. Every morning and evening, and at Mass and as I am driving, I pray for all parishioners, especially those for whom I have received requests. In recent weeks I have prayed for the healing of Kate Davis (daughter of Pat Crean) who is struggling with cancer, and I now invite all parishioners to join me in this prayer.

I spoke with the Carmelite Sisters during the week and they have assured us that they are now also praying for the healing of Kate. They have suggested this prayer and I ask all parishioners to join me in praying this prayer specifically at least once every day, and any other prayers for Kate and her family, perhaps especially a decade of the Rosary each day.

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2016 Thirty eight young people (aged 18-35) from our diocese of Christchurch will travel on pilgrimage to Europe visiting Rome, Assisi, Lourdes & Paris before joining an estimated two million young people from around the world for the World Youth Days in Krakow Poland with Pope Francis. The pilgrimage is from July 11 until August 4. I am delighted to share with you that

two of the pilgrimage group are parishioners of our own Good Shepherd Parish. World Youth Day began 30 years ago and is held every three years, the last being in Rio in 2013. The pilgrimage is an intense experience of the beauty and depth of Catholic faith. Please pray for all young people around the diocese, and the world as they prepare for the event.

RACE NIGHT John Paul II Centre for Life Race Night Friday 9 September 2016 @ Addington. This has become a significant night of celebration for a growing number of parishioners of our diocese. This year we are planning on booking a table or three for Good Shepherd Hurunui parishioners and their friends. More information will follow, but for the moment put the date in your diary. Tickets will be \$50.00 per person and will include dinner.

Let us continue to keep in our prayer the many benefactors of our parish of the Good Shepherd:

+those who have given generously over the 150 years that Mass has been celebrated in the Hurunui,

+Those who give through their positive conversation, presence and prayer for our parish

+Those who contribute financially to our parish.

May the Spirit of God

be close to Kate
to renew and uplift her
and to pour gifts of healing upon her,
strengthen her and comfort her,
enfolding Kate in love to protect her.
Lighten Kate's burden of illness
and bestow peace in mind and body,
Bless Kate's loving husband Jim, her
children, and all her family, friends and
members of the parish
with much strength and peace.

We thank you Lord for hearing this prayer we
make for Kate's healing through the
intercession of Our Lady and all the Saints.

Through Christ Our Lord,
Amen.