

Catholic Parish of the Good Shepherd

Hurunui District, Catholic Diocese of Christchurch



Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

3 July 2016

the cross - our path to life

Some of my study in the last couple of weeks has been on the reality of suffering and sacrifice. We tend not to like these unpleasant realities, and think that if a day has a dose of either then this is a sign that something is wrong. The fact is that sacrifice and suffering is at the heart of all human existence, No person who has ever lived has avoided these, and as followers of Jesus who suffered and died, we know that we too will suffer and we will die. However we know too because of the resurrection of Jesus, that death is no longer an ending. Instead it is a transition into life (much like the birth of a baby who dies to life in the womb).

In a study of the theology of marriage last week I came across this account of a town free from divorce. These people seem to have understood the sacramental nature of the sacrament of marriage - that is, Marriage is a participation in the life of Christ in a way similar to the life of the ordained priest. We will suffer, and this suffering is not a sign that something is wrong. Instead this is an opportunity for us to embrace the journey, and to reap the rewards. Here is the story:

In the town of Siroki-Brijeg in Herzegovina not one single divorce has been recorded among its 13,000 inhabitants. Not one single family has broken up in living memory. For centuries, because of the pressure of the Turks and then the Communists, the people suffered cruelly as their Christian faith was always threatened. They knew through experience that salvation comes through the cross of Christ. That is why they have indissolubly linked marriage to the Cross of Christ. They have founded marriage which brings forth human life, on the Cross, which brings forth divine life. The Croatian marriage tradition is so beautiful that it is beginning to take hold in Europe and America too.

When a couple is preparing for marriage, they are not told that they have found the ideal partner. No! What does the priest say? You have found your cross. And it is a cross to be loved, to be carried, a cross not to be thrown away, but to be cherished. I know if fiances were told this in my home country France, they would be struck dumb. But in Herzegovina, the Cross represents the greatest love and the crucifix is the treasure of the home.

When the bride and groom set off for the church, they bring a crucifix with them. The priest blesses the crucifix, which takes on a central role during the exchange of vows. The bride places her right hand on the crucifix and the groom places his hand over hers. Thus the two hands are bound together on the cross. The priest covers their hands with his stole as they proclaim their vows to be faithful according to the rites of the Church.

The bride and groom do not then kiss each other, they rather kiss the cross. They know that they are kissing the source of love. Anyone close enough to see their two hands joined over the cross understands clearly that if the husband abandons his wife or if the wife abandons her husband they let go of the cross. And if they abandon the cross they have nothing left. They have lost everything for they have abandoned Jesus. They have lost Jesus.

After the ceremony, the newlyweds bring the crucifix back and give it a place of honour in their home. It becomes the focal point of family prayer, for the young couple believes deeply that the family is born of the Cross. When a trouble arises or if a conflict breaks out, it is before this cross that they will seek help. They will not go to a lawyer, they will not consult a fortune teller or an astrologer, they will not rely on a psychologist to solve the problem. No, they will go straight before their Jesus, before the cross. They'll get on their knees there and in front of Jesus they will weep their tears and pour out their hearts, and above all exchange their forgiveness. They will not go to sleep with a heavy heart because they will have turned to Jesus, the only One who has the power to save.

They will teach their children to kiss the cross every day and not to go to sleep like pagans without having thanks Jesus first. As for the children, as far back as they can remember, Jesus has always been the friend of the family, respected and embraced. They say night, night to Jesus and kiss the cross. They know that Jesus is holding them in his arms and that there is nothing to be afraid of, and their fears melt away in their kiss to Jesus.

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First Communion

In recent decades many parishes have noticed that while dozens of children may receive communion for the first time in any one year, is rare for the vast majority of these children to receive communion again apart from at a school Mass. A number of people asking to be married in the church have not received communion, or the sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) apart from when they were 7 at the time of their first communion. In the absence of school support, this pattern is even more noticeable in the Hurunui.

In recent years in the Hurunui children preparing for First Communion have not been required to be at Sunday Mass during the months of their preparation for the sacraments. Those preparing the children were trying to do everything possible to make it easy for the children and for their families, but with very few exceptions, we do not see these children at Mass, even at Easter or Christmas. It is evident that our desire to reach out to the children and their families has not helped the children to understand and to live the centrality of Sunday Mass.

This year's Hurunui First Communion programme will work with any parents and children who seek to deepen their relationship with God in the church through these Sacraments, and participation in Sunday Mass will be the heart of the children's preparation.

An invitation from the Community of the Beatitudes

We are delighted to announce the completion of the new "St Joseph of Nazareth Hermitage".

This beautiful, self-contained unit next to our monastery will be a place of peace and rest for people to come on retreat.

We'll be officially opening the hermitage by having it blessed, and we invite you to join us for this happy occasion! The blessing ceremony will take place on Sunday 10th July at 2pm, followed by afternoon tea.

*Every blessing in the Lord,
The Sisters*



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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Catholic Hurunui

PHILIPPINES MISSION OPPORTUNITY St Joseph's Parish, Papanui are planning a second mission trip to Tacloban in the Philippines from the 10th to the 24th March 2017. They are keen to involve people who have dental or medical expertise to join the mission. This will be an invaluable personal experience, whilst being involved in the mission of the Church and having the opportunity to share time and practical resources with the local people who are still recovering from the devastation of Cyclone Haiyan. If this sounds like you, Fr John Adams is keen to hear from you, phone 3529275.

OUR LADY OF MT CARMEL MASS The Sisters warmly invite you to the annual celebration of Our Lady of Mt Carmel on Sunday, 17 July at 2.30pm, at the Carmelite Monastery, 52 Halswell Road. Emeritus Bishop Basil Meeking will be the principal celebrant at a concelebrated Mass, followed by afternoon tea. You are most welcome to join us on this special occasion to ask Our Lady's intercession at this very difficult time for the Church and the world. In preparation for the feast, a novena of Masses will be offered for all our relatives and friends.

MASS AT MARY POTTER COMMUNITY CENTRE You are invited to Mass with the Greater Company of Mary members at 10.30 a.m. on Saturday July 16 at the MP Centre 444 Durham St Nth followed by morning tea. We warmly welcome and encourage new members to join our prayer ministry for the many suffering and dying people in our world.

DOVE CATHOLIC FELLOWSHIP FOR WOMEN The Rosary: How should we pray it? Why should we pray it? Come and be encouraged through testimony and teaching on this beautiful devotion. As Padre Pio told us, "the Rosary is the weapon for these times." All Women Welcome Saturday 9th July 1 pm – 3.30pm Christ the King Parish Centre Info phone: Diane Findlay 03 312 8672 www.dove.org.nz

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINS. Most hospitals no longer provide names of Catholic patients to our chaplains. If someone from your family going to hospital please advise the chaplain: Burwood: Kirsten Challies 027 437 6737 Christchurch Hospital: Angela McCormick 364 0640 (x89554) Hillmorton: Gloria Magee 027 212 7377 Princess Margaret: Gloria Magee 027 212 7377 St George's: Fr Chris Orr 351 9502

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.

THINKING DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD? Speak to any priest or contact Vocations Director Fr. John O'Connor vocations.chch@gmail.com

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.

Weekday Mass Timetable

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.catholicurunui.nz

This week especially, let us pray for:

- + those who are suffering from ill health, especially Kate Davis & Robert Owen, That they, and all who long for full health may receive anew the healing Spirit of God.
- + for those parishioners who are feeling the burden of work challenges and stress of uncertainty in their work, including those who suffer the ongoing effects of the drought.
- + 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 their positive conversation, time, talent, presence and prayer for our parish
- + That the parish Thanksgiving Programme may bear fruit enabling out parishioners together to be the more visible presence of Christ in the Hurunui.
- + Those who contribute financially to our parish today.



GOOD SHEPHERD HURUNUI CATHOLIC YOUTH GROUP Expressions of Interest. Calling all young people 10+ years of age (and their parents) who would like to participate in a catholic youth group within our parish. We would like to know: The names, ages and locations of your keen young people so we can establish a programme that suits everyone. Please send an email or text message with your child's: Name, Age, Location E.g. Amberley, Waiau, Culverden, Hanmer, Cheviot, Hawarden and a day that suits you best. Send this info to: simon@amuri.school.nz OR 027 422 0183

THE SACRAMENTS OF RECONCILIATION & FIRST HOLY COMMUNION. Preparation classes will start on the 10th July after the 10am Mass at Hawarden. All children 8 years and over are welcome to attend with their parents. All enquiries contact Sarah at parish office catholicurunui@gmail.com or 03 319 8730

LADIES LUNCH Parishoners and friends are very welcome to a shared lunch on Wednesday, 20th July, 12 noon at Anne Murphy's home, 11 Leslie St, Culverden township 03 3158489. Guest speaker is Fr Anton Mclean. Will run a raffle for a charity to be decided. Please bring a small plate of finger food. After the last lunch we sent \$ 210.00 to Sister Aroha for the work of the Missionaries of Charity in Sri Lanka.

WITH THE MOVE of the presbytery to Amberley the postal address and phone number for the presbytery and office remain the same. You will always be able to contact a priest on the 03 319 8730 number. If the phone is not answered leave a message and you will have a response within the hour. The catholicurunui@gmail.com email is received simultaneously by Fr. John and Sarah, and will also deliver a very quick response.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. A summary financial report for the year ended 31 March 2016 is available on the parish website together with the full financial statements.

RACE NIGHT John Paul II Centre for Life Race Night Friday 9 September 2016 @ Addington. 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 include the cost of dinner.

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

as a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; in Jerusalem you shall find your comfort.

Isaiah 66

FOOD for THOUGHT presents "When Death Comes Close - How can we support loved ones and/or families of loved ones and those alone, to die in a way that reflects their wishes and needs?" Come and listen to Margie McCallum, who offers companionship to the dying, assists people to create meaningful funerals, and writes poetry that flows from her experiences. She is currently interviewing New Zealanders for a book about Death and Dying, Funerals and Grieving. Hurunui Library 7.30 pm Monday July 4th Any queries phone Michele 03 3149144 Light supper provided Gold coin donation appreciated.

Of your charity pray for the happy repose of the soul of:
Owen Sullivan
Robert Cotcher (*Julia Sinclair's father*)
May he rest in peace.

Masses are celebrated for those who have died (or for special intentions) as requested by parishioners. Please either email your request catholicurunui@gmail.com or post to the parish office.