

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH PARNELL

Sunday Mass Times ~ Saturday Vigil 5 pm, Sunday 7 am & 9.30 am

No weekday Masses until further notice except public holidays.

Saturday 9 am Mass & 9.30 am Reconciliation

Public Holidays 9 am Mass. (See below for Christmas timetable.)

Parish Priest ~ Father Stephen Berecz ~ Email: sberecz@gmail.com

Parish Secretary ~ Nathaniel Hood: phone (09) 373 3132 ~ Email: office@parnellcatholic.org.nz
www.parnellcatholic.org.nz

Christmas Time at St John the Baptist

Tuesday 24 December Christmas Vigil Mass 8 p.m. (Carols start 7.30 p.m.)

Wednesday 25 December Christmas Day Mass 9.30 a.m.

Thursday 26 December Feast of St Stephen Mass 9 a.m.

Wednesday 1 & Thursday 2 January Mass 9 a.m. Weekend masses as usual.

Parking in St John's Car Park

Those attending Sunday or a weekday Mass do not need to pay if using the St John's car park. On a Sunday, you may leave your car in the car park for one hour after Mass (that is, till 11.30 a.m.) without payment. Cars left beyond that time could be towed away.

On weekdays or Saturday morning, you have fifteen minutes after Mass only.

Safe Church - Safeguarding

As Catholics we believe that every person is created in the likeness and image of God. Therefore, we continue to ensure that our parish is a place where everyone is treated with respect & dignity. We foster an environment which is welcoming, & in which all our parish whānau, including our tamariki, rangatahi, kuia & kaumātua, feel safe. If you have any complaints or concerns, our Safeguarding Co-ordinator is Nathaniel Hood & you can contact him by phone 373 3132 or email office@parnellcatholic.org.nz. You may also contact the National Office for Professional Standards 0800-114-662. You may also contact the police 111.

The Square Gift Store

(Catholic Shop)

Liston House, St Patrick's Square
43 Wyndham Street, Auckland CBD 1010
Tel: (09) 365 1693

Email: info@thesquaregiftstore.co.nz

St Vincent de Paul Society

Foodbank Donations

Our Parish welcomes your donations of non-perishable goods and personal care items. The donations basket is located on the left side of the main entrance as you go inside the church. Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

Contact the SVDP Food Support team at
0800 680 090 or 815 6122

Email: foodbank@svdpak.org.nz

Diocesan Youth & Young Adult Ministry

www.facebook.com/AKCYM

Contact Sam Brebner samb@cda.org.nz

Catholic University Ministry

To find out more about what's going on for Catholic tertiary students in Auckland, please contact Daniel Story at daniels@cda.org.nz & check out [instagram.com/aucklandcatholicstudents/](https://www.instagram.com/aucklandcatholicstudents/)

Mass: Deaf Friendly

- 12 noon, 2nd Sunday each month. Followed by shared lunch (BYO). Poynton Room, 30 New St, Ponsonby. NZSL adapted.

- 9.30am 4th Sunday each month. Good Shepherd Parish, Telford Street, Balmoral. NZSL interpreter present. www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/discipleship/deaf-ministry

No cash but keen to donate?

Donations to the Parish should be to this account:

Acc. name: St. John's Parnell Parish
Account N^o: 02 0108 0705969 000

Set up through online banking
or visit your nearest branch.

Register with the Parish for receipt.



PARISH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PARNELL

"Prepare a way for the Lord."

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ 22ND DECEMBER 2024

As Advent draws us into the anticipation of Christ's birth, the Gospel this week offers a profound glimpse into the joy and faith surrounding this sacred event. Mary, having received the angel's message of her miraculous pregnancy, sets out with haste to visit her relative Elizabeth. This moment is more than a family reunion; it is a meeting filled with divine significance. Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, recognizes Mary's blessedness—not only because of her faith but because of the child she bears. The blessing comes from the presence of Jesus, the promised Messiah, growing within her.

"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb", Elizabeth proclaims later in the passage. This blessing is not about Mary's worthiness alone but about the transformative power of Christ. Mary is blessed because she believed in God's promise, and the One she carries is the source of that blessing.

Advent reminds us that this same blessing is offered to us. To be blessed, as shown in this Gospel, is to welcome Jesus into our lives, to believe in His promises, and to live in the hope of His coming. It's not about external circumstances or worldly achievements but about a heart open to the transformative presence of Christ. Just as Elizabeth and her unborn child leapt for joy in the presence of the Savior, we too are invited to experience that joy and blessing when we encounter Jesus.

As we prepare to celebrate His birth, let us reflect on our faith. Do we, like Mary, trust in the promises of God? Do we, like Elizabeth, recognize the presence of Christ in our lives and in those around us? Advent is a time to rekindle our belief in the One who blesses us with peace, hope, and eternal life. May we approach Christmas with hearts ready to embrace the same blessedness that Mary and Elizabeth knew—blessedness that comes from knowing and believing in Jesus, the child born to save the world. *- Fr Stephen Berecz*

Thank you to all who have helped

in the various ministries in our parish over the past year. Thank you too to our generous parishioners who have continued to support our church as well as our wider community in the diocese of Auckland. May you all have a wonderful Christmas &, for those who are going away, safe travels. God bless.

Liturgy of the Word

Mic 5:2–5a From you, O Bethlehem, will come the ruler of Israel.

Ps 79/80:1a, 2, 14–15, 17–18 **R 3** Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face & we shall be saved.

Heb 10:5–10 I come to do your will.

Luk 1:39–45 Why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?

Next weekend: 1 Sam 1:11,20–22, 24–28; Ps 83/84:1–2, 4–5, 8–10; 1 John 3:1–2, 21–24; Luk 2:41–52.

For Sunday and weekday readings see: mobilegabriel.com AND/OR www.livingtheword.org.nz

Presiding Priest this Sunday

Saturday 5 pm Fr Stephen Berecz
Sunday 7 am Fr Tony Dunn
Sunday 9.30 am Fr Stephen Berecz

Mass Times this week in Parnell

Tuesday 8 pm (carols start at 7.30)
Wednesday 9.30 am
Thursday 9 am
Saturday 9 am

Reconciliation

Saturday 9.30 am
~ ~ ~

St Michael's Remuera Mass times this week:

Sun 8 am, 10 am, 5 pm
Mon 7 am, 12 noon
Tues 7 am, 5 pm, midnight (carols from 11 pm)
Wed 8 am, 10 am, 5 pm
Thurs 7 am, 12 noon
Fri 7 am, 12 noon
Sat 8 am

St Michael's Reconciliation times this week:

Sunday 7.30 am, 9.30 am, 4.30 pm
Saturday 8:30am

Altar servers needed in our Parish

If your son or daughter would like to serve at the altar for Mass, please speak to sacristan Peter Lye, or enquire at the Parish Office. Full training & support will be provided.

2025 Columban Calendars now available

These can be purchased from the Parish Office for \$17 each. Please bring cash or email the parish office for details if you'd like to pay online.

Local Youth Ministers Wanted!

The Catholic Diocese of Auckland is looking for self-motivated leaders to become paid Local Youth Ministers, working across both a secondary school & parish. This is a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of young people! To learn more & to apply, please visit:

www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/staff-vacancies/.

Opening of the Year of Jubilee

Join Bishop Steve in Mass opening the year of Jubilee 2025, Cathedral of St Patrick and St Joseph, 11pm, 31 December.

Christmas Timetable at St John the Baptist

TUESDAY 24 DECEMBER

Xmas Vigil Mass at 8pm (Carols start @ 7.30pm)

WEDNESDAY 25 DECEMBER

Christmas Day Mass at 9.30am

THURSDAY 26 DECEMBER

Feast of St Stephen Mass at 9am

SATURDAY 28 DECEMBER

Masses at 9am & 5pm

SUNDAY 29 DECEMBER

Feast of the Holy Family Masses at 7am & 9.30am

WEDNESDAY 1 JANUARY 2025

Feast of Mary Mother of God Mass at 9am

THURSDAY 2 JANUARY 2025

Mass at 9am

Start Anew in Christ: Lent Resource for 2025

Fr Stephen is considering purchasing a set for the 2025 Jubilee Year if there is sufficient interest. If you would be interested in receiving a copy, please contact the parish office. Find out more at archdiocesanministries.org.au/lent-resource/.

Explore Catholic theology in context

Archdiocesan Ministries (Brisbane) are excited to open registrations for Module 1: Catholic Theology in Context. Each module in the Catholic Foundations course is open to everyone & can be completed independently, regardless of prior participation in other modules.

www.catholicformation.au

Dove Catholic Fellowship for Women

is excited to be launching a new initiative called Dovecotes. We invite you to prayerfully consider joining us by forming a Dovecote in your parish. All it needs is for two or more women, to support each other to deepen their personal relationship with Jesus Christ, through regular shared prayer. Our leaflet called 'Welcome to Dovecotes' is on our website: www.dove.org.nz or email Gloria Stafford: dovenational.leader@gmail.com.

Art Exhibition 2025—Trev 'Ofamo'oni

This invite to Good Shepherd Parish Hall Sundays in January 2025 is to welcome you to an exhibition of *Eikons* or Images of the Church as seen by West & East.

Please support the Catholic Caring Foundation

Christmas appeal through your donations & prayers. Your donation will have double the impact. caringfoundation.org.nz or call (09) 360 3012.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

is seeking an experienced journalist to support its communications efforts in 2025 & beyond. This new position will assist the Church in sharing its stories & in keeping the Catholic & wider community informed about the life, mission & ministry of the Church. A background in religious journalism would be advantageous, as would experience in media monitoring. Please send expressions of interest to communications@nzcbc.org.nz no later than January 12. The role could be filled sooner than January 12 for the right candidate, so please contact the Bishops Conference promptly.

Advance your faith with a New Year retreat

Please join us in the Ponsonby Herne Bay Parish Centre, 24 Vermont St, Ponsonby on Saturday 25 January, for a lively, hopeful, retreat day with Fr John O'Connor. Sessions will begin after 8am Mass in Sacred Heart Church & conclude in time for reconciliation at 4.15pm & Vigil Mass at 5pm. Sessions are standalone—the morning or afternoon, or for both. Fr O'Connor will also offer Mass at 10.30am Sunday, after which we will enjoy a shared finger-food lunch in the Parish Centre. We would appreciate a koha of \$20 for the day, \$10 morning/afternoon. Some refreshments provided.

Pilgrimage with the Saints Tour 2025

Fr Chris Friel (Timaru) will lead this 17-day tour of Portugal, Spain & France in June. For full details & itinerary, email Pilgrimage Tours in Auckland at info@travlink.co.nz or phone 0800 99 77 88.

Thank you from Monte Cecilia Housing Trust

Thanks for your parish's incredible generosity in supporting this year's Xmas donation drive.

Anniversary Mass Road Trip 12 January

leaving 5.30 am, Pompallier Catholic Centre, 30 New St, Ponsonby. Join us for a one-off day trip to join all the New Zealand bishops in celebrating the first Mass given by Bishop Pompallier at the home of the Poynton family in January 1838. This visit to Tōtara Point in the Hokianga will leave promptly at 5.30am. We will regather after lunch at 2:30pm for the return trip. We expect to arrive back at Pompallier Diocesan Centre at between 6:30pm & 7pm. Our bus is full but those wishing to join the convoy in their own cars/vans are welcome. Please contact Deacon Steve for further information stephenf@cda.org.nz.

Te Ara o te Tūmanako—The way of Hope

The theme for Jubilee 2025 is "Pilgrims of Hope" & this journey accompanied by Bishop Steve will be the "The Way of Hope". Beginning in Lyon & travelling along the way to meet the pilgrims of the past who have influenced our local & universal church, ending in Rome as they pass through the Holy Door in St Peter's Basilica in Rome & receive the Jubilee blessing. See poster in foyer.

Retreats & Events at St Francis Retreat Centre

For more info/dates & to book visit stfrancisretreatcentre.org.nz or call 09 625 6651.

Time Out Days—For those who seek a day retreat in 2025—9:30am–2:30pm (\$30 includes lunch) | Thu 13 Feb | Tue 11 Mar | Wed 16 Apr.

Women's Prayer Retreat—A reflective prayer retreat in the Catholic tradition for Women | Fri 28th Feb 6pm–Sun 2 Mar 3pm 2025 | Earlybird \$300 pp (before 8/2) | Standard \$330pp.

Lenten "Homecoming" Retreat—Reflecting on Rembrandt's painting & Henri Nouwen's book *The Return of the Prodigal Son* | Fri 11 Apr 6:30pm–Sun 13 Apr 7:30pm 2025 | Earlybird (before 22/3) \$300 | Standard \$330.

Please pray for those who are sick, recovering from surgery or needing our prayers, especially:

Mary Jean Laffey, Luke Sebastian Catiben, Scott Hickey, Maureen Adsett, Bernadette Tan, Chonusi William, Teana Jones, Maria Martho, Linus Broughton, Dawn Rocca, Lyn Sparks, Royston Beckham, AS, Margaret Everett, Ian Werder, Maryke Lind, Joy Mitchell, Francis Morais, John Kainuku, Christopher Browne, Serena Coughy, Adelaida Sison, Rita Lopez, Wayne Barden, Mary Bratton, John & Rosa Williams, Michael Wong, Yaroslav Khmel, Rosa Santos, Linus Broughton, Dawn Rocca, Royston Beckham, AS, Margaret Everett, Lyn Sparks, Ian Werder, Maryke Lind, Paul Mulderry, Louise Collins, Judy Hanna, Neira, Thilsi Vern, Ivy Hi, Dina Miranda, Malu Beltran, Vivien Emery, Gil Melling, Teresa Gudex, Corazon Villanueva Misa, Ben Hunt, Angela Robinson, Anne Telles, Kirei Tua, Maurice Robinson, Maura Just, Aaron Ablan, Alice Swann, Dennis Matthew, Marlee Owens, John Sullivan, Joy Agon, Lynn Welsh, Samira & Raj, James L. Cu, Linda Mole, Alberto Olarte, Ana Laura Robles, Brian Murphy, Christopher Hughes, BC, Ana Manjarrez, Sue Bedford, Joe Raymond, Patricia Wright, Sue Wynne Davis, Ann Gordon, Nicholas James, Bonifacio Sanches, Rosita Galarg, Gavin Alexander, Benny Clynes, Eric & Rachel Smith, J. Harrington, Rodolfo Paragas, Virgilia Velasquez, Shannon Kavanagh, Dennis Obillos.

We remember those who have died recently & whose anniversaries occur at this time:

Cardinal Thomas Stafford Williams, Leticia Gonzalez, Jan Laurent, Anita Butkovich, Lancelte Heron, Charlie Pride, Larry Downes, Vincent Santos, June Yuong, Olga Wolk, Marge Rameka, Ivan Selak, Josephine Aitchison, Vilma Adique, Santos Adique, Karen McDonald, Aileen Fitzpatrick, Elizabeth Hood, Consolatrix Redillos-Ageas, Baby Eli, John Body, Catriona Jackson, Jude Fernandes, Murray Tanner, Adrian de la Santos, John Fabling, Mary Henley, Chris Hughes, Janine Haywood, Doris Myers, Ella Swanson, Don Thompson. *Eternal rest grant to them.*