

**22nd MARCH 2026
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT**

REFLECTION

When was the last time you cried?

We cry, first of all when we see someone we love hurting. We also cry for ourselves when we are hurt, frustrated, sad, or lonely. Our tears are personal-they are for someone.

Our Lord's beloved friend Lazarus had been dead for four days. "By now there will be a stench," his sister says. Our Lord's response is the same as ours, tears. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word Incarnate, God made flesh, weeps-and His tears are also personal. When He sees Martha and Mary grieving for their brother, He grieves with them. When He sees Lazarus, "the one whom He loves", dead in the tomb, He weeps. "See how He loved him!" they said when they saw Him break down. See how the love of God is not general, it is profoundly personal. No one loves you more than the one who created you, the one who knows you best. And it is He who weeps with you and for you because He so desperately wants to free you.

Martha says, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." This wouldn't have happened. She also cries for justice. And I tell you "from the beginning it was not so". Death came into the world as a result of original sin. Lazarus is dead because he too suffers from the consequences of our first disobedience. Here then is Our Lord. He comes face to face with this sad mortal reality and weeps, for this is not the will of the Father.

Parents' hearts bleed when they see that their children do things that hurt them. Even more so, infinitely more so, does the Most Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ bleed when we choose to wound ourselves by sin. Tradition holds that during His agony in the garden of Gethsemane, Our Lord saw every sin ever committed, past, present, and future and scripture says that His soul became "sorrowful unto death." Despite all the good that the Father prepares for us, we still choose that which can never satisfy. And I tell you, "it was not so from the beginning."

Our Lord declares, "I am the resurrection and the life." This is what He wills. This is what He came for. "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" *John 10:10* The Father in His goodness will not let death have the final word. He sends Our Lord Jesus to awaken us from the sleep of death, "Lazarus, come out!" The Lord calls His beloved friend from the tomb by his name, Lazarus. He calls us to himself.

In these last remaining days of Lent, come to Confession where Christ calls you by name, wanting to clothe you again with the white garment of your baptism. In the confessional, weep for your sins with Him. Wipe away your tears and His when you resolve, "by the help of His grace, to do penance, to amend your life, and to avoid the near occasions of sin." Ask for the same grace when you meet Him today in Holy Communion. Stay close to Him as He ascends Calvary on Good Friday. Keep watch at His tomb on Holy Saturday. Then, rejoice with Him when He brings you the joy of Easter, and ultimately, leads you to the glory of eternal life - where He "will wipe every tear from our eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, no more crying or pain" (CF. Rev.21:4)

Extracts from the writings of Fr Aaron Salvan

Please pray for: All those who are in need and finding life a challenge at this time.

BISHOPS' LENTEN APPEAL

Supporting the work of Caritas, the second largest humanitarian organization in the world, is a chance to tangibly respond to those ruptures across the globe. Each year, the **Bishop's Lent Appeal** is the best way to fund Caritas' work - supporting vulnerable communities globally. Charity, which can be lived out through almsgiving, among other practices - is an important part of a life lived in the spirit of the Gospel. You can donate directly via direct credit or credit card through the Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand website <https://www.caritas.org.nz/ways-to-give> The Bank Account for Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand is 03-0518-0211216-03 Please use "Lent" as the code and your first and last name as particulars. Free Post envelopes are available from church if you prefer to give that way. All funds received by 29 March will be processed as part of the 2025/26 tax year. **Your generous support enables Caritas to help poor & marginalized communities around the world.**

HOLY WEEK TIMETABLE

Palm Sunday 28/29 March

(Palms will be blessed and distributed at all Masses)

5.30pm Saturday Vigil Mass

8.30am Sunday Mass

10.30am Mass will start in the parish hall with the blessing of the Palms and a procession around and into the church.

5.00pm Sunday Mass

Monday 30 March

9.15am Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion

Tuesday 31st March

9.15am Mass St Mary's

7.00pm Christ Mass St Patrick's & St Joseph's Cathedral

Wednesday 01st April

9.15am Mass

6.30pm Stations of the Cross

7.00pm Mass

Holy Thursday 02nd April

NO MORNING MASS

7.00pm Mass of the Last Supper Includes presentation of the Oils and washing of the feet. After Mass wait and watch with the Lord till 10.00pm

Good Friday 03rd April

10am Stations of the Cross

3.00pm Good Friday Liturgy

Holy Saturday 04th April

9.00am Morning Prayer

7.30pm Great Easter Vigil Mass Includes Baptisms and full Initiation into the Catholic Church of 27 new Catholics.

Easter Sunday 05th

Mass 8.30am - 10.30am & 5.00pm

**COMMISSIONING OF ALL
MINISTER'S OF THE WORD AND
MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Will be done over the second weekend of Easter the 11/12th April.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS
AND AN EVENING MASS EACH
WEDNESDAY DURING LENT
STATIONS 6.30PM & MASS 7.00PM
COME AND JOIN US,
ALL WELCOME!!**

EASTER EGGS

When Easter Egg Shopping please include one or two for the children at De Paul House, so that children, including those in their outreach programme can enjoy an Easter treat too! Eggs should be left at the church after weekend Masses or bring to the Parish Office **by Friday 27th March** so that De Paul House have time to get the Easter treats to the children in time!

**NORTH SHORE DEANERY
LENT RECONCILIATIONS**

RITE II all at 7pm

Takapuna Tues. 24 March
Glenfield Wed. 25 March
Northcote Thurs. 26 March
Beachhaven Fri. 27 March

NURTURING OUR FAITH

Monthly Faith Formation opportunity to gather, reflect, nourish and strengthen our faith. This month's formation is an in depth reflection on Holy Week. Date Monday 23rd March, 7 to 8.30pm in the Foley Centre. Facilitator is Joyce Ng.

To register please email.
office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

INVITATION!

You are cordially invited to Our Thursday Parish Scripture Reflection "*Evangelizing with Scripture*"
10.15am to 11.30am
Venue Foley Centre

GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION

Kindly note, there is a letter from the Dicastery regarding the Good Friday collection for the Holy Land posted on the notice board in the church foyer.

CHILDREN'S FORMATION

If your child has been baptised, attends a non-Catholic school and would like to know more about their faith, these classes provide an opportunity for them to learn the faith. **The classes are a requirement for those children wishing to register for the Sacramental Programme later this year.** Classes are on a Sunday morning. Enq. Childrensformation@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

MASS INTENTIONS

Sun. **10.30am** Mildred Ong RIP, Fidela Diaz RIP, Nenita Hernandez RIP & Razen Diego (Birthday on 23/3)

PARISH NEWSLETTER



You can now subscribe to get a link to our weekly newsletters via email for updates on Parish and Diocesan activities.

We encourage you to scan the QR Code, above, and subscribe now!

ST MARY'S PANTRY - THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who supported Mary's Pantry in 2025. Together, we distributed 360 fruit & veg bags, supporting over 85 families in our community. We have three fundraising events planned for 2026, along with plans to expand our Community Bags programme and launch our social supermarket. More details will follow soon.

Mary's Pantry is now also a registered charitable trust and if you would like to make a one-off or regular donation this can be done directly to the Mary's Pantry bank account 02-0200-0315568-000. To receive a tax receipt, please email your details and bank reference to hello@maryspantry.org.nz
Thank you to all our volunteers, donors, and supporters for helping us live our parish motto:

"Together we grow to reflect the face of Christ."

GIFT OF DREAMS

Saturday 28th March 10am to 2pm at the Orewa Catholic Church.

The Auckland Christian Meditation Community is hosting a presentation by Tay-Marie Yorston. Dreams tell our stories, they anchor and deepen our faith in seasons of transition, anxiety, stress, grief and loss. BYO lunch, bring a koha and a friend, no need to book.

More details on christianmeditationnz.org.nz/community-days-retreats

JOSHUA CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP - NORTH SHORE

Meeting Wed. 25 March, time 7.00pm Fellowship, 7.30pm Praise & Worship. Venue St Thomas More Church Glenfield. Topic: Lenten Reflection - The Two Standards: Choosing Christ. Join us for an Inspiring evening of brotherhood, prayer, reflection and encouragement. More info. From Tet-Woo 021 038 0196 or Dominick 021 100 3694

PALM SUNDAY CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

Come and join in a beautiful family friendly witness to the sanctity of human life from conception. This Vigil closes out the 40 Days for Life prayer vigil. Sunday 29th March 7.30pm at Potter's Park, cnr of Dominion and Balmoral Roads.

For more information contact Simon 021 400 729 or simon@fli.org.nz or at FLI.org.nz/prolifeevents

WEEK 5 : JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

Thank you for hearing the cries of our heart and the cries of the poor in our midst. We pray for deep healing in lands and hearts torn apart by violence and war. May those who carry pain and darkness find a place and time for healing and release. Give us faith in the resurrection. Amen

Please pray :

For the elderly and frail and the sick in our parish, especially, Philip, Yohann, Linda F, John McC, Megan S, Peter D, Peter C, John W, Mary L. Shannon, Owen B, Susan C, Brian, Katya, S Perry, Kathy M, Matthew S, Ronald B, Syrel C, Billy G, M. Angus C, Keira, Max W, David P, Yvonne S, Andrew C, Lauren S, Fe T, Jamie S-W, Adam S, James F, Lu P, Caroline C, Connie B, John H, Emily D, Sebastian C, Lucia, Anselmo S, Victoria R, Huda AW, Hilda P, David K, Maria O, Alice C, Najla, Petros A, Jocell D-V, Luca M, Maselino L, Ann C, Letalie V, Yvonne P, Helen McBride, Aesop N, Patricia W, Elizabeth S, M O'S, Jason P, Maria & Andre T, Chike E, Emily G, June B, John R, John S, Patricia Maunsell, Mary G, Cath S, Anne J.

DAILY READINGS

Monday	Reading Daniel 13	Ps. 130
	Gospel John 8: 1-11	
Tuesday	Reading Numbers 21: 4- 9	Ps. 102
	Gospel John 8:21-30	
Wednesday Annunciation		
	1st Reading Isaiah 7:10-14,8:10	Ps. 40
	2nd Reading Hebrews 10: 4-10	
	Gospel Luke 1:26-38	
Thursday		
	Reading Genesis 17: 3- 9	Ps. 105
	Gospel John 8:51-59	
Friday		
	Reading Jeremiah 20:10-13	Ps. 18
	Gospel John 10:31-42	
Saturday		
	Reading Ezekiel 37:21-28	Ps. 31
	Gospel John 11:45-57	
Sunday Passion Sunday		
	1st Reading Isaiah 61: 1- 3,6,8-9	Ps. 89
	2nd Reading Apocalypse 1: 5- 8	
	Gospel Luke 4:16-21	

NOTICES FROM THE DIOCESE

Prayer Retreat for Women Prayer and the Interior Life, Friday 17th April 6pm to Sunday 19th April 3pm. Time for Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, Personal Prayer and Spiritual Direction. St Francis Retreat Centre, Hillsborough. Earlybird registration and more details www.stfrancisretreatcentre.org.nz

Rise up and Shine Festival Taste the World, Celebrate the Culture 30th May. Starts at 10am with Thanksgiving Mass. Followed by Social Entertainment until 3pm. Music, Zumba, Food Stalls and Cultural show. Join us at the Migrant Chaplaincy Rise Up and Shine Festival, where every bite tells a story and every dance sparks joy. Venue Malaeola Community Centre, 16 Waokauri Place, Mangere.

WYD 2027 Webinars In preparation for World Youth Day 2027 in Seoul Korea, Te Kupenga Catholic Theological College invites young people and everyone to grow in their faith, hope and missionary discipleship, with this year's webinar series, "Take Courage! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33) more info www.tekupenga.ac.nz/webinars-2026

Lent Webinar Series - Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand Journey Registrations have now opened for the next Webinar Series involving our Catholic Bishops, for all dates: <https://link.caritas.org.nz/lentweb1regionong>
Teams Oceania Conference 20-22 March Team members from around Oceania, including the Philippines & Timor Leste. For enquiries and registrations contact Jan & Tony on teamsnzaotearoa@gmail.com

Charis NZ Chevalier Cyril John will be leading a 1.5 day, hosted by Current of Grace Auckland at Christy he King Church, Owairaka. 11/12th May. Training on Prophetic Intercession.

WHY NOT BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN YOUR PARISH IN 2026? URGENTLY NEEDED NOW

Car Parking attendants (ALL Sunday & Special Masses)

Mass Coordinator for 10.30am Mass

Hospitality people

Contact the office on office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz and more Details/training will be given!

CHURCH CLEANING 21 Mar. Valdez family - 28 Mar. Butler Family
ALTAR LINEN 22 Mar. Birgitte R - 29 Fleur B



"Didn't I tell you that you would see God's glory if you believe?"
John 11: 3-45

How is God inviting you to trust Him more deeply at this moment?

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP 2026!

Next Meeting 05th April after the 5.00pm Mass. Anyone between the ages of 18-35 is most welcome. Come along and meet other young adults in the parish for fellowship and to journey alongside one another in our Catholic faith. Enquires Email: gnastrun88@gmail.com

PROLIFE FACTS

March 2026 has been an inspiring month for pro-life witness in New Zealand. The National Pro-life Conference on March 6th brought people together from across the country to hear excellent speakers and be strengthened in the mission to build a culture of life. The following day, around 1500 people gathered in downtown Auckland for the March for Life 2026. Walking together along Queen Street singing life-affirming hymns and refrains created a hopeful, family-friendly atmosphere and a strong public witness. Organisers are deeply grateful to everyone who participated and contributed.

Dates for the 2027 events will be announced soon.

For pro-life info, visit www.voiceforlife.org.nz.