**26 JULY 2026**
**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

## REFLECTION

Conventional wisdom has given us the well known proverb:
"don't put all your eggs in one basket."
Meaning: Beware! Don't stake all you got on just one thing. If you have ever invested any money, your financial advisor probably told you the same thing, invest in a diversified portfolio.
"don't put all your eggs in one basket."
This Sunday's Gospel flies straight into the face of conventional wisdom: "The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it." This pearl merchant first goes out "searching for fine pearls" in the plural - intending to find enough to make a pearl necklace, or bracelet or at least a pair of earrings. He's looking for enough pearls to string, so that if one breaks, goes bad or missing or whatever, he's not lost his whole investment. But then this pearl merchant goes crazy - or at least, he gets *very* confident.
"When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it."

Now, generally, Jesus tells us parables to throw us off. Contrary to what a lot of people believe, parables are not little moral stories. For instance, nobody should think that not sharing your lamp-oil with other bridesmaids is the height of charity. Nobody should think that letting ninety-nine sheep on their own to go off and find one that got lost in the brambles is good farming practice. And nobody should think that investing all your assets in one big pearl is a financially sound decision. What Jesus is trying to do with the parables, instead, is to shake us up, to change how we imagine God, and how we imagine He will come and save us. God is unconditionally invested in each and everyone of us. He loves all His children. Each one is a pearl of infinite value to Him. God sent His only begotten Son to lead a human life and lose that life for us. That is totally insane! It is not prudent, it doesn't even respect the basic natural law of all living beings - self preservation. That's how crazy God's love is for each of us.

That is what Jesus, in the parables, is telling His disciples along the ages. And in return, what God hopes, what Christ hopes. What the Holy Spirit hopes, is that we will somehow reciprocate their love. They hope that divine love for each and everyone of us will not remain unrequited. That we too will invest all we have on God, that we will "put all our chips" on His mercy and grace. So, brothers and sisters, if you feel that you are putting your trust in something that is taking you away from God and those you should love, pause and think. Try and imagine what pearls of great price life has offered you. You can guarantee that the gospel is one of them!

Extracts from the writings of Fr Nicholas C Steeves

***Please pray for:***
*All families struggling to cope with illness or conflict at this time.*

**HAPPY GRANDPARENTS & ELDERLY PARISHIONERS DAY 2026!**
We thank you for your love, patience & example to us all! May your day be filled with many blessings.

**CAN YOU HELP DE PAUL HOUSE?**
You can get some good bargains at The Warehouse or Briscoes! De Paul House needs your help to restock their warm bedding and towel banks. You will be helping homeless and low-income families and senior citizens stay warm this winter. De Paul House has had a huge increase in calls for help both with housing and support services. Please share the message with friends, family and work colleagues. Matthew 25:40 The King will reply *"Truly I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."*
**admin@depaulhouse.org.nz ph: 480 5959**

**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. Childrenformation@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

**JOSHUA CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**
Next meeting Wednesday 29th July at St Thomas More Church, Wairau Rd, Glenfield. 7.00pm Fellowship, 7.30pm Praise & Worship followed by presentation, topic *"Introduction to the New Testament."* enq. Tet-Woo 021 038 0196 & Dominic 021 100 3694

**RETREAT DAY FOR WOMEN - DOMINICAN SISTERS OF ST. CECILIA**
Women of all ages are invited to join the Sisters, visiting from Sydney, for a Retreat Day centered on the Eucharist. Sun. 02 Aug. 12.30pm to 6pm at St Lukes's , 260 Chapel Road, Flat Bush. Cost $10 including afternoon tea. Please register at https://events.humanitix.com/rereat-for-women

**OVERCOME ADDICTIONS BY FR ROBERT STEELE**
Fr Robert Steele, who struggled with alcohol addiction before his ordination but has just marked 25years of sobriety, has published: A Journey of Hope: Combating Pornography on the internet. He says his book, described as a Catholic approach to healing and freedom, comes from a place of empathy, not judgement. Tuesday 28 July 7 to 8pm St John the Baptist Church, Mairangi Bay.

**FOOD BANK SHELVES ARE EMPTY!**
De Paul House needs food and especially personal and household care products. Shampoo, soap, hand-wash, deodorant, dish wash, clothes wash, etc. Basics like crackers, biscuits, pasta sauce, tinned fish & meat, coconut milk & cream, jam, vegemite, milk powder, long life milk. Every contribution makes a difference. If you want to run a food drive, please contact Lesley Farmer lesley@depaulhouse,org.nz orcall 480 5959

**ALTAR SERVER TRAINING**
We are looking to train new Altar Servers, for all Masses but especially for the **5.30pm Vigil Saturday and 5.00pm Sunday Masses**. Training will be at **3.30pm on Thursday 30th July** in the church, so if you have been Confirmed and made your 1st Holy Communion recently and would like to join the ministry this is for YOU please check with your parents and ask them to register by emailing the office at office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz
If you are a current Server and would like a refresher you are welcome to also attend this session.

**ALONE AGAIN?**
A weekend away to help those suffering the heartache of separation, divorce or widowhood 21 to 23rd August. The Beginning Experience is a non-profit organization that provides support for those grieving being single again. Cost $350 includes accommodation, meals, materials & follow-up event. More info www.beginningxperience.org.nz

**FLOWER ROSTER**
We are urgently needing new volunteers for our flower roster (flowers done on a Saturday morning). If you have a flare for arranging flowers and are able to help by being on a monthly roster please contact the office office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz
We have at least 4 places vacant!!!!

**OCIA**

Order of Christian Initiation for Adults
*A Journey of Faith*
**OCIA** adopted for Unbaptised Children of 7-15 years begins soon.
**To enrol for the 2026/2027 OCIA process** please email the Parish Office
christianinitiation@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz
By 16th August 2026

**NURTURE OUR FAITH' 2026**
Next Faith Nurturing monthly evening is Monday 27 July, 7-8.30pm, in the Foley Centre. This is an opportunity to reflect, nourish, and strengthen our Faith by delving deeper into the meaning of what we believe. The topic that we will explore is "Catholic Sacraments - Encounters with the Divine ''.
To register, please email office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz.

ST MARY'S NORTHCOTE PARISH AUCKLAND

**TO REGISTER, PLEDGE FOR YOUR PLANNED GIVING, OR GET OUR NEWSLETTER ONLINE**
Please go to our Web site
Don't hesitate to contact the office if you need help!
office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

**IMPORTANT NOTICE - SCAM EMAILS BEWARE!**

Recently the frequency of scam emails pertaining to be from Priests has increased enormously. Please check carefully the email address of any pertaining to be from a priest. It is better to phone the parish office (**480 7357**) or send an email direct to the parish office **office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz** before responding if there is any doubt.

**SILENT AUCTION - ORIGINAL WATERCOLOURS - BY FR IVAN LUNJEVICH**

Celebrate the beautiful artwork of a much loved Priest of the Catholic Diocese for 60 years - generously donated to **Mary's Pantry** to support families in need across the North Shore. **Your Bid = real impact** to help us stand alongside local families doing it tough. View artwork and place your bid

https://www.32auctions.com/maryspantry2026

**Auction closes: 28 July 2026 - 10.00am NZST**

**Payment & Collecxtion** Winners will be contacted after the auction closes to arrange pickup. Pay by **cash or EFTPOS** at collection. Questions? hello@maryspantry.org.nz

**HUMAN PERSON IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICAL INTELLIGENCE**

Pope Leo XIV's first Encyclical now available in NZ cost $23.50
Online stjosephscentre.co.nz/products/magnifica-humanitas or instore
St Joseph's Centre Gift Shop, 253 Dairy Flat Highway, Albany 489 5613

**ST MARY'S KNIGHTS (JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP AGES 8-12 YEARS)**

Meets every 4th Friday of the month from 6 to 8pm in the parish hall. We discuss scripture, learn about significant people in the church and in the bible as well as focusing on key events in the liturgical calendar. Allow your children to learn and grow in their faith as well as have fun and make friends from other schools and year levels.

**ST MARY'S YOUTH GROUP (AGES 13 TO 17 YEARS)**

St Mary's welcomes youth aged 13-17 years to our youth group! Our youth Masses are every 3rd Sunday of the month at 5pm followed by our youth group session from 6 to 8pm in the parish hall. Come along for prayer, games and fellowship.

**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Sun. 10.30am** Julia Linardi RIP (3rd Anniv.); Special Intention of Ting Sie Mee (undergoing bone marrow transplant for Leukemia); Lino Hernandes RIP (10th Anniv.) Thanksgiving for Chel Hernandez & family. **5.00pm** Phyliss O'Sullivan RIP (29th Anniv.) wife of the late Steve, mother of Mary & Margaret & the late Peter and Paula. ;
**Tues. 9.15am** Ismael Tajo RIP.

**Please pray :** For the elderly and frail & 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, Emily D, Sebastian C, Lucia, Anselmo S, Victoria R, Huda AW, Hilda P, David K, Alice C, Najla, Petros A, Jocell D-V, Luca M, Maselino L, Ann C, Yvonne P, Helen McBride, Aesop N, Patricia W, Elizabeth S, M O'S, Jason P, Maria & Andre T, Emily G, June B, John R, Patricia M, Cath S, Anne J, Patrick C, Cath S, Mike L.

## DAILY READINGS

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| **Monday** | | | |
| Reading | Jeremiah | 13: 1-11 | Cant. Deuteronomy |
| Gospel | Matthew | 13:31-35 | |
| **Tuesday** | | | |
| Reading | Exodus | 14:17-22 | Ps. 79 |
| Gospel | Matthew | 13:36-43 | |
| **Wednesday St. Martha** | | | |
| Reading | Jeremiah | 15:10-21 | Ps. 59 |
| Gospel | Matthew | 13:44-46 | |
| **Thursday** | | | |
| Reading | Jeremiah | 18: 1- 6 | Ps. 146 |
| Gospel | Matthew | 13:47-53 | |
| **Friday St Ignatius of Loyala** | | | |
| Reading | Jeremiah | 26: 1- 9 | Ps. 69 |
| Gospel | Matthew | 13:54-58 | |
| **Saturday St Alphonsus Liguori** | | | |
| Reading | Jeremiah | 26:11-16,24 | Ps. 69 |
| Gospel | Matthew | 14: 1-12 | |
| **18TH WEEK ORDINARY TIME** | | | |
| 1st Reading | Isaiah | 55: 1- 3 | Ps. 145 |
| 2nd Reading | Romans | 8:35,37-39 | |
| Gospel | Matthew | 14:13-21 | |

**NOTICES FROM THE DIOCESE**

***World Youth Day Auckland 2026*** 10am to 8.30pm *Saturday 01st August* at Victory Convention Centre. Join over 1,800 young Catholics at Victory Convention Centre for World Youth Day Auckland 2026-a massive joy filled day of faith, community and WITNESS. Inspired by the scripture chosen for the 40th World Youth Day, "You also are my witnesses, because you have been with me" (Jn 15:27). This year's event is about fixing our gaze on Jesus and becoming courageous witnesses of Christ in our world. For more info and to register to go to: https://events.humantix.com/world-youth-day-auckland-2026 .

***Wings.Nga Parirua*** Ponder and pray-Encyclical Letter– Magnifica Humanitas of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV on Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence. Join us and reflect on Pope Leo's own words together on Zoom. Wednesdays 22, & 29 July 7 to 7.30pm for the link contact Dianna Fouhy diannaf@cda.org.nz

***Diocesan Vacancies:*** Otahuhu Parish Coordinator 20 hrs a week Tuesday to Friday 9am to 2.30pm Full details and job description go to www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz –Diocesan Services, staff vacancies. ST ANNE'S, MANUREWA `PART-TIME Parish Receptionist more details go to SEEK https://nz.seek.com/job/92934322

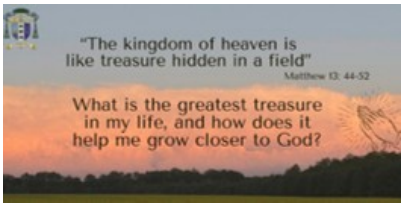
***Alpha in the Catholic Context*** A local series on why Alpha in our parishes will help and how it will generate vibrancy. All welcome to attend. 19 Aug.7pm Where does Alpha fit in the life of the parish, 16 Sept. 7pm ow to take your Alpha from good to great. Register on Training Zoom for Alpha in a catholic context-Fill out form more info. Contact Clare@alpha.org.nz or Deacon Fraser stephenf@cda.org.nz

***Eucharistic Healing Service*** Joy Healing Ministry, based in Onewa, are holding a Eucharistic Healing Service on Sat. 08th August, 3 to 5pm at St John's Church, Centreway Rd, Orewa. Visiting priest Fr Frankie Mulgrew, from Salford Cathedral, Manchester, UK will be conducting the service assisted by Fr James Mulligan, which will include Reconciliation. The 5.30pm Vigil Mass will follow and then refreshments.

***Auckland Inter-Faith Council*** AIFC Annual General Meeting. Thurs. 6 August 7.30pm in Ponsonby. Please let us know if you can attend. If you would like to be an AIFC member and support our volunteer work with your membership fee please see more information at http://www.aucklandinterfaithcouncil.org.nz/membership/aifc-membership/

**JOHN PRIDMORE - INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC SPEAKER**

In Auckland for a series of inspiring Parish Missions. For more than 30 years, John has travelled the world sharing his powerful story of conversion, hope and God's mercy, inspiring thousands to rediscover their faith. Each evening includes John's testimony, prayer and an opportunity to deepen your relationship with Christ through Eucharistic Adoration. St Joseph's, Takaupna Monday 17th to Wednesday 19th August sessions begin 7.00pm.



*"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field"* Matthew 13:44-52

*What is the greatest treasure in my life, and how does it help me grow closer to God?*

**CHURCH CLEANING**
01 Aug. Upton Family
08 Aug. Kimberley G
**ALTAR LINEN**
26 July Prisca T
02 Aug. Ninette C

**PROLIFE FACTS**

Applications for assisted suicide and euthanasia, which the Ministry of Health refers to as "assisted dying", have reportedly increased by 44% over the past three years. 486 New Zealanders died from these causes between April 2025 to March 2026. ACT have their Assisted Dying Amendment Bill sitting in the ballot box. If taken up and passed, conscientious objection would not exempt publicly funded healthcare facilities from allowing euthanasia and assisted suicide to be provided on their premises by external providers. According to Voice for Life, although the number of people seeking to die is increasing, the number of doctors prepared to assist is trending down, from 148 in March 2023 to 121 in March 2025

***For pro-life info, visit w.voiceforlife.org.nz.***