

25th OCTOBER 2026
THIRTIETH WEEK ORDINARY TIME

REFLECTION

We live in a world caught up in a maze of rules, procedures and regulations. We often feel overwhelmed by the constant burden of adjusting to new demands. The question that the scholar of the law asks Jesus - "Teacher, which commandment in the law is greatest?" - is therefore hardly unfamiliar to us. In the Israel of Jesus' day it was not just a theoretical problem either. The Pharisees had listed exactly 613 commandments in the Torah: 248 positive precepts, corresponding to the traditional count of the body parts, and 365 negative prohibitions, one for each day of the year. They divided them into "light" and "heavy" regulations, attempting to determine what ultimately decides salvation and God's favour. Hidden within the scholar's question lies a valid anxiety that many of us share today. In a world structured by such a complex web of rules, what really matters? Where should I focus my attention so as not to lose myself in the thicket of regulations, daily duties, and expectations imposed by others?

Yet can love ever truly be "commanded"? Love cannot be forced by decree or enforced through fear. The Gospel's "You shall love" is not the ruling of a judge, but an invitation to step into a relationship. We need to understand that God is not looking for efficient bureaucrats of a religious system who meticulously check out every box on the list of devotional duties. God wants our heart. Most importantly, He loved us first (1 John 4:10) and His unmerited love enables us to respond. What does it mean to love God with all one's heart? We must love Him with both inclinations of the human heart. The inclination toward good and the inclination toward evil. In other words, God does not wait for us to become crystal clear and free from temptation. He desires that we bring Him our whole heart, including our difficult, unrefined passions, fears, anger, self impulses, and allow Him to transform it. What does it mean to love with all one's soul? A willingness to entrust our soul, our destiny, to God in all circumstances, without setting conditions or fearing for our own security. To love with all one's strength? Love for God cannot remain a mere sentimental emotion, it must cost something. What are our money, time, health and talents? If employed for love, they become tools of true freedom.

The second Commandment, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself". Why should loving our neighbour be so closely bound by loving God? For Christians the answer is evident because in the incarnation, God united Himself to humanity in Jesus Christ. That is why Jesus could say "Whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for Me". (Mt.25:40). There is no path to God that bypasses our neighbour.

Serving others is loving God Himself. Let us not be afraid when God asks us to love, let us open our hearts to the love that precedes us. Allow God to love us in our weakness.

exerts from the writings of Fr. Michal Paluch

**REMEMBERING OUR DECEASED
LOVED ONES - NEXT WEEKEND**

31 OCTOBER/1 NOVEMBER

If you have lost a family member or close friend during the past twelve months (i.e. November 2025 to September 2026) and you would like them to be remembered with a candle, and have a photo added to our photo collage then **please let the office know as soon as possible but no later than Thursday 22nd October.** We will need a photo of the person and their year of birth and death. If your relative/friend was farewelled from St Mary's then you will receive a personal invitation, via email and we will have a copy of the funeral leaflet and a photo. There is a basket, pens and paper for you to write the names of your loved ones whom you would like to be remembered at all Masses during November and a box to 'post' the paper with their names. As usual, everyone will be invited to light a t/light candle at which ever Mass they attend on the weekend of 31 October/1 November. Large named candles will be provided for the recently deceased who are advised to us.

ON SALE FROM THE PARISH OFFICE
Claretian Bible Diaries for 2027

only \$20.00 - also

St Columban Art Calendars
only \$12.00

both make wonderful gifts!

INVITATION!

Our Parish Thursday morning Scripture Reflections continue in the Foley Centre from 10.15 to 11.30am ALL WELCOME!

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 do so.

The classes are a requirement for those children wishing to register for the Sacramental Programme next year!

Classes are on Sunday mornings enq. childrensformation@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

VOLUNTEERS LUNCH

Thank you to all who attended last week's light lunch and very special thanks to Mel, Leah and Magdalene who worked in the kitchen.

BABY GWEN!

Can baby Gwen's grandmother please contact the parish office (09) 480 7357 or office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

Please pray:

for all families who are struggling at this time.

**INVITATION TO - ANNUAL PARISH DAY
RETREAT 21 NOVEMBER 2026**

If you are involved in any of the Church Ministries, such as Minister of Holy Communion, the Word, Communion to the sick/elderly, Music, Projection, Care of Church linen, Hospitality, Catechist, Faith formation etc. etc. this is the day for you, we would love to see you there. Local venue, To cover all costs including morning & afternoon tea and Lunch \$40 pp. Please register by emailing the parish office office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

ST VINCENT DE PAUL NEEDS HELP!

Recently retired? Have some spare time? or simply want to make a difference in your local community? We'd love to welcome a few more friendly volunteers to our Takapuna Store on Saturdays or Wednesdays. We're especially grateful for the support already provided by volunteers from St Joseph's and St Mary's, and there is room for more helping hands. St Vincent de Paul profits go back into supporting the local community. If you can support us once a month/fortnight or weekly your time would be greatly appreciated. Pop into **25 Barry's Pont Road, Takapuna** for a chat or contact takapuna.vinnies@gmail.com

**ON GOING REQUEST FOR FOOD/CARE
PRODUCTS FOR DE PAUL HOUSE!**

First a BIG Thank You to those who regularly bring something along every weekend - everything helps!

De Paul House needs an ongoing supply of 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, longlife milk. Every contribution makes a difference.

If you want to run a food drive, contact Lesley Farmerlesley@depaulhouse.org.nz

**SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S
RESPONSIBILITY**

Help us strengthen a culture where everyone is welcomed, heard, respected and protected. more info. contact the parish office.

THE ROSARY

A devotion with an uncertain origin - Pat McCarthy www.studyjoy.nz/2026/10/04/the-rosary-is-a-devotion-with-an-uncertain-origin/



ST MARY'S NORTHCOTE PARISH AUCKLAND

To register, Pledge for your Planned Giving, get our newsletter online, or update your address and contact details: Please go to our Web site!

Don't hesitate to contact us if you need help
office@stmarysnorthcote.org.nz

RED NOVEMBER 2026 - AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED
THE DIOCESE PLANS TO LIGHT THE POMPALLIER CENTRE RED IN
VISUAL SUPPORT OF RED NOVEMBER THROUGHT NOVEMBER
THEY WILL ALSO CELEBRATE RED WEDNESDAY MASS AT THE
CENTRE ON 18 NOVEMBER. DETAILS TO BE ADVISED.



THEIR FAITH COSTS THEM EVERYTHING.
YOUR SOLIDARITY COSTS A MOMENT STAND
WITH PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS AROUND THE
WORLD. RESOURCES, REGISTRATION &
DONATIONS OPEN NOW. REDNOVEMBER.ORG

BISHOPS' ELECTION STATEMENT

The New Zealand Bishops have *published* their statement for the 2026 General Election. Titled *Discerning our nation's future through a Gospel Lens*, the document encourages Catholics and people of good will to consider voting as a moral and civic responsibility, not just a matter of personal preference. The bishops invite people to consider how they cast their votes by reviewing candidates and parties' positions across a range of key issues, and they also encourage people to pray for the country. Access the election statement at <https://bit.ly/NZCBCElections26>

CHURCH CLEANING - 31 Oct. Hoa N - 7 Nov. Kimberley G
ALTAR LINEN - 25 Oct. Anne H - 01 Nov. Prisca T

ST MARY'S KNIGHTS (AGES 8-12)

Next meeting this Friday (30 October) we will be doing an All Hallows Eve party in honour of All Saints and All Souls Days. Please dress up as your favourite saint. Prizes for the Best Dressed! 6 to 8pm in the parish hall - Pizza will be provided. More info/queries Frankie 022 059 0852

MASS INTENTIONS

Sat 5.30pm Windsor Valladares RIP 2nd Anniv. Savio & Maureen Fernandes
Wedding Anniv.: **Sun. 10.30am** Thanksgiving for Birthday and Graces received
by Blesilda Lee: **5.00pm** Paula O'Sullivan RIP (2nd Anniv.) daughter of the late
Phylliss & Stephen, sister of Margaret, Mary & the late Peter

Please pray: For the elderly and frail & the sick in our parish, especially, Philip, Yohann, Linda S, John McC, Megan S, Peter D, Peter C, John W, Mary L, Shannon, Owen B, Susan C, Serge, Kanya, S, Perry, Kathy M, Matthew S, Ronald B, Syrel C, Billy G, M. Angus C, Keira, Max W, David P, Yvonne S, Lauren S, Fe T, Jamie S-W, Adam S, James F, Lu C, Caroline C, Emily D, Sebastian C, Lucia, Anselmo S, Victoria R, Hilda P, David K, Alice C, Naja, Petros A, Jocel D-V, Luca M, Maselino L, Yvonne P, Helen McBride, Ason N, Patrics 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, Aria J, Neil M, Ray & Noelene O, Sue M, Celine S, Kathleen F, Dorothy S, Francis, Mary G, Rachel W, Helen S

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY

READING EPHESIANS 4:32- 5; 8 PS. 1
GOSPEL LUKE 13:10-17

TUESDAY

READING EPHESIANS 5:21-33 PS. 128
GOSPEL LUKE 13:18-21

WEDNESDAY STS SIMON & JUDE

GOSPEL EPHESIANS 2:19-22 PS. 19A
READING LUKE 6:12-16

THURSDAY

READING EPHESIANS 6:10-20 PS. 144
GOSPEL LUKE 13:31-35

FRIDAY

READING PHILLIPPIANS 1: 1-11 PS. 111
GOSPEL LUKE 14: 1- 6

SATURDAY

READING PHILLIPPIANS 1:18-26 PS. 42
GOSPEL LUKE 14: 1,7-11

SUNDAY ALL SAINTS

1ST READING APOCALYPSE 7: 2- 4, 9-14 PS. 24
2ND READING I JOHN 3: 1- 3
GOSPEL MATTHEW 5: 1-12

DIOCESAN NEWS

Mass for Deceased Clergy All parishioners across the Diocese warmly invited to the Annual Mass to remember & pray 3rd Nov. 11am at St Patrick's Panmure.

Ruth Miller Scholarship for Theological Study for those already teaching in a Catholic School doing one or more theology papers towards a Bachelor of Theology in 2027. apply scholarships@cda.org.nz closes 27 November

Marriage Preparation Course. Getting married in early 2027? Don't leave it too late! The final Marriage Preparation Courses for 2026 are filling quickly! If you are planning to marry in the first half of 2027 you will need to complete your preparation this year. We encourage you to register as soon as possible to secure a place. Courses are offered at St Michael's Parish, Remuera on Saturdays 9.00am to 1.00pm and at St Luke's 9.00am to 1.30pm. If you are not in the 10.00am to 11.00am to 1.30pm, more info. & register

Alpha Ignite Registrations now open - Come and hear Clare Bell, Alpha NZ NZ's Catholic Engagement Manager speak about how to use Alpha to ignite the parish. If you are interested in hearing more about how Alpha can work building your parish. Sat.28 Nov 11am to 3pm at Pompallier Diocesan Centre Lunch provided. register at www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/alpha-ignite-2026/

Administration Assistant Wanted: Marriage & Family Life is looking for a highly capable Admin Assistant who combines excellent administrative skills with a genuine pastoral sensitivity & commitment to serving others. Part-time role of 16 Hrs, Mon. Tues. Wed and Friday 10am-2pm (some evening and weekend work) visit www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/staff-vacancies/

Marist School, Mt Albert is celebrating its centenary next year and are looking for past pupils, staff etc to join the planning committee contact Principal at j.search@marist.school.nz

Election Webinar - October 28th The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference is hosting a webinar to unpack the bishops 2026 election statement, *Discerning Our Nations Future Through a Gospel Lens*. Join Wellington Archbishop Paul Martin SM, Catholic Family Support Services Hamilton manager Renee Rewi and Trinity Catholic College Principal Kate Nicholson live at 7pm on Wednesday 28th October. The conversation will examine how faith can inform participation in public life and help shape a society that upholds human dignity, promotes justice and serves the common good. Learn more and register at <https://bit.ly/NZCBCElection>

"Love your neighbour as yourself".
Mathew 22:34-40

What is one small act of kindness I can
offer someone this week?

PRAY MASS
SUNDAYS @2PM
SHINE TV
free to air TV Channel 25
SKY TV Channel 201

PROLIFE FACTS

Following Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness week (9 to 15 October), many simple yet meaningful ways exist to honour the value of human life throughout the year. Individuals and church communities can pray for unborn children through spiritual adoption (praying for an unborn child known only to God for 9 months), support pregnancy centres with practical donations, and remember babies lost through miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant death, through memorial services, lighting candles, and memorial trees. Ways to make a difference include helping new parents, supporting food banks, visiting isolated elderly people, offering prayers for vulnerable mothers and babies, and praying peacefully near abortion clinics. These are all tangible ways that we can help build a society that respects life, at every age and stage, in our every day lives.

for more prolife facts visit:rightforlife.org.nz