

Anniversary's in August

Margaret Fletcher, Herbert de Stacpoole

Aimee Oldham, Kerri Hitchens

Monica Brick, John Seed, Franc

Barbara Bird, Mons Thomas Duffy, Martin Taylor

Royal Commission - St John of God Case Study-

The Royal Commission into Abuse in Care has released a report into the Brothers of St John of God. This follows on from public hearings held in early 2022. The focus is on Marylands School, a residential school run by the Brothers in Christchurch from 1955-1983. Also investigated is Hebron Trust an organisation in Christchurch for at-risk youth run by a Brother of St John of God from 1986-1992. The report contains confronting material from the investigation and highlights the horrific abuse and failure to act on reports and disclosures of abuse appropriately. Te Rōpū Tautoko, the group coordinating Catholic responses to the Inquiry, are working through the findings alongside church leadership. They are updating the Tautoko roadmap of work to reflect the required actions. The aim is that all of us collectively implement meaningful change to the way we safeguard all those in care and respond to those who have suffered harm. For more information and to read the report visit www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/marylands

Pro-Life—Schoolgirls who fall unexpectedly pregnant, may confide in the school counsellor, or the public health nurse. The girl may then be offered the option of an abortion, and there have been cases where the school counsellor personally drives the girl to the abortion clinic. There is no legal requirement for the girl's parents to be informed. For more pro-life information, go to www.voiceforlife.org.nz.

This Sunday night (20th August), John Cowan's guest will be broadcaster, podcaster & media chaplain Petra Bagust. Petra has worked in TV and radio for over 30 years. She grew up in Christchurch and attended the University of Canterbury, where she complet-



AMBROSE GOLF TOURNAMENT 2023

2 DEC WAIPUKURAU GOLF CLUB
TEE OFF 12PM
REGISTRATION 11:30AM
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ed a Bachelor of Fine Arts. She began her television career at local TV station Cry TV and later co-hosted youth TV series Ice TV and Ice As. She went on to host What's Really In Our Food? and present TVNZ's Breakfast. Most recently, Petra has moved into podcasting, hosting two podcasts - Grey Areas and Sunday Sanctuary. Grey Areas remained in the top 10 Apple Podcasts for eight weeks and just won Best Entertainment Podcast - Seasonal at the 2023 New Zealand Radio Awards. She is also a chaplain with Media Chaplaincy New Zealand, offering support and a listening ear to media professionals. Petra and her husband Hamish have three children and live in Auckland.

Mass Times

Week Day Masses

Saturday—9am @ St Joseph's

Tuesday—9am @ St Joseph's

Thursday—9am @ St Patrick's

Sunday Masses

Vigil Mass—5.30 @ St Patrick's

Sunday Mass—9.30am @ St Joseph's



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Rātini Kupu

20th Here-turi-kōkā 2023

20th Sunday of Ordinary Time

20th August, 2023

Fr Paul's Birthday—On the 26th August after Mass, there will be a pot luck dinner in the St Patrick's Hall to celebrate Fr Paul's birthday. All are welcome. Mark the date now!

Today we move ahead in our reading of Matthew's Gospel. Last week we read about Jesus walking on the water and the disciples' confession of faith that Jesus is the Son of God. If we were reading Matthew's entire Gospel, we would have read about Jesus' debate with the Pharisees about Jewish purity laws. Jesus argues that it is not what goes into us that makes us unclean; he is referring to the strict Jewish dietary rules. Instead our words and our actions—what comes out of us—make us unclean because they emerge from a heart that is unclean. Knowing about Jesus' debate with the Pharisees helps us to understand today's Gospel. In fact the story heightens the surprise and shock we feel as we hear Jesus' exchange with the Canaanite woman. The woman, who is not Jewish, approaches Jesus, requesting that he heal her demon-possessed daughter. At first Jesus ignores her; he says nothing. The disciples ask Jesus to send her away, and Jesus agrees, remarking that he was sent to minister to the Jews alone. The woman persists, paying homage to Jesus, and yet Jesus denies her request again. He even insults her, using a Jewish word of derision for Gentiles, "dog." But the woman cleverly turns Jesus' insult into an affirmation of faith. Only then does Jesus grant her request and heal her daughter. Jesus' unresponsiveness to this woman may strike us as uncharacteristic or shocking. Yet in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' ministry is directed primarily to the people of Israel. At only a very few points, such as the one found in today's Gospel, do we find Jesus anticipating the later Christian ministry to the rest of the world. Behind Matthew's text we can hear this early Christian community's struggle to understand how God's selection of Israel is consistent with two events: Israel's rejection of Jesus and the Gentiles' acceptance of Jesus. Just as Jesus was surprised by the faith expressed by the Canaanite woman, so too the first Christians were surprised that the Gentiles would receive the salvation God offered through Christ. In today's second reading from Paul's letter to the Romans, we hear the apostle Paul considering this same concern. The faith that the Canaanite woman expresses is an affirmation of and confidence in God's abundant mercy. Yes, salvation comes through Israel, but it overflows for the benefit of all.

www.loyolapress.com

Assumption of the Virgin Mary – De hemelvaart van Maria, Rubens, c 1626. It was 14 August 1958. The little packet of pink smokos [lollies], bought at the shop in Convent Rd next to the school, inexplicably developed a hole while in the pocket of my black gym-frock [school uniform]. It's a long way from Ōtaki to Manakau on the bus when you're six and the temptation for my little hand was just too great to resist. By the time I got home only two smokos remained. My mother needed no explanation about the planned present for her birthday the next day. She knew the truth and she 'took me into her arms without judging me'. That same date marks the patronal feast of our country – Mary's assumption into heaven. The actual dogma says: We pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. The feast affirms the very goodness of our bodies – the whole person will be saved. Mary has been totally redeemed and now shares fully in the risen life of her son Jesus. She is not a ghost or a spirit floating around in the sky. She is a real bodily person. What happened to her will ultimately happen to us. As we pray in the Creed: 'We believe in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting.' At the end of his recent Exhortation on holiness, Gaudete et



Exsultate, Pope Francis writes: I would like these reflections to be crowned by Mary, because she lived the Beatitudes of Jesus as none other. She is that woman who rejoiced in the presence of God, who treasured everything in her heart,

and who let herself be pierced by the sword. Mary is the saint among the saints, blessed above all others. She teaches us the way of holiness and she walks ever at our side. She does not let us remain fallen and at times she takes us into her arms without judging us. (#176) This is the Mary we honour today, teaching 'us the way of holiness' and walking 'ever at our side.' The gospel reading for the Assumption is Luke's story of Elizabeth's visit to Mary and the latter's great song of praise, the Magnificat (Luke 1: 39-56.) Its two parts are about love of God and love of neighbour, or spirituality and social justice, or contemplation and action. Whatever approach we take we immediately get caught up in Mary's cry of joy. Mary the poor, struggling Galilean peasant woman, has been chosen by God. In the second part, Mary sings passionately of God's mercy to oppressed people, God's victory over the powerful. First century Palestinian Jewish society called out for this kind of salvation. The song is full of powerful verbs. The coming of God's reign will mean much reversal: the hungry will be fed, the lowly exalted and the powerful toppled. Mary herself, the teenager pregnant with the Messiah, embodies the reversal she proclaims. My mother did not need me to tell her what I had done. She knew. Mothers just know. Pope Francis urges us to remember this: Our converse with her consoles, frees and sanctifies us. Mary our Mother does not need a flood of words. She does not need us to tell her what is happening in our lives. All we need do is whisper, time and time again: "Hail Mary..." (#176). So, let's all whisper on this great feast. *Dr Elizabeth Julian rsm*

First Reconciliation/Communion
We are taking registrations for our Sacramental programmes. There will be forms in the foyers or please email the office for a form. If your child attends St Joseph's school you can register at the school office. Children need to be 8 years or older. Email the office on cat.chb@xtra.co.nz

Notices from Titipounamu Study & Joy
• Women in the Bible with Kieran Fenn fms. Mondays, 07/14/21 Aug & 04/11/18 Sep, 7-8.30pm. ZOOM.
• Fee: \$20/session or \$90/series. All sessions are connect but also stand alone.
• <https://www.studyjoy.nz/2023/07/10/women-in-the-bible/>
• Liturgical Spaces with Prof Thomas O'Loughlin.
• Series on Muffin Talk radio programme freely available online at:
• <https://www.studyjoy.nz/2023/07/17/liturgical-space-thomas-oloughlin/>
• For more information: www.studyjoy.nz
• **Billings Method Training Session**
• Nelson 29 and 30 September
• Billings Life is holding a Natural Fertility Management training session in Nelson on Friday 29 and Saturday 30 September for health professionals, those wishing to become accredited teachers of the Billings Ovulation Method and users of the Billings Method. The Billings Method teaches accurate, evidence-based, scientific self-knowledge about human fertility. It does not depend on regular cycles, thermometers, kits, drugs or devices. It empowers couples to take control of their fertility to avoid or achieve pregnancy or to monitor reproductive health. To register or for further details: Phone 0800 693 378 | Email: info@billingslife.org.nz www.billingslife.org.nz
• **It is impossible not** to react in some way to this Sunday's Gospel. Surprise, shock, disbelief, amazement, even alarm, are all possible responses to what we read. A Jesus who is prejudiced and who refers to Canaanites as 'dogs' is difficult to take. A Jesus whose first response is not compassion, but rejection, is not what we expect at all. Yet this is what we find in today's Gospel, plainly stated and

clearly told. It would be a pity to side-step or attempt to rationalise this Gospel in order to make it fit the image of Jesus



we expect to see in his encounters with people. Jesus was a real flesh and blood man, with the human weaknesses and limitations we all have. "He was like us in all things, but sin", we are told in the letter to the Hebrews. Today it is a very human Jesus we meet in the Gospel and that, for me, is wonderful. Jesus was a person of history; a man of his time and culture; a man shaped, but not limited, by his background and experiences. Why should we not expect to find in him the same temptations and limitations we find in ourselves? These are some of the things we have in common with Jesus. It is because of them that we can call him 'friend' and 'companion'. It is also because of them that Jesus truly understands us and can empathise with us. Whenever we reflect on the person of Jesus we are entering into the incredible mystery of the Incarnation. At times we must simply acknowledge this mystery with humility, and then go on to meet the man who walked the tracks and trails of Israel ... and simply walk with him. This is a wonderful Gospel. Join me in reflecting on it. Brian. b.maher@oblates.ie



Ecumenical Season of Creation

2 Sep 2023 | Liturgical Year
Pope Francis invites us to celebrate the Season of Creation as a moment for "ecological conversion."

