

Anniversary's in December

Johannes Hoogenboom (Snr), Claire Weir, Pauline Gordon
Angela Fleming, Kevin Stowe,
Bridget Cameron, Charles McCloskey (Mac), Mick O'Sullivan,
Mollie Saxon, Molly Fergusson

Sister Eveleen Retreat House ...is a spiritual haven nestled among the native trees on Scarborough Hill, Sumner, Christchurch. It is owned by the Anglican Diocese but is run ecumenically. It was bequeathed to the church by Sister Eveleen who asked for it to be used as a 'house of spiritual prayer.' The team around Sister Eveleen Retreat House invites you to stay with us here at Sister Eveleen to rest, recharge your spirit, and experience a deeper connection with your faith. What does Sister Eveleen Retreat House offer? · Themed retreats throughout the year. The new retreat calendar for 2024 is taking shape. We offer retreats from 1 to 7 days, weekends or during the week, silent or quiet. These are led by experienced retreat leaders or spiritual directors from various Christian denominations. · Be a guest at Sister Eveleen and book a room (within the retreat house, including use of lounge, kitchen and chapel) for your own stay or self-guided retreat day (s). · Book Sister Eveleen Retreat House for a retreat-day for your pastoral, parish team, your prayer or committee. · Attend our regular prayer rhythm at Sister Eveleen or come up for a visit if you are in the area. If you would like to know more, explore our website, follow us on facebook, get in touch (via email or phone) or just come up for a visit. We look forward to welcoming you here at Sister Eveleen Retreat House. Manaakitia te Atua. If you have any questions or would like further information please contact SERH: (ph) 022 563 6879 (e) enquiry@sistereretreat.com

This Sunday night (3rd December), John Cowan's guest will be Chief Children's Commissioner, Dr Claire Achmad. Dr Claire Achmad is an advocate for children, having worked in various areas relating to children's rights. She was appointed as the Deputy Chair of the Children and Young People's Commission in July 2023 and, from November 1st, took up the role of Chief Children's

Commissioner and Chair of the Commission for a five-year term. From 2021 to 2023, Claire served as Chief Executive Officer of Social Service Providers Te Pai Ora o Aotearoa. She holds a doctorate in international children's rights law from Leiden University and has published internationally on various children's rights issues. She also holds degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Auckland and is on the University of Auckland's 40 Under 40 list. Previously, she has worked for children's NGOs and international organisations in New Zealand, Australia and Europe, held a senior role within the New Zealand Human Rights Commission, and practised as in-house legal counsel in the New Zealand government. She was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand in 2007. Claire was born and grew up in the Waitākere Ranges, went to school in West Auckland, and is of New Zealand and Indonesian heritage. She holds a guest lecturer position in the Child Law Department of Leiden University and is a member of the Asia New Zealand Foundation Leadership Network.



Advent begins

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

3rd Hakihea 2023

1st Sunday of Advent

3rd December, 2023

Prayer for the Middle East

Lord, Jesus Christ, The Holy Land is once again struck by violence, hatred and death. Lord, look with mercy upon the land that was your earthly home. Receive the deceased into your presence. Comfort those who mourn, are wounded, or forced to flee. Be close to all who are full of fear and despair. You are our peace and the light of the nations, put an end to the spiral of terror and suffering in the Holy Land and the whole Middle East. Let peace and justice flourish at the holy sites. You are our refuge. Let the people be safe In your Love. Have mercy on us and on our time. Amen.

The Season of Advent is our beginning of a new year - four weeks to prepare ourselves for Christmas. No! Not Santa Claus, turkey and ham (salad and crayfish if you live in Australia!), re-runs of 'Home Alone', presents, silly new board games, family, and exhaustion, but a much simpler and beautiful event: the birth of a tiny, unnoticed, baby in a cave. The word 'Christmas' goes back as far as the 10th Century and literally means "Christ's Mass." It is the birth of Christ that we celebrate. All the rest of the festivities – food, wine, presents, family – are simply intended to help us celebrate it with joy, laughter and good cheer. The story of Christmas is the happiest, most joyful, most amazing story ever told. It is the story of how our God wishes to share his own life with us. His life is pure Love ... the thing we spend our lives searching for and when we find it, like a couple married for fifty years, we hold it close to us, never wanting to let it go. Of course, in this world human love is not perfect and it does pass with death or change. The life of Love, which is who God is, never changes and never ends. Once invited to be part of God's life (perfect Love) we become absorbed into a love, joy, peace and fulfilment which will never change or end. Just imagine the joy of falling madly in love – really in love – and knowing that the joy you felt when you first fell in love, will never end or need to end. It is perfect and it is yours. This is the real story of Christmas. Our celebrations will be so much more meaningful, and so much more significant if our celebrations are in the context of 'Christ's Mass'. The first step in preparing for the real feast of Christmas is awareness. Each day, simply take a few seconds or minutes, to remind yourself that the true meaning of Christmas is God's eternal love for us. God shared the infinite depth of that love when he came to live among us in the person of Jesus. Our God came to live among us, as one of us, just to show us how much he loves us and to let us know that we are invited to share in his own eternal life of Love. Let your awareness deepen each day. Don't try to understand it – you can't! Just recognise it as true – God's Christmas present to me! b.maher@oblates.ie

The Annual Sick & Retired Priests Special Collection - Sunday 3 December 2023- The Clergy Trust Fund provides for the well-being and care of priests in the Diocese. This includes stipends, food, travel home for 'overseas priests', retreats and all costs relating to healthcare. The Clergy Trust Fund is struggling to meet growing medical costs. Hence, your giving to this special collection is most appreciated, especially by our elderly priests who then benefit from your generosity. Your support is a great way of showing your gratitude to your priests. Many thanks and blessings to all who contribute to this special collection. Every contribution helps.

Mons Brian Walsh, Chairperson, Clergy Trust Fund

St John's College

Next week our Year 9 and Year 10 students will be attending camps and spending a day each at Splash Planet. Our Junior Academic Prizegiving will be held on the last day of school, Friday 8 December.

If you are interested in following the students on the Awa run you can do so by checking out the Young Marist Instagram and Facebook pages.

<https://www.instagram.com/youngmarists/>

<https://www.facebook.com/youngmaristsaotearoa/>

The boys ran 20 km's today, some of it pretty hilly. They have done really well. Tomorrow they will run a further 20 km's with 10'km's to be run on Friday, but with the added challenge of going over the Gentle Annie.

Don't forget the give-a-little page. The money is being raised for the education of young people on the East Coast who often have to leave school after Year 10 due to varying circumstances. The scholarships allow students to complete their secondary education at one of the Marist Colleges with the opportunity to continue on to tertiary education should they wish.

<https://givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/st-johns-college-awa-run> Conor Bolton

Notices from Titipounamu Study & Joy—

St Nicholas - History, Legend & Culture with

Dates to save

Wine and Cheese—10th December 4-6pm. Bring a little something to share

14th December—St Joseph's school prize giving

22nd December—Office closes reopens on the 16th January, 2024

Beate Matthies.

Monday, 4 December, 7-8.30pm. ZOOM. Free.

Donations/Koha are appreciated.

<https://www.studyjoy.nz/events/st-nicholas/>

YouTube Recordings

Muffin Talk radio programmes are available online at:

<https://www.studyjoy.nz/category/resources/muffin-talk/>

For more information: www.studyjoy.nz



10th December—Mass at St Joseph's will be at 10am due to St Joseph's school leavers Mass

Minister so the Sick

We are requiring people to go on a roster for the Minister of the Sick—this involves going to Mt Herbert/Woburn home to give Holy Communion to people who can no longer attend Mass. Please contact the office if you are interested.

Like people at airports

There are various themes to explore as Advent begins. Isaiah calls us to confess our sins and hope for better days. Paul's thanksgiving to God is upbeat about the future. Jesus warns us against complacency, for the end is coming sooner than we expect. We might go mainly with the first and third readings, about being prepared for the day of the Lord. Advent invites reassessment of where our ways are leading us. This annual reminder that the world as we know it will one day end, sounds more appropriate in the northern Wintry season, when daylight is short and darkness seems to be winning over the light. But the positive side of this is that a new Spring day is dawning over the horizon, when Christ will come again into our lives with power to save us.

Do you ever watch people at airports, waiting for loved ones to arrive from a flight? They often seem excited, eager for the first appearance of the familiar face, ready with the broad smile of greeting to embrace the returning traveller. We too wait for the Lord's coming with eagerness, because we long for his presence. The waiting is important because, during our life's pilgrimage, we are incomplete. As Augustine once said, "You have made us for Yourself, o Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You." At some deep level of our personhood we are in need, a need that only God can fill. This is a time to open our hearts and invite the Lord to bring us to completion. We begin Advent, yearning for his coming. Today's first reading puts this yearning into an image, that "We have all withered like leaves... blown by the wind." The whirling, withered leaves of autumn are a familiar scene these past few weeks. Isaiah proposes the dead leaves as symbols of all that is dried up and withered in our lives. But he also calls us to look for a better day. God is still in charge of creation, and our personal lives are under his loving care. We pray this Advent, "Come, Lord Jesus," and make our own the words of the psalm, "Visit this vine and protect it, the vine your right hand has chosen." It is a central plank of our faith that the Lord never abandons His people. Back to the people at airports waiting for loved ones to arrive.

It is an alert, active waiting – keeping an eye on the time. In today's gospel Jesus says, "Be on your guard, stay awake." He wants us to focus on our task here and now. We are to grow more mature in our relationship with others and with him, paying attention to prayer, and living with his message in our hearts. That's what waiting for him should be like. And while we wait, we can enjoy his gifts, as promised, for as Paul assures us: "You will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ." associationofcatholicpriests.ie

Simbang Gabi—Among Filipino Catholics, the Rosary Novena is a common practice where the prayer is recited for nine days. In our parish this will be starting on the 16th December at 8pm at St Joseph's with the final Mass the vigil Mass on Christmas eve. All welcome to this special time in our parish.



Gifting Tree

St Vincent de Paul has asked if the community of The Holy Trinity Parish can give an unwrapped gift or some Christmas food for our most vulnerable in our community. The gifts and food will be donated to Central Connect who have counsellor's and social workers as well as the home the CHB Foodbank. Please leave under the Jesse tree from next week.