



St Mary's Parish, Mt. Albert, Auckland

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Kia ora,

Well this week we were all hopeful we would have the news that would see us returning to celebrating Mass together, but it was not meant to be. As you know we will still only be allowed to have 10 people gathered as such we will not be able to open for any Masses. Fr Philip has offered to arrange a Mass for any family wanting to celebrate Mass for a special reason. Please let the office know if you would like to organise one. Fr Philip continues to remember us all at his daily Mass.

Our Church is open daily for private visits and prayer, please remember to use the QR code or manually sign-in and to keep a 2-meter distance from others.

When we are able to return to Mass it is recommended that bring your own mask or face covering, but they are not mandatory.

This week our parish office will see the return of Johanna, we would ask you call ahead to let her know you are coming in.

We had a fabulous response to our call for food and we thank you all for your generosity. This week we have provided food to 139 people. We are asking for your continued support, with focus on spreads, pasta, rice, tea, coffee, soap and sanitary pads.

Please let us know if need extra prayers, practical support or anyone who does.

The diocese website has gospel reflections, www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz and Sunday Mass. Or Shine TV: Channel 25 or Sky channel 201, 2pm each Sunday.

We ask you to remember our students, teachers and staff in your prayers as they return to school this week.

We pray for people who suffer from the pandemic that the grieving be consoled, the sick healed, the jobless employed and the pandemic ended.

And we pray that we will all make the most of these times and find new ways to be kind to our neighbours.

God of compassion, sometimes it is hard to be your followers. Give us, and those we pray for, the strength to do the right thing always, through Jesus Christ your Son.

Many Blessings,
Parish Office

This Sunday's readings;

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 20:7-9

SECOND READING: Romans 12:1-2

GOSPEL: Matthew 16:21-27

REFLECTION FOR 22nd SUNDAY LITURGY

THE FRUITS OF SUFFERING AND PAIN

“Graceful acceptance of temporary suffering results in lasting glory”. When a bud goes through the pain of bursting, it is transformed into a beautiful flower. When a pupa struggles out of a cocoon, it is transformed into a charming butterfly. When a chicken breaks the shell and comes out it becomes a lovely bird. When a seed bursts the pod and falls to the ground it begins to grow as a plant. When we undergo the suffering and pain of life we are strengthened. Arthur Golden reminds us, “Adversity is like a strong wind. It tears away from us all but the things that cannot be torn, so that we see ourselves as we really are.” St. Paul wrote: “Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope (Romans 5:3-4).” Suffering is not the last thing in life. It leads us to something greater, as long as we are ready to accept its challenges. “A bend in the road is not the end of the road... unless you fail to make the turn.” Let us remember today's readings are reminding us that Christian discipleship demands self-control (“*Deny yourself*”), the willingness to suffer (“*take up your cross*”), the readiness to follow Jesus by obeying his commandment of love, and generosity in surrendering our lives to God. God bless us all.



1st September **World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation** – the start of “Season of Creation”

From *Laudato Si'*, *A Prayer for our Earth*: “All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. Amen”. Pope Francis has officially invited the faithful to participate in this annual “season of increased prayer and effort on behalf of our common home”. Further information and resources can be found at <https://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/justice-peace/environment-sustainability-committee/>