



St Mary's Parish, Mt. Albert, Auckland

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Kia ora,

We hope you are all well as we settle into our new way of life at level 2.5. We are pleased to see some more life about the place, the students back at school, Johanna working back in the office and most importantly some of you calling into the church for prayer. It is nice to see a little bit of life returning.

We are truly grateful for those that helped stock the foodbank this week. We remain busy with lots of demand for our food, but thanks to you all we are keeping up. This week we are in need of spreads, tea, coffee, milo, tinned food, pasta, rice, soap and toothbrushes, thank you. The parish support of the Caring Committee has been a true reflection of our Parish motto of "Living Mary's Yes".

This week's Gospel calls on us to reconcile with our brothers and sisters, and in line with this Fr Philip has kindly offered the sacrament of reconciliation. To arrange this, we would ask you to book a time with the Parish office.

Please remember to let us know if you or anyone you know is in need of any practical help. As a result of the level 2.5 lockdown our Parish AGM was required to be postponed. In the meantime, the Parish Council has asked that if you have any general questions that you would like the PPC to address, please send them to the office by 14th September.

We have also had to postpone Confirmation and First Eucharist that was supposed to be held this weekend, they are now planned for Saturday 31st October 2pm for Confirmation and Sunday 1 November 10am for First Eucharist. Please keep all those awaiting these Sacraments in your prayers.

We await with eager interest for the Prime Ministers update and hope and pray that we may be able to return to Mass together soon.

We pray for a spirit of love to shine in our lives and the way we treat each other in our families, and our community.

We wish all fathers, including Father Philip and Father Albertus a very Happy Father's Day this Sunday.

Many blessings,
Parish Office Team

6th September, 23rd SUNDAY in Ordinary time
Readings: Ezekiel 33:7-9, Rom 13:8-10 and Mt 18:15-20

My dear brothers and sisters, today's liturgical readings speak about God's command concerning our spiritual responsibility and individual accountability for others in our families, parishes and community. This accountability arises from our identity as God's children. As brothers and sisters in Christ, therefore we must lovingly and prudently correct each other when we err, forgive those who offend us, and ask forgiveness from those we have offended.

In the first reading, God tells Ezekiel that he is to be a "*watchman for the house of Israel*," obliged to warn Israel of moral dangers. If Ezekiel should refrain from speaking God's word given to convert the wicked, God will hold Ezekiel responsible for the death of the wicked. In the second reading, St. Paul points out that the love we should have for one another should be our only reason for admonishing and correcting the sinner. Love seeks the good of the one who is loved. Therefore, we should admonish one another so that we all may repent and grow in holiness. In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches that true Christian charity obliges a Christian, not only to assist his neighbours in their temporal and spiritual needs with material help and prayer, but also to aid with correction those brothers and sisters who have damaged the community by public sin. If the erring one refuses a one-on-one, loving correction by the offended party, then the Christian is to try to involve more people: first, "*one or two others*," and eventually "*the Church*." Finally, Jesus mentions the efficacy of community prayer in solving such problems, for Christ is present in the praying Christian community.

Let us remember **GOSSIPING** is character assassination. Suppressing **HURT FEELINGS** is storing poison in one's heart. Fostering **ENEMITY** is imprisoning oneself and **CONDEMNING** others is incurring condemnation on one's self. So if we want to have peace within ourselves, peace in our families, peace in our communities and peace with our neighbours, let us get rid of all these evil forces and put on the armour of Christ i.e love, endurance, forgiveness, patience and charity that we may become the true children of God. May God bless us all.

Message from Fr Philip for Father's Day

My dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, Father's Day is one occasion which comes with an opportunity to make our Dads feel special and make them realise their contributions in the whole family set up. When a child is born, right from that day, to them their father is their superhero. The child learns to move and take their first steps with their Father. Children, therefore, look for ways to enchant their Fathers and shower upon love with a heart full of Love.

Today we acknowledge that a father is a person who stands by his children no matter what. He loves them unconditionally; he provides everything that they need and he protects them from all dangers. He does it all for the good of his children without demanding anything in return. Therefore the love and affection that is hidden in each of his acts is tremendously blissful. There's nothing in the Universe that can give as much pleasure as the love of a father. Therefore he should be admired for what he does for everyone in the family. Pope John XXIII, once said, "It is easier for a father to have children than for children to have a real father."

PRAYER: God our loving Father, creator of heaven and earth, in your wisdom and love you made all things. We thank you for the gift of our fathers to whom you have entrusted the responsibility to provide loving protection of their families and guidance of their children. Give them valiant faith in the face of confusion and conflict, hope in times of troubles and sorrow, and steadfast love for their families and for all your people throughout the world. May your Holy Spirit constantly inspire them with justice and mercy, wisdom and strength, fidelity and self-giving love. May they receive your Grace abundantly in this earthly life and may they look forward to eternal joy in your presence in the life to come. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**