

Third Sunday of Advent - Joy

"Prepare a way to God" – Gaudete Sunday



"I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord"

John 1:19-28



Happenings

Our Lady of Hope Parish, Tawa-Titahi Bay
OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHURCH - 169 Main Road, TAWA
ST PIUS X CHURCH - 64 Te Pene Avenue, TITAHI BAY

✉ mail: PO Box 51029, Tawa 5249 | ☎ phone: 04 232 5611

✉ email: ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz | 🌐 website: www.ourladyofhope.org.nz

3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B - 17 DECEMBER 2023

Was it 25 December?

THE EASIEST WAY to find out is to begin by Luke's gospel. He related the announcement of the birth of St John the Baptist to Zechariah and Elizabeth. Zechariah was a priest of the class of Abijah (Lk 1:5), the eighth class of 24 priestly classes (Neh 12:17). He was assigned to burn incense (Lk 1:9) which was traditionally done once a year, on the 15th of Tishrei, which is somewhere between 20 and 30 September in our calendar.

While on duty inside the sanctuary, Archangel Gabriel appeared and informed Zechariah that he and Elizabeth would have a son (Lk 1:5-24). Thereupon, they conceived John, who after presumably 40 weeks in the womb would have been born at the end of June. For this reason, we celebrate the Nativity of St. John the Baptist on 24 June.

Luke also recorded how the Archangel Gabriel told Mary that Elizabeth was six months pregnant with John (Lk 1:36), which means the Annunciation occurred on 25 March, as we celebrate. Nine months from 25 March, or six months from 24 June, renders the birth of Christ at 25 Dec, our Christmas.

It's commonly believed that Christians made the date of Christmas to wipe Roman pagan celebrations out. Fr. William Saunders, in one of his consistently excellent articles for The Arlington Catholic Herald (19 Dec. 2013), remarked that we have a record of celebrations of Christmas on 25 Dec., from Pope St. Telesphorus (c. 125-136), the seventh bishop of Rome, St. Theophilus (AD 115-181), bishop of Caesarea, St. Hippolytus (170-240), Pope Liberius (352-66), St. Gregory Nazianzus (d. 389), and St. Ambrose (d. 397).

Yet, the earliest date provided by historical evidence for the Roman celebration of Sol Invictus is 274, instituted by the Roman emperor Aurelian.

For more articles of this nature and many great Advent and Christmas links visit www.patheos.com/blogs/davearmstrong/2006/11/christmas-index-page.html.

We are still on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, but I now wish you all a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rico Angelo





THE CATECHISM CONNECTION

Here, some paragraphs from **the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)** are presented because they cite, or allude to, or treat topics found in the liturgical readings. We, therefore, encourage you to read them with the Catechism that we may grow deeper in our understanding of our Faith.

CCC 30: "Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice." Although man can forget God or reject him, He never ceases to call every man to seek him, so as to find life and happiness. But this search for God demands of man every effort of intellect, a sound will, "an upright heart", as well as the witness of others who teach him to seek God.

YOU ARE GREAT, O Lord, and greatly to be praised: great is your power and your wisdom is without measure. And man, so small a part of your creation, wants to praise you: this man, though clothed with mortality and bearing the evidence of sin and the proof that you withstand the proud. Despite everything, man, though but a small part of your creation, wants to praise you. You yourself encourage him to delight in your praise, for you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you. [St Augustine, *Conf* 1,1,1]

CCC 218:

IN THE COURSE of its history, Israel was able to discover that God had only one reason to reveal himself to them, a single motive for choosing them from among all peoples as his special possession: his sheer gratuitous love. And thanks to the prophets Israel understood that it was again out of love that God never stopped saving them and pardoning their unfaithfulness and sins. CF *Isa* 43:1-7; *Hos* 2.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM - My soul rejoices in my God.



Reconciliation is available before Vigil and Sunday Masses or after 9am Mass on Saturday mornings (9.30-10am).

Daily Readings 18-24 December

Monday: Matthew 1:18-24; *Tuesday:* Luke 1:5-25; *Wednesday:* Luke 1:26-38; *Thursday:* Luke 1:39-45; *Friday:* Luke 1:46-56; *Saturday:* Luke 1:57-66; **4th Sunday of Advent, Year B:** 2 Samuel 7:1-5,8-11.16; Psalm 89; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

MASSES: Special Intention (surgery) (21).



ANNIVERSARIES: Idalin Pinto (22).

ANNIVERSARIES THIS WEEK: Frederick Thompson, George Hagan, Raymond Johnston, Joana Kelly, Robert (Bobby) Mahoney (18); Mary Vivian, Margaret O'Driscoll, Phylis Dee, Ted Liong (19); Sydney Sullivan (20); Ruby Stinson (21); Ella Watson, Suluo'o Alosio-Logotuli; Susan Newland (22); Avis Fitzpatrick, Jean Ellis, Eileen Houston (23); Owen Harris, Clive Barry, Norman Hodge, Geoffrey Ellis, Mura Pignet (24).

R.I.P

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace. Amen

18-24 DECEMBER: MASS & SERVICE TIMES

	OUR LADY OF FATIMA CHURCH, TAWA	ST PIUS X CHURCH, TITAHI BAY
Monday	9am Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion; 7pm Simbang Gabi	
Tuesday	9am Mass; 7pm Simbang Gabi	
Wednesday	9am Mass; 7pm Simbang Gabi 9am-5pm Adoration	
Thursday	9am Mass; 7pm Simbang Gabi	10am Mass
Friday	9am Mass; 7pm Simbang Gabi	
Saturday	9am Mass; 7pm Simbang Gabi	5.30pm Vigil Mass
Sunday	8.30am & 10.30am Mass; 7pm Christmas Eve Family Mass	

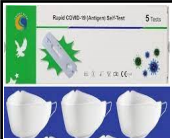
Weekday Masses may be replaced by a Funeral Mass

Parish Priest: Fr Rico de la Torre Ph: 021 205 6476
Parish Secretary: Jane Lee Ph: 232 5611 169 Main Road, Tawa
 Hours: Tuesday to Friday 9.30am-12 noon
Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson: Marie Prescott Ph: 232 7679
Parish Finance Committee Chairperson: Graeme Hansen Ph: 232 4360
St Francis Xavier School: Joan Woods, Principal Ph: 232 8927
St Pius X School: Nenah Kelemete, Principal Ph: 236 7006
Bishop Viard College: Chris Theobald, Principal Ph: 237 5248
Filipino Chaplaincy Web: www.filchap-adw.nz

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS/WEEKLY COLLECTION

10 December 2023 - \$2,298.300

This amount does not include Bank Automatic payments or direct debit payments.



RAT TESTS AND FACE MASKS

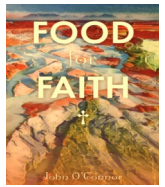
If you or your family need RAT tests and/or face masks, please contact the parish office (ourladyofhope@xtra.co.nz or phone: 232 5611) as we still have a good free supply. *Thanks*



CAROL SINGING WELLINGTON HOSPITAL - Christmas Eve

After an absence of 3 years, Christmas Eve Carol singing is returning to the wards at Wellington Hospital. This has great meaning to patients who are unable to be home with family and friends.

If you are able to join in, please meet at the *Hospital Atrium* at 6.45pm on *Christmas Eve* for 90 minutes approx. *Wellington Hospital Chaplains*



FOOD FOR FAITH

A selection of Fr John O'Connor's reflections from the www.foodforfaith.org.nz website is now available as a book. It is offered as an encouragement for people who are seeking greater maturity of faith. To get a copy please visit the website, or for more info email: john@fff.org.nz



PLENARY INDULGENCE ON THE OCCASION OF THE EIGHT CENTENARY OF "CHRISTMAS AT GRECCIO" AS EXPERIENCED BY ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

On Christmas night 800 years ago St Francis of Assisi was inspired to create the first live Nativity scene at Greccio. He desired to touch people's hearts with the depth of God's love revealed in the Incarnation. It was this event that popularised the Christmas creche. This year to mark the anniversary, a plenary indulgence is available for all the faithful between 8 December 2023 and 2 February 2024. For more info, visit the website: www.secularfranciscans/nz/



NZ CATHOLIC (17 December - 27 January) Now for sale in church foyers. **Price: \$4** (unchanged for 8 years).

Please put money in blue cash box on foyer table

Some headlines for this issue: Joy as fourth Bishop of Hamilton ordained. Don't forget suffering Church. Pope receives new NZ ambassador. South Korea pilgrimage was a real blessing.

As a promotion, this entire edition is supplied at this

link: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/7d2f4fc3-4750-490e-9037-f0042afa6a31>



THE JESSE TREE

3rd week of Advent

Moses and Aaron - Ornament: Tablets of the Torah - Exodus 20:1-11

David - Ornament: The Star - 1 Samuel 16:1-13



ADVENT RECONCILIATION

Saturday 16 December, 3pm
Our Lady of Fatima Church, Tawa

Parishioners are invited to take up this opportunity for Reconciliation prior to Christmas.

Fr Rico will be joined by Fr Andrew Kim and Fr Alfred Tong.



SIMBANG GABI / AGUINALDO MASS

This is a 9 Day Novena in anticipation of Christmas and to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary. All parishioners are welcome and encouraged to attend the Novena Masses which will be held at **7pm from 15-23 December at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Tawa** and **celebrated in English.**

Thank you for your support.

May we have a fruitful celebration of the Birth of Jesus.



CHRISTMAS FUN MORNING

Tuesday, 19 December 10am-12.30pm in the Our Lady of Fatima church foyer

Leave your children, 4 year olds and upwards with us to enjoy crafts/video/songs/food. We will also be practicing the Christmas Eve Family Mass play. Contact Marie Andrewartha for more info: 021 476 153. If you are able to help with the Fun Morning, please contact Marie.



CAROL SINGING INVITE

Parishioners are invited to join the Smith family on 24 December at 2pm at St Pius Church for Christmas Carol singing, reflection and prayer. This will be followed by refreshments, so please bring a plate to share. All are welcome to come and join in singing on Christmas Eve.



CHRISTMAS FUN MORNING

Tuesday, 19 December 10am-12.30pm in the Our Lady of Fatima church foyer

Leave your children, 4 year olds and upwards with us to enjoy crafts/video/songs/food. We will also be practicing the Christmas Eve Family Mass play.

Contact Marie Andrewartha for more info: 021 476 153. If you are able to help with the Fun Morning, please contact Marie.



CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY MASS

7pm, Sunday 24 December at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Tawa

Join us for this special celebration. Children can come dressed as angels or Shepherds and participate in the Christmas play.



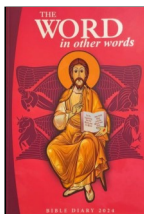
CHRISTMAS TREATS FOR SVdP FOOD PARCELS

During the month of December, we like to include a few treats like fancy biscuits and crackers, tinned fruit, chocolate and sweets in our St

Vincent de Paul food parcels. Over the next few Sundays please could you help us in spreading some Christmas joy by placing in our basket in the church foyers any of the above food items as well as any bottles of shampoo, hand cream, fancy wrapped soaps etc. *Many thanks and God Bless you all.*



Adoration will cease for 2023 at **5pm on Wednesday, 20 December and resume on Wednesday, 17 January 2024 following 9am Mass.**



FOR SALE AT THE PARISH OFFICE - [cash only]

Columban Calendars - \$12

The Word in Other Words - Bible Diary 2024 - \$25

A helpful companion for those who continually seek to encounter Christ in the Scriptures.



St Vincent de Paul Christmas Cards - \$3 for pack of 5

MISSIONZ Calendar - \$2



CHRISTMAS GIFTS

At Family Life Catholic Gifts, we have many lovely Christmas gifts. We have a good variety of Nativities (a number of which are on special) and other Christmas gifts, as well as our usual supply of rosaries, statues, books etc.

Visit us online at: www.catholicgifts.co.nz or phone (09) 629 0820.

All proceeds from sales support our life-saving work defending life, faith and family.

PEACE LAMP FOR THE HOLY LAND

Caritas invite you to join in prayer for lasting peace in the Holy Land. May we join together as a faith community to pray for all those affected by this conflict.

Peace lamps (like the image shown) are produced in the village of Taybeh, 30 kilometres from Jerusalem, and have been distributed around the world, to unite people of all faiths in prayer for the peace of the Holy Land.



Prayer for the Holy Land

Jesus, protect the innocent and vulnerable, comfort the suffering, and give courage and wisdom to leaders in the Holy Land. Amen.



INTERESTED IN STUDYING THEOLOGY?

The Theology Programme at the University of Otago offers a wide range of papers and qualifications, all available via distance learning.

We offer a comprehensive selection of papers in Biblical Languages, Biblical Studies, Christian Thought and History, and Pastoral Studies/Ministry. These papers provide foundational understanding, explore Scripture and theology in depth and address contemporary life and ministry issues.

For further information go to: www.otago.ac.nz/theology or phone: 0800 80 80 98 or (03) 479 8639. See: tinyurl.com/theologyotago for a brief video or find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/theologyotago