

Our Lady of the Valleys Parish
Second Sunday of Advent Year A
8th December 2019



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THE DEEP END

Change of heart

‘Once again, we come to the Holiday Season, a deeply religious time that each of us observes, in his own way, by going to the mall of his choice.’

We might recognise ourselves in the above statement! We are so used to the commercial side of Christmas – the frenzy of ads and gift-buying, the extravagant decorations and parties – that it is easy to forget what we are really celebrating.

That’s where John the Baptist comes in. We first meet John in Luke’s Gospel, before he is even born: Elizabeth’s pregnancy is announced at the same time as Mary’s though John will be born first. The next we hear of John, he appears as God’s messenger (as we hear in today’s Gospel), preparing the way of the Lord. His job is to set the stage for Jesus to begin his ministry, and his central message is repentance. The Greek word for repentance was *metanoia*, which literally means a change of heart, or turning one’s life around. So John is inviting his audience to make a break with the past, turn to God, and go in a different direction. When Jesus begins his own ministry, his first message is the very same: ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.’

This is a fitting message as we enter the second week of Advent. As we prepare to welcome Jesus, we are invited to *metanoia*, or change of heart. As we ponder the mysteries of Christmas, we are nudged onwards in a new direction. This week, we could make a conscious effort to move away from the noise and lights of ‘the mall’, to still our minds and to open our hearts to God’s call.

Triona Doherty
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Weekly Collection: \$ 1,716.10



COLUMBAN CALENDARS FOR 2020 – Just a **few** are available at both churches and the Parish Office for \$12 each please hurry and secure a copy for yourself or a loved one.



IN THE PARISH		
Tues 10 th Dec	7:00 pm	St Vincent de Paul Stokes Valley
Thurs 12 th Dec	7:30 pm	Parish Finance Committee
Sun 8 th Dec	4:00 pm	Rite II Reconciliation at OLOG



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE 2019

Tues 24 th Dec	5:30 pm	Family Mass at Our Lady of Grace HTG (preceded by Carols from 5:15pm)
	12:00 pm	Midnight Mass at St Francis Xavier STV (preceded by Carols from 11:30pm)
Wed 25 th Dec	8:30 am	Morning Mass at St Francis Xavier STV
	10:30 am	Morning Mass at Our Lady of Grace HTG

CHRISTMAS CARDS - Are now on sale and are available at the Parish Office and at both churches on Sunday. Hurry and get yours today.



CHRISTMAS MASSES – MINISTRY ROSTERS

With the 4 Masses held for Christmas this year we require the assistance of a number of ministers at the 5:30pm, Midnight, 8:30am and 10:30am Masses. Those with liturgical ministries in the Parish are invited to indicate their willingness to help by placing their name of the Ministries Roster in either Church foyer. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

CALLING ALL ANGELS AND SHEPHERDS of all ages, please dress appropriately for the occasion, to gather at the Christmas Eve, 5:30pm, Mass at Our Lady of Grace and join Father on the Altar.



CARDINAL'S CARE APPEAL

Started last week and envelopes will be available for individual donations in both churches. A video promoting this appeal is available for viewing/download at

<https://wetransfer.com/downloads/a1542a579c786c7aa1663e4974447ba220191126031439/284a4001cd868235ea1e1c5931fac36f20191126031439/3cdd47>

PRESBYTERY OPEN DAY 15th DECEMBER 2019

All parishioners are invited to the Presbytery in Heretaunga, next Sunday, for a Christmas Open Home hosted by Fr Tony. This is a chance to say thank you to those in the Parish who have shown hospitality in the past, and for those who have worked during the year to make our Parish a welcoming and expanding Family of God. Come along between 2:00pm – 4:00pm. Look forward to seeing you there.



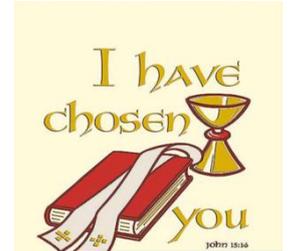


SAINT VINCENT de PAUL CHRISTMAS APPEAL

It's that time again Christmas presents for our needy children. We would be pleased to receive gifts for Christmas age range from 6 months to 14 years, boys and girls. Please state age and gender on outside of parcel. You can leave presents at masses at both Churches or SVdP. shop Scotts Court Stokes Valley hours 10:00 am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday by December 12th mid day or ring Gordon 938 2750 or Terry 528 6313. Cut off day 8th December.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CARDINAL WILLIAMS AND BEST WISHES

On Friday 20th of December Cardinal Tom Williams will celebrate 60 years of priestly ministry and forty years as a bishop. Please remember him in prayer and give thanks for his years of generous and outstanding service .



NATIONAL TREASURER

The Society of St Vincent de Paul New Zealand is currently accepting applications for the role of National Treasurer.

If you have a desire to join one of New Zealand's best known, trusted and respected not-for-profit organisations, please email national@svdp.org.nz for a full job description.

Sacramental Preparation Programme 2020 - Enrolments for the 2020 Sacramental Preparation Program are now open for those candidates who would like to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist. Enrolment forms are available in the foyer of both churches and the School. The Programme starts on February 23rd and the Reconciliation portion happens over Lent. Any enquiries please contact Fr Tony or Louise Peirce the Sacramental Programme Co-ordinator.



ECOLOGY, JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

We must be courageous: lay low the mountains of pride and rivalry; fill in the ravines dug by indifference and apathy; make straight the paths of our laziness and our compromises.

Pope Francis: Angelus 6 December 2015



PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER all who are sick and unwell and those who are lonely and worried. We pray also for those souls in purgatory and who have died recently including, Greg Quinn, Antonia Delorenzo, Andre Gaudal, Beverly Lal, and Graham Carr. We also pray for Jean Alterado and John Carson whose anniversary occurs at this time. May they rest in peace.

Our Lady of Grace Church 5 Palmer Crescent, Heretaunga

Mass Times Sunday–10:30am

Weekdays Wed, Sat 9:00 am Mass, Fri 9:30 am Mass

Reconciliation – Please ring for an appointment

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Friday (during school terms)
10.00am –6:00pm

St Francis Xavier Church 152 Stokes Valley Road, Stokes Valley

Mass Times Weekends 5:30pm Vigil (Saturday) and 8:30am (Sunday)

Samoa Community Mass 4th Sunday – 11:30 am

Weekdays– Tues, Thurs, 9:30am Mass – Wed, Sat 9:30 am Liturgy of the Word

Reconciliation Please ring for an appointment

St Vincent de Paul – Heretaunga Terry 528 6313
Petone Shop 568 6408

St Vincent de Paul – Stokes Valley
Gordon 938 2750
Stokes Valley Shop 563 9278

Sunday Readings		Sunday Readings	
8 th December – Second Sunday of Advent		15 th December – Third Sunday of Advent	
First Reading	Isaiah 11:1-10	First Reading	Isaiah 35:1-6, 10
Second Reading	Romans 15: 4-9	Second Reading	James 5: 7-10
Gospel	Matthew 3:1-12	Gospel	Matthew 11:2-11

