

**Our Lady of the Valleys Parish
Third Sunday of Advent Year A
15th December 2019**



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THE DEEP END

Christmas is all around

The sights and sounds and smells of the season are all around us. Is there a particular sound that reminds you of Advent or Christmas – perhaps a carol you've always loved, or the sound of jingle bells? For many, the smell of mince pies or mulled wine are real signs of Christmas. Our towns and cities are filled with wonderful sights too: festive lights and decorations, trees decked out with tinsel and baubles, while our churches display Nativity scenes. Another common sight in the run-up to Christmas are the charity collectors we meet on the streets, singing carols or shaking buckets, urging us to give generously to a good cause. It is a feast for the senses, with these experiences often evoking warm Christmas memories and putting us in good humour.

Today is known as Gaudete Sunday – *Gaudete* means 'rejoice'. In our churches the rose coloured candle is lit on the Advent wreath to symbolise joy. Today's readings bring out this sense of joyful anticipation of the Lord's coming. The people of Jesus' time would have been familiar with Isaiah's talk of 'everlasting joy and gladness'. And Jesus tells us: 'Happy is the man who does not lose faith in me'. It is this personal encounter with Jesus that we celebrate at Christmas, God becoming man, the Good News announced by John the Baptist in today's Gospel. We have reason to be happy – let's make this Gaudete Sunday a real celebration.

Triona Doherty
trionad@gmail.com

Weekly Collection: \$ 1,327.40



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.



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

FOUND

A jacket has been found in the presbytery which was left behind on the Men's Night. Please contact the office to claim it.



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IN THE PARISH		
Sun 15 th Dec	2:00 pm	Open Home at Presbytery ALL WELCOME
Wed 18 th Dec	11:00 am	Anointing Mass Pettit Centre NO 9:00 Mass
	7:30 pm	Saint Vincent de Paul, Heretaunga
Thurs 12 th Dec	11:30 am	EOY Mass for St Brendan's OLOG
	1:30 pm	Anointing Mass at Stokeswood NO 9:30 Mass
	7:30 pm	Parish Council Meeting
Sun 22 nd Dec	4:00 pm	Rite II Recon Service at St Joseph's U Hutt



CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE 2019

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

A WILD AND WONDERFUL WEEKEND

Last weekend will for most people be remembered for the wild weather we had here in Wellington (and indeed in other parts of the country as well). Despite these climatic events other things also took place last weekend



MEN'S GROUP

Friday evening – a great gathering of the Men's Social Group at the presbytery for their Christmas shared meal. About 50 gathered and had a wonderful time - sharing stories, laughs and food.

Saturday afternoon – the Women's Circle of Friendship held the last event for the year - a High Tea with a Christmas flavour. Lots of singing, led by the musical group 'The Dahlias', humour, good cheer and festive food rounded off their year. Looking forward to seeing it resuming in the new year.



Sunday – after a damp start, thanks to Fr Rod who filled in at the last moment to preside at 10:30am for Fr Tony who got caught up in traffic as SH2 was closed due to flooding including water; a damp start also, for the Living Waters Cafe as water entered the Pettit Centre kitchen. The day ended with an uplifting **Rite II Reconciliation Service**. Thanks to the visiting confessors who gave up their time and also to our own Overflow Youth Music Group who provided the musical backing for the event.



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

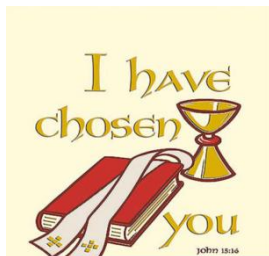
Started last week and envelopes will be available for individual donations in both churches. A video promoting this appeal is available for viewing/download at

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

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PRESBYTERY OPEN DAY 15th DECEMBER 2019

All parishioners are invited to the Presbytery in Heretaunga, this 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.



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.

NOVEMBER MASS COUNT

The numbers listed below are an average of the counts undertaken in the Parish over the five Sundays of November:

5:30 pm (Vigil) – Stokes Valley	77
8:30 am (Sunday) – Stokes Valley	113
10:30 am (Sunday) - Heretaunga	154
10:30 am (Sunday) – Home of Compassion)	65
11:30 am (4 th Sunday) – Stokes Valley	76
7:00 pm (Sunday) – St Patrick's College	49
TOTAL AVERAGE FOR THE MONTH	534



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.

NZ CATHOLIC



The Dec.15 – Jan. 25 issue is out now. Some headlines are:
 \$126m Catholic precinct in Christchurch. Legal action looms over school funding.
 Moving abortion story at March for Life. Tongan Catholics clean up close to home.
 The next issue of NZ Catholic will be published on January 26.



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, and Andre Gaudal. We also pray for those 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

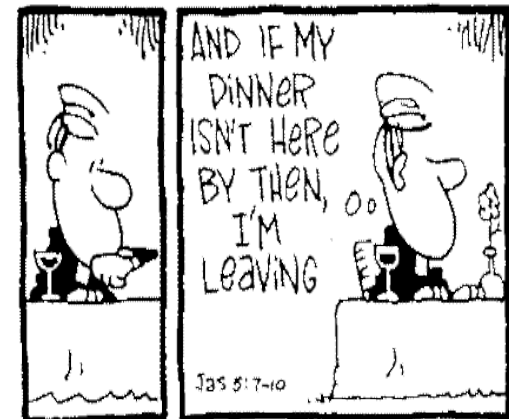
St Francis Xavier Church 152 Stokes Valley Road, Stokes Valley

Mass Times Weekends 5:30pm Vigil (Saturday) and 8:30am (Sunday)
Samoan 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	
15 th December – Third Sunday of Advent		22nd December – Fourth Sunday of Advent	
First Reading	Isaiah 35:1-6, 10	First Reading	Isaiah 7:10-14
Second Reading	James 5: 7-10	Second Reading	Romans 1: 1-7
Gospel	Matthew 11:2-11	Gospel	Matthew 1: 18-24