



*The women went to anoint the body of Jesus. Then they became the anointed messengers, Christ is risen from the dead.*

## The Easter Candle for 2023

This year's Easter Candle has some beautiful symbols as part of its decoration.

The Gold Background symbolises the Kingship of Christ.  
 The Blue Cross symbolises Mary our Mother at the foot of the Cross.  
 The Heart in the Centre of the Cross - represents the ardent love of Christ.  
 The flames from the Heart are the flames of divine love.  
 The crown of thorns remind us of Christ's passion and wounds.  
 The Rays of Red and white light from the heart remind us of the blood and water that flowed from Christ's heart and of Christ's mercy.  
 The Blue Stripes at the top and bottom of the candle with the purple jewels remind us of our own personal journey of penance that flowers into Easter joy.

Thanks to Sharlene for her beautiful artwork.

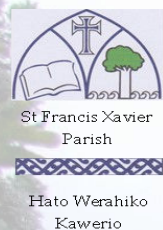
**Prayers please for these people and their families.... and those who are sick and their caregivers especially:** Brian Reed, Bev Costello, Margaret Hibbert, Anne Stead, Moyna Farrelly.

**Recently deceased:** Margaret Cadwgan, Clive Chamberlain (father of Nick), Pauline McGuire, (mother of Geradine McCarrison), Neil Daly (Auckland, son of Neil (dec) and Ann Daly.

**Anniversaries:** Marie Holmes, Alan Churchouse







# St Francis Xavier Catholic Parish

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**Ruakaka; Hikurangi; Whangarei Heads; Maungatapere; Maungakaramaea; Matapouri; Poroti; Pipiwai.**

**PARISH STAFF:** Fr Brian Prendeville sm (pp), Fr Peter McDermott sm, Fr Trevor Tindall sm, Deacon Jim Nees, Deacon Nimo Ponifasio. Janet Ponifasio, Glennis McSherry.

Online at: [www.whangareicatholic.org.nz](http://www.whangareicatholic.org.nz) Email: [sfx@whangareicatholic.org.nz](mailto:sfx@whangareicatholic.org.nz) Facebook Search: Catholic Parish of Whangarei - St Francis Xavier



Easter is the time of joy for us, the followers of Christ. So on behalf of our Parish Team: Priests, Deacons, staff and family we wish you all a JOYFUL Easter. From the earliest time, this has been the reaction of Christians to the news that Jesus Christ is risen. It means that God has conquered sin and death in raising his Son Jesus from the dead. This is a mystery that means so much to us as followers of Christ. It is a mystery that our Catechumens, both Adults and children are baptised into on Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday.

We listen to the Easter gospel stories of women arriving at the tomb and finding the stone rolled away and the tomb empty. Even more remarkable than that, they encountered Jesus alive. They spoke with him and touched him. They ate and drank with him. It truly was him and they were shown his **wounds**. Jesus passed the identity test.

The amazing thing about this mystery is that whatever happened to the body of Jesus we can be assured will also happen to us. Jesus encountered sin and death. He was wounded for our sake and in his wounded body He was raised to new life. **Jesus is now in touch with wounded humanity**. He is the Lamb once slain, who still bears the sign of his slaughter and yet he is alive.

Easter assures us that whatever wounds we have from life; the effects of sin or of hurt or of violence, they can be overcome. We may still carry the scars, but like Jesus we know it has not been in vain. It can be a source of new life if we allow the power of the Resurrection, the power of love to be the final word on it all.

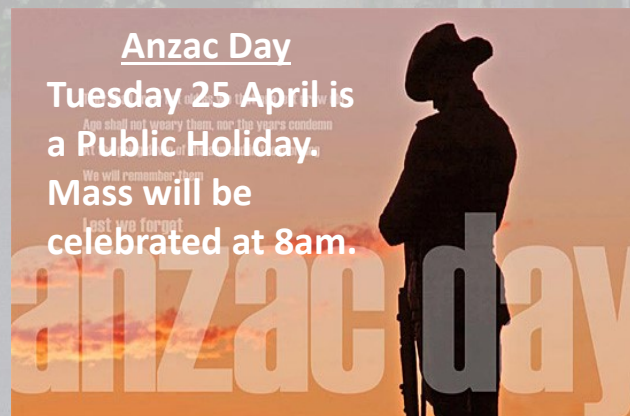
May the power of the Resurrection enlighten and enliven your home and may you feel a real deep down joy. Alleluia Christ is risen indeed.



**Joshua Catholic Men's Fellowship** next meet for prayers, praise and worship on Wednesday 19 April here in the Church at 7pm. All men welcome.



**NOVENA.** Starts again on Wednesday 19 April at 6pm. The Filipino community gather to pray a Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in the side Chapel of our Church. All welcome to join them.



## DATES TO NOTE IN YOUR DIARY

- ♦ **Monday 10 April:** Easter Monday. 8am Mass. See notice.
- ♦ **Tuesday 11 April:** Easter Tuesday. Parish Office closed. See notice.
- ♦ **Sunday 16 April:** Sunday of Divine Mercy.
- ♦ **Monday 25 April:** Anzac Day (National Holiday) 8am Mass

**Please note: As Easter Monday (10 April)** is a Public Holiday, Mass will be celebrated at 8am. The Parish Office is closed Tuesday 11 April.

## Next Week's Readings:

**Second Sunday of Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy)**  
**Acts 2: 42-47; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20: 19-31**

## Icon Reflection

"Christ is Risen," is the Gospel proclamation. All four Gospels are silent on the manner of Christ's Resurrection. Nowhere in Scripture is there a factual account of the event, but rather it expresses what occurred before or after the Resurrection. Two Icons depict this mystery of the Resurrection, the Descent into Hades and the Myrrh-Bearing Women. The more familiar one is the Icon of the Descent into Hades. In it, Christ is seen trampling the gates of Hades, taking Adam and Eve by the hands and drawing them to life.

Our Lord's entrance into Hades, (depths of the earth) transforms it. Through death He entered the realm of Hades which in the Icon is shown by the black abyss. Christ's presence in Hades showed that He took upon Himself every humiliation and sin of mankind. He is shown as a conqueror with a radiant halo, the symbol of glory. His garments are brilliant, filling the darkness with the light of His divine presence. He stands upon the broken gate of the kingdom of death, thus indicating His victory over death by His own death and resurrection. Through His humiliation and death, He raised all creation to participate in Divine Life.

Bolts, broken chains, and keys are scattered about to signify the freeing of those held captive and the breaking of death's hold over men. By Christ's descent, Hades is destroyed and its gates trampled. Having broken the bonds of death's power, Christ is seen raising Adam and Eve from the grave. In freeing our first parents, Christ also frees those who put their faith in His coming.

***"The Resurrection is an earthquake for the Faithful, a cause of dread for the ignorant; for the Faithful because the sluggish body bestirs itself from the sleep of death, for the ignorant because, disturbed by the trembling of the body and the movement of the earth, they depart from faith and belief in the Resurrection."***

- By Saint Ambrose of Milan

**55+ Group**

## MONTHLY MORNING TEAS.

Due to the resignations from our long term committed committee members and the low support from parishioners, it has been deemed prudent to cease these monthly meetings, causing this social event to go into recess for the foreseeable future. To those who have supported this group over the many years, we say a big thankyou. Regards  
Reg Sweeney

## SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME 2023.

### ***"Ready The Way"***

### ***Reconciliation, Confirmation & First Communion.***

For **baptised** children who will be 8 years of age, or older by September 2023. Enrolment forms available from the Parish Office. The Programme will begin Sunday 30 April at 10am Mass, followed by a shared picnic lunch. Enquiries to the Parish Office. Thank you

**MAORI COMMUNITY - KO NGA PANUI.** Himene practice, (2nd & 4th Thursdays) 7pm in the gathering area of the Church. **Miha Maori:** First Sunday of the month at 10am.



**Newcomers** - please make yourself known to a greeter before Mass. Please take a *New Parishioner Pack* from the Church foyer, fill out and return to the Parish Office. Thank you.



Martha and Mary will meet on Friday 14 April 2023 at 10am in the Parish Hall. All welcome