

Look with a gaze at the image for one full minute, and see what you see.

Jyoti Sahi (Indian, 1944–), *Resurrection*, 2007. Oil on canvas, 178 × 122 cm.

Jesus as the Greater Jonah

- Notice the outstretched arms of Christ—a pose that deliberately references the Crucifixion. Here, though, those extremities are not pinned down to a cross. They are utterly open and free, embracing the world in risen glory. It's common for artists to hint at the Crucifixion in Resurrection images.
- The Crucifixion and Resurrection are two sides of the same coin, one great unified event, neither of which can be understood in isolation from the other.
- A human figure on each side of Christ. In Crucifixion images, these spots are traditionally occupied by the Virgin Mary and the apostle John, but here the abstracted figures double as two of the Marys at the tomb. They look down to where they had laid the body two days ago but find only an empty stone bench. They have yet to encounter the enormous presence behind them.
- Notice the trunk of a tree that runs vertically up the centre of the picture plane, almost one with Christ, whose arms stretch out like branches. The Tree of Life is a common motif in Christian art, a reference to John's vision of heaven ([Revelation 22:1–4](#)). It is often integrated into Crucifixion imagery to prophesy hope in an otherwise bleak scene, but here the tree shoots forth from the ground in full-fledged resurrection power.
- One can see that the tree branches double as the skeletal structure and gaping mouth of a fish. Christ is being expelled from this giant sea creature, much in the manner of the prophet Jonah. Jonah disgorged is one of the earliest Christian images of the Resurrection.

It can be found painted on the walls of the third-century catacombs of Rome, where Christians were buried, and carved onto marble tombs, and later it found its way into illuminated manuscripts, both Western and Eastern. The association of the Old Testament story of Jonah with the New Testament story of Jesus is one that Jesus made himself. When the Pharisees asked him for a sign to prove his messiahship, he said that he would give them none except the sign of Jonah. "For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish," he said, "so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" ([Matthew 12:40](#)). As the apostle Paul later articulated, Jesus's Resurrection, his bursting forth out of the belly of the earth on the third day, has implications on the afterlife of believers. Because Jesus has risen from death to live eternally with God, so shall we. That's why the earliest images of Jonah were created in funereal contexts. They provided hope for the loved ones of the deceased.

- Notice is the almond-shaped mandorla in the upper register. A manifestation of God's glory, the mandorla is usually shown rotated another ninety degrees, enveloping Christ's whole body. What Sahi has done with this unique positioning is make possible additional readings of the shape. At first, I saw it as the all-seeing eye of God, with Christ's head forming the pupil, and a halo the iris. But it could also be the opening of a womb, from which the reborn Christ is emerging. It also be the eye of God in his design for making all creation new, the Church illuminated in the risen Christ for all the world to be in the eye of God, as it is a Truth needed for our age.





St Francis Xavier Catholic Parish

Cnr. Kamo Road and Park Avenue, P.O. Box 8061, Kensington, Whangarei. Phone: 437 7902. Fax: 437 7904. House: 437 5266.

Ruakaka; Hikurangi; Whangarei Heads; Maungatapere; Maungakaramea; Matapouri; Poroti; Pipiwai.

PARISH STAFF: Fr Brian Prendeville sm (pp), Fr Trevor Tindall sm, Fr Peter Janssen sm, Deacon Jim Nees, Deacon Nimo Ponifasio. Janet Ponifasio, Marjorie Abraham-Quinn.

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



“Death trampled our Lord underfoot, but he in his turn treated death as a highroad for his own feet. He submitted to it, enduring it willingly, because by this means he would be able to destroy death in spite of itself. Death had its own way when our Lord went out from Jerusalem carrying his cross, but when by a loud cry from that cross he summoned the dead from the underworld, death was powerless to prevent it. Death slew him by means of the body which he had assumed, but that same body proved to be the weapon with which he conquered death. In slaying our Lord, death itself was slain. It was able to kill natural human life, but was itself killed by the life that is above the nature of humans.

Death could not devour our Lord unless he possessed a body, neither could hell swallow him up unless he bore our flesh; and so, he came in search of a chariot in which to ride to the underworld. This chariot was the body which he received from the Virgin; in it he invaded death's fortress, broke open its strong room, and scattered all its treasure.” *Ephrem the Syrian, sections 3-4 and 9 of the Eastertide sermon.*

The so-called treasures we hold so dear, are scattered, Pride, Prestige, Power.

“So, whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.”

The thrill of welcoming you all to Easter 2024. The new members of Christ's Body, the Church growing in faith and courage, Proclaimed Christ is Risen from the Dead, Death is conquered an answer to sin and new life offered to us to live with Christ. We are tasting Heaven.

Happy Easter to you all. Gratitude for the many people who have worked so hard to assist in the Easter ceremonies.

Some Easter wishes that we work together to establish a working governing body for the Parish, (The Parish Pastoral Council.) that we assist those in the care of the Liturgy, we pray for the conversion of hearts of many people who no longer walk the Easter Mystery. We offer the opportunity to many young people to be involved in the service of the parish. We give those who have laboured long and hard a rest from the burdens of commitment they have taken on, we pray the Easter mystery to revitalize our communities in with great hope and courage. We actively look for a large bell to grace our church. We look to the building of a grotto to the Blessed Mother, overlooking our primary school, and work to repair our carving to the entrance of the church. The repair of the Church roofing system over the chapel, the replacement of the carpet in the aisles, the continuing assessment for new layout for our church parking. The continuing of planning for the New Church at Ruakaka, Bream Bay. Great social occasions for all to gather, Pig on a spit, minted lamb, and a glass of fine wine. The care and sacred of our Church, and our welcoming to new parishioners, especially those who are coming to New Zealand.

So, whoever is in Christ is a new creation, the old order has passed.

Dear Lord, please allow many more people to become Christian and welcome them for 2025...Lord hear us.

Fr Brian Prendeville S.M.

* **Love to go** on “a mystery tour” for over 65's? Enroll at the Parish Office if you are interested.

Communion under both kinds. In consultation with Bishop Steve, we can reinstate receiving communion under both kinds. The teaching of the Church is that under either kind we receive Jesus Christ, Soul and Divinity.

Please note: As Easter Monday (1 April) is a Public Holiday, Mass will be celebrated at 8am. The Parish Office is closed Tuesday 2 April.

Next Week's Readings:
Second Sunday of Easter (Sunday of Divine Mercy)
Acts 4: 32-35; 1 John 5:1-6; John 20: 19-31

Ready the Way –Sacramental Programme 2024

To prepare for the Sacraments of: **Reconciliation, Confirmation, and First Holy Eucharist.** Enrolment forms available from the Parish Office. **Registrations close on Thursday 11 April.** **Information and Orientation meeting for all the Parents/ Guardians on Friday 3 May at 7pm here in our Church.** This will explain the requirements of the programme and the Kaupapa. (Parents only please)
Programme starts: Sunday 12 May 2024 at 10am Mass at Saint Francis Xavier Church for parents and children, followed by preparation session in St Joseph's Room at St Francis Xavier Catholic School.
Age Guideline: A candidate should be 8 years old to start the programme.



Baptism Course. The next Baptism Course is on Sunday 28 April and Sunday 5 May, 2pm-3.30pm here in our Church. If you are expecting your first child, now is a good time to do the Course. For further information and to register please phone the Parish Office 437 7902.



Daylight Saving ends at 3am on Sunday 7 April. Turn clocks back 1 hour. St Francis Xavier Church Saturday Vigil Mass will return to the time of 5pm after Sunday 7 April when Standard Time begins. Please note: **5pm Vigil Mass will be from Saturday 13 April.**

Pregnancy Choice. Can you spare 3 ½ hours per fortnight to volunteer in their shop? Pregnancy Choice is looking for volunteers and donations. Please phone Sharlene 0231 459 002. Thank you.

Congratulations to Karen Sturge who was professed as a Secular Franciscan on 23 March at St John's Church, Orewa.

SFX Prayer Group usually meet every Tuesday in Eymard House during School term, 10am to 12 noon. Tuesday 2 April we meet at Ann-Marie's home, 9 April meet in Eymard House. Phone Anne Marie for details 021 140 4657



Christian Meditation meet every Wednesday in Eymard House 5pm - 6pm. All welcome.

Joshua Catholic Men's Fellowship next meet for prayers, praise and worship on Wednesday 17 April here in the Church at 7pm. All men welcome.

SFX Catholic School News: This Easter period we pray especially for those receiving their Sacraments. May they always stay close to God. Thank you to the adults who have accompanied them on their journey giving their time and aroha. Some of our senior students attended the Chrism Mass on Monday for the blessing of the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of Catechumens, and the Consecration of the Sacred Oil of Chrism. God bless all those travelling to be near loved ones this Easter. May we all be reflective in this most Holy season on our impact on others and the ongoing challenge of being the best versions of ourselves. Bernadette Hall (Principal)



Martha and Mary next meet on Friday 5 April at 10am in the Parish Hall. All welcome

Newcomers - please make yourself known to a greeter before Mass. Please take a *New Parishioner Pack* from the Church foyer. Thank you

Prayers please for these people and their families.... and those who are sick and their caregivers especially: Ben Hutton, Margaret Hibbert, Truus Kaptein, Margaret Kernot, Liz Nicholls (*Auckland, sister-in-law of Mary Ann Reed*), Laurie Butler, (*Piopia, brother of Patrick*).

Recently deceased: Ann Luiten, Cornelia (Nelly) Koopman, Jim Nicholls, (*Auckland, brother of Mary Ann Reed*), Margaret Gray (*Trentham*)

Anniversaries: Margaret Cadwgan, Clive Chamberlain, Alan Churchouse, Pat Crossett, Perry Mason.

