

SOUTH OTAGO PASTORAL AREA

Parishes of Balclutha, Milton and Lawrence

Bulletin 3rd December 2023



Parish Priest – Fr Jacob
Thevasahayampillai
03 417 8603 022 678 4328

Website:

www.balcluthacatholicparish.org

Email address:

catholicchurchclutha@gmail.com

Pastoral Area Assistant:

Stephanie Swann – 03 485 9996

Reverend Deacon:

Iosefa Setu – 027 280 8772

Parish Council Contacts:

Balclutha – Pauline Dodds:

418 1230

Stephanie Bowden, Secretary:

021 238 6668

Milton – Peter Mallon:

417 8181

Lawrence – Geoffrey Blackmore:

485 9503

Mass Times:

Lawrence – 5.30pm Saturday

Lawrence – 4pm Wednesday

1st Sunday – 11am

Milton – 9am Sunday

Milton – 9am Saturday

Balclutha – 10.30am Sunday

1st Sunday – 5.30pm Saturday

Balclutha – 10am Tuesday,

Thursday & Friday

Reconciliation:

On request, or

Balclutha prior to 1st Sunday

Mass, Saturday @ 5pm

Milton after 9am Mass Saturdays

Lawrence prior to Saturday Mass

What is Advent?

Advent is a period of spiritual preparation in which many Christians make themselves ready for the coming, or birth of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Celebrating Advent typically involves a season of prayer, fasting and repentance followed by anticipation, hope and joy. Celebrating Advent involves spending time in spiritual preparation for the coming birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas. In Western Christianity, the season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday prior to Christmas Day and lasts through to Christmas Eve.

An Advent project of being alert and watchful in the spirit of today's Gospel...

Every morning when we get up, let us pray, “Lord, show me someone today with whom I may share your love, mercy and forgiveness.” Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said, “Whatever you do in your family for your children, for your husband, for your wife, you do for Jesus.” Every night when we go to bed, let us ask ourselves, “where have I found Christ today?” The answer will be God’s Advent gift for us that day. By being alert and watchful we will receive an extra gift: Christ himself. Let us remember the saying of St Thomas Aquinas: “Without God, I can’t. Without me, He won’t.”

SUNDAY READINGS FOR THE COMING MONTH – Year B

3rd December – 1st Sunday of Advent, Year B - Isaiah 63:16-17;64:1.3-8, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:33-37

10th December – 2nd Sunday of Advent – Isaiah 40:1-5.9-11, 2 Peter 3:8-14, Mark 1:1-8

17th December – 3rd Sunday of Advent – Isaiah 61:1-2.10-11, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-34, John 1:6-8.19-28

24th December – 4th Sunday of Advent – 2 Samuel 7:1-5.8-12.14.16, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

25th December – Christmas Eve Vigil – Isaiah 62:1-5, Acts 13:16-17.22-25, Matthew 1:1-25

25th December – Christmas Day – Isaiah 52:7-10, Hebrews 1:1-6, John 1:1-18

31st December – The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph - Genesis 15:1-6.21:1-3, Hebrews 11:8.11-12.17-19, Luke 2:22-40

We pray for those recently deceased: Pat Swann, William Elder and those whose anniversaries are at this time: **Joan Gill, Gottfried Wimmer, Dennis Maber, Doreen Smeehuyzen, Michael Gregan, Robert Byers, Terry Ryan, Henry Owen, Bill Darmody.**

Samoan Thanksgiving Mass- This Sunday:

1st Sunday of Advent

3rd December @ 1.00pm in the St Mary MacKillop Church. With Fr Peter Chadwick. All are welcome.



Monthly Filipino Mass - This month Saturday 9th December. Not the usual Friday. Please join Fr Elie Sangco from the Gore Parish for Mass at the St Mary MacKillop Church at **7.00pm. **A shared Christmas meal and party to follow.** All are welcome.**

Pre-Christmas Anointing Masses:

Balclutha – Friday 8th December 10.00am (Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary).

Lawrence – Wednesday 13th December 4.00pm

Pre-Christmas Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Balclutha – Tuesday 19th December 7.00pm

Milton & Lawrence – usual times or by appointment.



Bambinelli Sunday – 3rd Sunday of Advent – 17th December 2023.

Each year on Gaudete/Rose Sunday, Third Sunday of Advent, children and adults bring their Baby Jesus figure from the crib at their homes, to St Peter's Square, where the Pope blesses both the people and the figurines. You are invited to bring the Baby Jesus figure from your home Nativity scene to Mass that day to be blessed. Perhaps, take your 'bambinelli' home, place it in a gift box, wrap it, and save it for Christmas. Let this be the first gift your family opens on Christmas morning, when together you place your Baby Jesus figure in the crib.

Remember our local Food banks in your Christmas preparation and our call to care for those in need around us. The Diocesan Advent Appeal envelope also contributes within our region. Please give generously, as you can.

There will be a further Bulletin later this month covering Christmas, the end of year and in to January. If you would like to contribute with a report from your area, your group or role please send it to the Pastoral Area Balclutha email address catholicchurchclutha@gmail.com by Monday 18th December and your message can be included. Thank you.
God bless us all as we journey peacefully through Advent.



Let us pray for PEACE!

As the **Combined Christian Churches** of Balclutha,
we will gather in prayer...

You are invited to the **St Mary MacKillop Church**

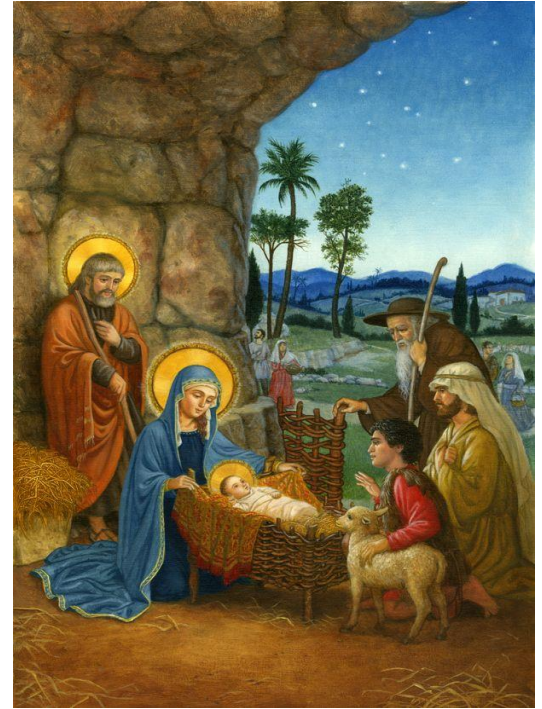
Friday 15th December 2023

7.00pm – 8.00pm

As we look to the Joy and Peace that the Precious Child of Christmas brings us; may we pause and together spend a time with Scripture, in Prayer and with Song in placing before Our Lord our yearnings for Peace in our hearts, our homes and our troubled world.

All are welcome.

Linger for a chat and refreshments.



Please note that the Fourth Sunday of Advent is Christmas Eve. All usual Masses for the Sunday will be celebrated leading on to the Christmas Eve Celebrations in Milton & Balclutha and so in to Christmas Day itself. Please pray for Fr Jacob as he leads us through these special Masses of preparation & celebration, in this most Holy Season.

CHRISTMAS Vigil CHRISTMAS DAY and December & January

Balclutha

Christmas Vigil: 10.00 p.m. (Carols 9.30 p.m.),

Christmas Day 25th December: 11.00am

Sundays: Jan 7 Saturday Vigil: 5.30pm

Dec 31, Jan 14, 21, 28: 10.30am

Lawrence

Christmas Day 25th December: 9.00am

Sundays: Jan 7: 11.00am

Dec 31, Jan 14, 21, 28: Saturday Vigil 5.30pm

Milton

Christmas: Vigil 8.00 p.m.

Sundays: 9.00 a.m.



2024 will be Year of Prayer, says Pope



The Holy Father wants a year in preparation for the 2025 Jubilee that will help "stimulate prayer with simplicity and in accordance with Christ's heart."

Pope Francis has announced that the year 2024, in preparation for the Jubilee 2025, will be dedicated to prayer.

The Pope made this announcement when he met with a group of shrine rectors and workers at the Vatican on November 11.

"I want next year, in preparation for the 2025 Jubilee, to be entirely dedicated to prayer. Next year will be dedicated to prayer," he told them.

The Pope said that "guides" will be published, "which will help rediscover the centrality of prayer." **I recommend them to you: they will be a good read, which stimulate prayer with simplicity and in accordance with Christ's heart.**

The Holy Father called for a daily renewal of the "joy and commitment" of "being men and women of prayer." Prayer that comes from the heart, not like parrots. No. From the heart. May the words that are spoken come from the heart.

As Jesus' first and greatest disciple, our Lady teaches us contemplative prayer, even in the midst of the busyness of the Advent season. In the silence of our hearts, we reflect with thanksgiving on all that the Lord has done for us and through us. And, in humility, we turn over in our minds that which we do not yet understand and entrust it to our Lord. May Mary show us how to ponder the works and the words of the Lord this Advent.

(Kimberly Hahn)

Saints and end-times: St. Francis of Assisi, Saint of Nature, was hoeing his garden one day. A philosopher friend approached him and asked, "What would you do if you learned you would die before the sun sets?" St. Francis reflected for a moment and replied, "I would finish hoeing my garden. I would be faithful to what I am doing now."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was asked by critics, "Why do you expose yourself to all this danger? Jesus will return any day and all your work and suffering will be for nothing." Bonhoeffer said, "If Jesus returns tomorrow, then tomorrow I will rest from my labors, but today I have work to do. I must continue the struggle until I am finished."

