

SOUTH OTAGO PASTORAL AREA

Parishes of Balclutha, Milton and Lawrence

Bulletin 3 September 2023



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Parish Council Contacts:

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Stephanie Bowden, Secretary:

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Milton – Peter Mallon:

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Lawrence – Geoffrey Blackmore:

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Mass Times:

Lawrence – 4.30pm 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

Gospel Reflection 23rd

Sunday Year A

“God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you.”

And Jesus sternly rebuked Peter: “Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.” Where did Peter go wrong?

How is it that he who was called The Rock turned out to be a stumbling block? It is true that he loved Christ and would not want anything bad to happen to him. It is true that those who love us would not want to see anything evil happen to us. Peter was trying to protect Jesus from the shame of the cross, but in doing so he was standing against the will of God. Jesus says the way of the cross is essential for our salvation and anyone who wants to be his follower must take up his cross and follow him. Today, many preachers are downplaying the message of the cross. The modern-day Gospel of prosperity says: “once you are a Christian everything becomes perfect for you and suffering, poverty, pain and sorrows disappear from you and riches and comfort come in.” This is not true. The scripture boldly says, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18). In another instance Paul confidently declares: “but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Corinthians 1:23). Sometimes, when we are under the heavy burden of the cross of life, we shout out to God: “Lord, take away this cup from me”, but we must also add, “Let not my will, but yours be done.” The way of the cross and the way of the world seem to be two opposing forces. The way of the cross is the way of Jesus; the way of the world is my own way. Naturally, we tend to oppose anything that will bring us the slightest inconvenience in our lives, but Jesus says: suffering and self- sacrifice have some values for our spiritual growth. Have we ever been mocked or suffered some public disgrace or been criticised, insulted, or discouraged for doing something good? I have come across people who never give up in offering themselves and services to others even in the midst of the most uncharitable criticisms. **Self-sacrifice is an ongoing offering of self to God and for the sake of others.**

SUNDAY READINGS FOR THE COMING MONTH – Year A

3rd September – 22nd Sunday Ordinary Time – Jeremiah 20:7-9, Romans 12:1-2, Matthew 16:21-27

10th September – 23rd Sunday Ordinary Time – Ezekiel 33:7-9, Romans 13:8-10, Matthew 18:15-20

17th September – 24th Sunday Ordinary Time – Eccles 27:30-28:7, Romans 14:7-9, Matthew 18:21-35

24th September – 25th Sunday Ordinary Time - Isaiah 55:6-9, Philippians 1:20-24.27, Matthew 20:1-16

1st October – 26th Sunday Ordinary Time - Ezekiel 18:25-28, Philippians 2:1-11, Matthew 21:28-32



We pray for the recently deceased; **Matthias Roberts**, and those whose anniversaries are at this time: **Patricia Edmonds, Helen Nichol, Tess Morahan, Cath Stevenson, Virgencita Clark, Jack Knight and Jim Edmonds.**

Earlier this year **The St Mary MacKillop Young Adults** group got together and reflected on what we would envision for our group. We came up with a mission statement saying:

"Learning and living our Catholic faith- not perfectly but passionately."

Just over half of our group were born and raised Catholic, while the rest are proud and devout converts to the Catholic faith.

Although it may seem like we are a Samoan youth group- **WE AREN'T.** 😊 We started out as a bunch of friends who wanted to do more for our St Mary MacKillop Parish and just do something... Many get together and singing practices later- we realised that we didn't come together just to do a few things- we were handpicked together by God for this group and for this mission, to capture the young souls of the Catholic Church for His Kingdom. Praise be!

The young people/young adults' group will be singing on **Sunday the 24th of September 2023.**

The first singing practice for this 'Youth Sunday' will be on **6th of September @ 5.30pm** and arrangements for the next singing practices after that will be decided at that practice, just working around the availability of our youth family. On **Friday the 22nd of September**, there will be an adoration with Deacon Iosefa where there will be a reflection of the readings for that Sunday, and we invite all the young people of our parish, ages 13+ to come along and fellowship with us through prayer and song. Would be a good opportunity to get to know one another.

If you have further questions or queries about our group- please feel free to contact Salu Taavili on 02102412029. Hope to see you there.

Service of the Word with Holy Communion – In Balclutha, First Sunday of the month Mass is a Vigil held on the Saturday evening, at 5.30pm. **This will continue.**

For those parishioners who are working and unable to attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Deacon Iosefa will lead a Service of the Word with Holy Communion in Balclutha on the First Sunday at 10.30am.

Monthly Mass - Please join Fr Elie Sangco from the Gore Parish for Mass the second Friday evening of each month at the St Mary MacKillop Church at **6.30pm. This month 8th September** A chance for all the Filipino community specially, to gather for Mass and a shared meal afterwards in the Mary MacKillop Centre behind the Church. All are welcome.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Hour – concluding with Benediction, will be observed in St Mary MacKillop Church, Balclutha, First Friday of the month. **For next month 6th October from 6.00-7.00pm**

Jules Riding – 'a mellow voiced Christian Singer' from Auckland is to be in Balclutha 13th September 7.00pm at the St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, as part of a Nationwide Tour. Entry by koha.

White Sunday – October 8th a day to acknowledge and celebrate childhood. Children/young adults can begin preparing for this special day now; practicing a bible passage, dance or song and to take part in a joint 'number' for this special day. More details soon of practice times. Any questions, talk to Iosefa or Salu.

😊 **THE DATE IS SOON** 😊 **FRIDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER. 'A Pastoral Area Social and Shared Meal'**

Venue: Balclutha Bowling Club, Charlotte Street, Balclutha. **Time:** 6.30pm for 7.00pm dining.

An evening for adults to relax & chat. Bring your favourite dish of food to share, savoury and/or sweet: From your past, your culture or your most celebrated chef. Bar will be open to purchase drinks.

...And some more...

Social Justice Week – The theme for this year’s focus on social issues is Peace. If you would like to join a reflection group to discuss some of the interesting topics, put together by the Caritas team, please sign up in the Church foyer and groups can be formed.

Each year the Catholic Bishops of New Zealand set aside a week in September for Social Justice Week, inviting us to reflect and take action on a current social justice issue. This year from the 3rd to the 9th of September we focus on Peace.



This year’s focus - Te arotahi mo tenei tau

Pope Francis has a lot to say about peace. The two levels of commitment to peace being carried out, are political and personal.

Our natural desire for a ‘peaceful co-existence can be found only in Christ. The Holy Spirit is impactful for us: “one of the distinctive signs of the Good Spirit is the fact that it communicates a peace that lasts in time. A peace that brings harmony, unity, fervour, zeal.”

Society teaches us to find inner peace in meditation, on-line gurus, taking a break from social media, working on our breathing, being kind, laughing, connecting with nature, expressing ourselves and being mindful. These methods are all useful, but they miss the essential ingredient of true personal peace; a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

This year the tag line for Social Justice Week is ‘Peace begins with you.’ It’s hard to promote peace unless we are experiencing peace ourselves. As Pope Francis points out that peace is not of our own abilities but by the grace of Christ.

And a Story

“Take up your cross and follow me.” A certain lady who spent her time working for the Lord – visiting the sick and the bed-ridden, helping the elderly and the handicapped – was diagnosed with a knee-problem needing surgery. The surgery unfortunately, was not a success, and the woman was left in constant pain, unable to walk. It seemed that the Lord had ignored the prayers of this woman and her friends for a successful surgery. This was a woman who considered herself a personal friend of Jesus. She was utterly disappointed, and her cheerful disposition turned into sadness and gloom. One day she pulled herself together and shared with her confessor what was going on in her soul. The confessor suggested that she go into prayer and ask her Friend Jesus why he had treated her this way. And she did. The following day the priest met her and saw peace written all over her face in spite of her pain. “Do you know what Jesus said to me?” she began, “As I was looking at the crucified Jesus and telling him about my bad knee, **he said to me, ‘Mine is worse.’”**

Father’s Day Joke:

Child: “Dad, can we get a pet dog?”

Dad: “Why don’t you get a pet tree instead?”

Child: “Why would we get a pet tree?”

Dad: “It’s just like a pet dog, but the bark’s quieter.”