



St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception

Catholic Parish, 2134 Great North Road, Avondale, Auckland 0600

Vision/Tirohanga

Growing in Faith Together

Oranga i roto i te Whakapono

Goal/Whainga

To Grow in Awareness as One Parish Family

Kokiritia te Oranga Kotahitanga o te Whanau Whakapono

PASSION SUNDAY (Palm Sunday) ~ 29th March 2026

Readings: Isaiah 50: 4-7 | Ps. 22 | Philippians 2: 6-11 | Matthew 26: 14-27, 66 (Passion)

Gospel Reflection

The commemoration of our Lord's Passion has begun. Today, Mass begins with the reading of Matthew's account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Riding on a donkey, Jesus is greeted by a very large crowd who "spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road" ([Matthew 21:8](#)). The people welcome Him with shouts of: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest" ([Matthew 21:9](#)).

The word "Hosanna" in Hebrew means, "Save us, we pray!" Though it was originally a plea for deliverance, it became an expression of praise and joy, especially as it came to be associated with the Messiah's arrival. The phrase "Hosanna in the highest" calls for God, enthroned in Heaven, to bring His saving power to earth. The crowds' acclamation reveals both a hope for salvation and a recognition of Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah.

During Passover week, Jerusalem's population increased several times over with pilgrims from across Israel. The atmosphere was vibrant with religious fervour and communal celebration. Merchants sold sacrificial animals, food, and provisions to the crowds. Central to the festivities was the Temple where sacrifices were offered and the Passover lambs were prepared for the sacred meal. Roman authorities increased security, wary of potential unrest, as the commemoration of Israel's liberation from Egypt stirred hopes of national deliverance. The Jewish authorities were also on high alert, concerned that any disturbance might provoke harsh reprisals from the Romans.

Imagine the excitement, concern, and surprise that many of the religious and Roman leaders felt as large crowds professed their belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Was Israel's deliverance at hand? This public acclaim highlighted why some saw Jesus as a threat. The Pharisees, in particular, feared that His messianic identity might undermine the religious authority to which they clung. Most of them dismissed the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah they awaited.

Jesus, however, had a very different understanding of the Passover that year. He knew it was the time for His hour of suffering and death, leading to His glorification. He had no interest in political manoeuvring. His sole desire was to fulfil His mission as the Messiah by becoming the one perfect Lamb of Sacrifice whose blood would atone for the sins of many. Jesus was determined and confident as He rode into Jerusalem. Though He knew the suffering that awaited Him, His gaze was fixed on His mission of saving souls. In His sacred humanity, He overcame every temptation to fear or anxiety, allowing peace, strength, and joy to fill His heart.

Not only is Jesus our Saviour and the one Mediator between God and us, His human life perfectly models how we are to live. Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem especially models for us how we are to face every difficult situation that tempts us to fear and anxiety. His courage must become our courage, and His determination our determination.

~ News and Updates from the Parish and around the Diocese ~

EASTER SUNDAY Parish Outdoor Mass: This will take place in the School courtyard on **Sunday 5th April 2026 at 10.00am (weather permitting)**. All parishioners welcome! Please remember not to leave any rubbish, or chewing gum in the School courtyard and surrounding areas.

Please note that there will be NO 6.00pm MASS for Avondale Parish at Christ the King Church, Owairaka on Easter Sunday 5th April 2026.

Easter Triduum: Unfortunately, we are unable to celebrate the Easter Triduum this year. Some parishioners have asked about a Good Friday service, but this is not possible. The Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil – is the heart of the Church's liturgy. The Easter Triduum consists of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil, forming the central liturgy of the Church. As a parish, we ordinarily celebrate all three: Holy Thursday begins with the Eucharist and Adoration. Good Friday includes the reading of the Passion and the Veneration of the Cross. The Easter Vigil culminates in the lighting of the new fire and Paschal Candle, the blessing of water, and the celebration of baptisms, confirmations, and the Eucharist. While we can't gather for these Holy Days this year, they remain at the centre of our faith.

Parish Pledge Giving via Online Banking: Due to our current situation and many of our parishioners having to attend Mass elsewhere, some have asked about our Parish Pledge Giving. If you would like to continue with your regular contributions, we encourage you **to change from using Pledge Envelopes to Online Banking** instead. That way it doesn't matter where you attend Sunday Mass, your regular contributions will continue for our parish of St. Mary's Avondale, and we will still be able to issue a tax receipt to you at the end of the current financial year. **If you would like to change to online banking, please contact the Parish Office.**



Prayer to St Joseph

O Saint Joseph, do assist us by your powerful intercession and obtain for us our parish Church.

And thus, having experienced your heavenly power here below may we praise God our Father in Heaven. Amen

18TH ANNUAL

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

03 APR 2026 | 9AM to 11AM

GATHERING AT ALBERT PARK ROTUNDA & CONCLUDING AT ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

The St Mary's Education Grant has been providing financial assistance to poor students in our local St Mary's School and Overseas, especially in our Pacific neighbourhood. The grant was started twenty-one years ago in November 2003. We urgently need new donors. Can you please help with a monthly contribution of just \$10? Yes, just \$10 a month can help to make a difference in some student's life. You can set up an Automatic Payment to the Parish Bank Account 02-0108-0706996-000 through your bank. Please include the following details: **Reference:** Educ Grant | **Code:** your phone number | **Particulars:** your surname and initials. You can set this up yourself through internet banking or take an Automatic Payment form from the table in the foyer. All donations are added together with your other donations to St Mary's Church and so they qualify for the usual tax deduction claim. For more information contact Tony Rea (email: tonirea@xtra.co.nz), Sumit Luis (sumit.luis@gmail.com) or Joe James (joejamesnz@yahoo.com).

~ News and Updates from around the Diocese ~

Prayer Retreat for Women: 'Prayer and the Interior Life' – **Friday 17th April, 6pm to Sunday 19th April 3pm 2026** – with time for Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Reconciliation, Personal Prayer and Spiritual Direction, at Hillsborough, Akld. Early Bird registration and details here: www.stfrancisretreatcentre.org.nz

Rise up and Shine Festival: Taste the World, Celebrate the Culture! **30th May, 2026.** Starts at 10am with Thanks giving Mass. Followed by Social Entertainment until 3pm. Music, Zumba, Food stalls and Cultural Show. Join us at the Migrant Chaplaincy Rise Up & Shine Festival, where every bite tells a story and every dance spark joy.

Bishops Lenten Appeal: The New Zealand Bishops are encouraging the Catholic community to prayerfully consider how they can contribute to the annual Lenten Appeal. The appeal supports the work of Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand, which through its global network serves some of our world's most vulnerable and needy communities. The Bishops explain that acts of Christian charity can change the lives of those who benefit from that charity, but also can transform those who give with generosity — according to their own circumstances. Find out more at www.caritas.org.nz/lent

LENT 2026 with FOOD FOR FAITH: Visit www.foodforfaith.org.nz and sign up to receive daily email encouragements from Fr. John O'Connor. Prepared especially for those seeking greater maturity of faith.



Divine Mercy Feast
Sunday 12th April 5:30pm
St Benedict's Church
 1 St Benedict's Street, Newton

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament,
 Benediction.

❖ Blessing of Images,
 ❖ Holy Mass,
 Veneration of St Faustina's Relic.

Bring your Divine Mercy Images and Artefacts to be Blessed


Free parking is available at Wilson Carpark, including free street parking on Sundays

“My mercy is so great that no mind, be it of man or of angel, will be able to fathom it throughout all eternity. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter”
Diary of Saint Faustina


All Welcome

17 - 24 May 2026
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
There is
ONE BODY
and
ONE SPIRIT
Just as you were
CALLED to
ONE HOPE - Ephs 4:4

JOIN US AT THE ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE
 Friday 29th May 2026 7:00PM
 At St John Presbyterian Church
 422 Mount Albert Road, Mount Roskill



DIOCESAN YOUTH MASS 2026



Last Sunday of each month 4-30pm February - November
St Patrick's Cathedral

\$4.50 parking available at Wilson Carpark, Hobson Street, via the Parkmate app.

For more info contact the Auckland Catholic Youth Ministry Team:
 ✉ youthmin@cda.org.nz
 📷 @acym2
 📱 @akcym

~ News and Updates from around the Diocese ~



JOSHUA 40
CATHOLIC MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

CELEBRATION WEEKEND

14 - 16 AUGUST 2026

KESWICK CHRISTIAN CAMP
5 COOPER AVE, HOLDENS BAY, ROTORUA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
ROBERT FALZON
LEADER OF AUSTRALIA'S menALIVE
AUTHOR 'Importance of a present dad'

ALL MEN WELCOME
FRIDAY PM TO SUNDAY MIDDAY
MEALS & ACCOMMODATION INCLUDED

Contact: Mike Lobo 021 280 9285
Greg Sullivan 021 437 747

SPACES ARE LIMITED
BOOK IN EARLY TO AVOID
DISAPPOINTMENT
SCAN THE QR CODE:



<https://menforchrist.wufoo.com/forms/joshua-40th-anniversary-celebration-rotorua>




Safeguarding is making a safe space for all our people

Who is Safeguarding for?

- ✓ Volunteers
- ✓ Tamariki
- ✓ Clergy
- ✓ Elderly
- ✓ EVERYONE!

SAFE PARISH - SAFE GUARDING

As Catholics we believe that every person is created in the likeness and image of God. Therefore, we continue to ensure that our parish is a place where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. We foster an environment which is welcoming, and in which all our parish whanau, including our tamariki, rangatahi, kuia and kaumatua, feel safe. If you have any complaints or concerns, our Safeguarding Co-ordinator is Tania Starr and you can contact her via email: safeguardingrep@avondalecatholic.org.nz. You may also contact the National Office for Professional Standards 0800 114 662. You may also contact the Police 111.



"What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?"
MATTHEW 26: 14 - 27

What helps you remain faithful when you face temptation?




CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND MIGRANT CHAPLAINCIES

Rise Up & Shine Festival

Saturday 30th May 2026 | 10:00am - 3:00 pm

At Malaeola Community Centre, 16 Waokauri Place, Mangere

Starts: 10:00am - Thanksgiving Mass

Followed by: Social Entertainments till 3pm.
Music, Zumba, Food Stalls and Cultural Shows

KEEP OUR SPIRITS UP.
CELEBRATE OUR ONENESS IN CHRIST

Parish Priest: Fr. Andrew Matthew | **Assistant Priest:** Fr. Danko Bizjak
Email: ppriest@avondalecatholic.org.nz
Parish Secretary: Gwendoline Jessop Helg
Email: office@avondalecatholic.org.nz
Website: www.avondalecatholic.org.nz
Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmarysavondale
School Principal: Kathryn Hira
Email: principal@stmarysavondale.school.nz

Parish Office:
Phone: (09) 828 9309
Tue - Fri: 9.30am - 3.30pm
Monday: Closed
School Office:
Phone: (09) 828 5599

Pledge Giving Account Number: 02-0108-0706996-000
Mass Offering Account Number: 02-0108-0706996-001
SMACC Building Fund Account Number: 02-0108-0706996-004