

St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish



Ascension Sunday 24 May 2020

Readings: Acts 1: 12-14; 1 Peter 4:13-16; John 17: 1-11

Stop clinging to who I was?

In the encounter of Easter morning between Jesus and Mary Magdalen, Jesus spoke these 'powerful' words to Mary; "Mary don't cling to me".

Today the disciples of Jesus are faced with a very similar situation to that of Mary, regards his Ascension; 'In a short time the world will see me no longer'.

The Feast of the Ascension calls us to be disciples in the now. To stand tall and take responsibility for our lives, so as to grow within our communities that we are part of. What is facing the disciples of Jesus on this day of the Ascension, is exactly what our church is facing today.

The church today is trying to reshape its imagination. It's the same experience for the first disciples who in the forty days that stretch from the resurrection to the ascension, were trying to understand how to let go, how not to cling, to the one body of Christ so that it can ascend and let Pentecost happen.

So what happens at the Ascension?

As scripture tell us, it was not a time of 'great joy', it was a time of 'some' joy soaked with considerable confusion, despondency, loss of confidence and loss of faith. For the Jesus that walked with them, who gave to them so much hope, was now confusing them by saying words like this from Johns Gospel;

'In a short time the world will see me no longer'

At one point, the disciples gave up completely and, as John put it, went back to their former way of life, fishing and the sea.

It was during this time of leading up to the ascension, Jesus slowly reshaped their imaginations. They learned that something had died, but something much richer had been born. The church that we grew up in, that body of Christ has been crucified, but Christ is not dead, the church is not dead. Both Jesus and the church are very alive, walking with us, reshaping our imaginations, reinterpreting the scriptures for us: 'Wasn't it necessary that the Christ, the church, should so suffer...'

Reflection; Refuse to cling to what once was, let it go and let it bless you, so that you can recognise its new life that you already have with and within you, and receive its spirit.

SPIRIT of GOD, blow upon us, blow into our hearts and make us breathe forth the tenderness of our God.

Jesus says, 'It is better for you that I go away', so that 'my Spirit can change you to breathe the Spirit within, so as to renew the face of the earth.

Un-cling and let's go for it. AMEN!



Pete Roe SM

Our Parish in Level 2

Last Sunday at 9.30am we live-streamed our first St Francis of Ohariu Mass. We know that there were some log-ins from different addresses. We also know that a number of you were unable to link up because of a technical problem with the log-in address. We apologise deeply for that.

For those who did find us and take the opportunity to share in the liturgy, thank you. We love to hear your feedback and we received a number of comments after last weeks live-streamed Mass including:

Attending mass so closely, virtually sitting at the altar and facing the priest, was a very "compelling" experience. The familiar words took on a different meaning. Thanks for making this possible, and looking forward to what evolves next.

After such a long time of being separated from the parish community, it was wonderful to feel connected and to see our own parishioners participating. I especially enjoyed the music ministry. Fr Pete made it very meaningful and personal.

Good to see our live-streaming this morning. Familiar faces:) Well done to the people who prepared today's live stream Mass. Having music and different people doing the readings I felt I was there. God Bless

This week we are excited to launch the Little Churches Project

On Sunday at 9.30am up to 10 parishioners will gather in 10 private homes to share together the 9.30 am Live Streamed Mass on YouTube

The log-in address for this Sunday's Mass at 9.30am is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSLtzweaCA6IRFbViFzFLSQ?>

At the same time a representative of each group will be physically present with Fr Pete. At the time of Communion, the *Little Church Representative* will collect their consecrated Hosts and be sent out (drive/travel) to join their *Little Church*. The representative will then safely distribute the Eucharist of the day to those waiting at the household.

In the current circumstances, we believe that the structure of the *Little Churches* is the most inclusive way we can think of for our parishioners to connect and worship together as is our Sunday custom and to once again partake in the Eucharist.

We believe that celebrating the Eucharist in this way this will result in a much deeper awareness that we are one, united, praying – and suffering – People of God. All of us



will become more aware of how we are all connected and part of a Whole – as Living Cells in a Body.

Also, if you want to join and be part of a *Little Church* in the Sundays ahead – either as a host or as an attending member – please get in touch with tim.gordon@stfrancisoHariu.nz

We are aware that some of our parishioners are immune compromised, in which case even small restricted gatherings are too dangerous. We will endeavor to get Communion to all those in such a situation as request it – an extension to the 'Communion for the Sick' that we are well accustomed to. Please contact the parish.

Message from the Leadership Formation Team:

Firstly thank you to all parishioners who had been in contact and who have continued to be actively involved in caring, praying, donating, supporting, suggesting and walking with each other during this season of Covid 19.

We have been heartened by your solidarity, care, suggestions and ideas about how to be church when our physical buildings have been closed.

Thank you for all your suggestions of how we need to move forward. Thank you also for all the time so many have put into developing the Little church idea and making videos, on line resources and rallying around to open the churches or restart groups.

The LFT members have been meeting on a weekly basis and also during the week to ensure that we are familiar and can implement all the legal and spiritual requirements of church, state and our people.

We have implemented procedures in our buildings around physical distancing, attendance registers, hygiene requirements and are now focusing on developing the necessary measures to ensure that we adhere to sound public health practices and keep people safe, healthy and well as Levels change.

None of us have been at this particular stage of history before and we like all, are gently trying to discern what the Spirit is calling us to and how we read the signs of these times.

We ask that you continue to think about how you can help to build our amazing parish. We definitely are connected and need every ones gifts at this time.

We will keep you updated as more information arrives from government, the Cardinal and the Archdiocese of Wellington. We ask that you continue to pray for all our leaders and all those effected by Covid -19.

Please contact any member of our team if you wish to volunteer in some role or have suggestions on how we can move forward together.

May is the month of Mary

Mary is many things, but she is first and foremost a mum . . . a mum who undoubtedly understands what it is like to deal with kids!

The ancient tradition of celebrating life and fertility in the month of May led Christians to adopt May as the month to honour the Mother of Jesus.



Laudato Si Week (16-24 May 2020)

We're living through history-shaping events. Laudato Si' teaches us how to build a better world—together. People everywhere are crying out for hope, and our faith is urgently needed to light the way. For Laudato Si' Week, 16-24 May, Catholics are uniting in solidarity for a more just and sustainable future. Stand united with our brothers and sisters in faith as we grow through the crisis of this moment to build a better tomorrow.

Reflect and prepare through online trainings, 16-23 May

Join the worldwide day of prayer, 24 May

Put preparation into action during the Season of Creation, this September.

To sign up, visit laudatosiweek.org



This week both our schools opened for classes. A big Thank You to all the staff who put so much effort into preparing the spaces. Below is room 8 from St Benedict's happy to be together again



Dear friends

During this week between Ascension and Pentecost Sundays the Christian churches make a special effort to pray for Christian unity.

The theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian unity is "They showed us unusual kindness" (Acts 28.2), which refers to the reception given to Paul and companions when they were shipwrecked on the island of Malta.

There is much to reflect upon in this theme in the light of our experience of the last few weeks with COVID-19. We have been urged to "Be kind" and to "Stay united". The pandemic has been the equivalent of a shipwreck for many people, and "unusual kindness" is needed as never before.

Over centuries the Christian churches have moved from hostility and aggression towards one another to working together on the many things we have in common, especially our assistance for those who are most vulnerable. Kindness can unite us as Christians. We have already seen how it can unite us as Kiwis.

Please take part in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in some way. If gathering is not possible or risky, then use the Eight Days of Prayer for Christian Unity leaflet which is available on www.catholic.org.nz or your diocesan website.

Everything you do towards Christian unity counts.

John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington



St. Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish App (use image from before) To further our communication, the Parish has signed up for a month's trial of 'ChurchAppsNZ', which is already in use by many Parishes and Schools. It has been great to see so many parishioners taking up the offer of the free app. If we have learnt anything over the past weeks it is the importance of communication; staying in contact with our Parishioners, providing updates, liturgical guides and prayer resources. You can access the app download here.

<https://stfrancisohariu.churchapps.co.nz/install/>



Secure places to post your giving envelope

The front door letter slot of the St Peter & Paul's Presbytery
Johnsonville

The letter box at number 3 Everest St Khandallah



Sts Peter and Pauls Church:



This past week a small number of parishioners spent some time being and praying. Heaters were set up, the church was sanitised regularly, flowers were provided and a sign in table set up.

Thanks for all those who cleaned and made this a welcoming space. The church will be

open every day next week from 10-4pm.



St Andrews Church:

On Thursday we farewelled Margaret Hughes in a small family ceremony. Father Jim Dooley lead the beautiful service, Sio served as both the incense man and the cleaner. Clayton set up the sound system, Marie warmed the church, Giovanna helped everywhere and Kitty made sure that the family were looked after.



Thank you so much to all our parishioners for your obvious love and care.



The Christian Meditation group met at St Benedict's last Monday evening and Nick and Linda took responsibility for ensuring that all tracing, sanitising and hosting group protocols were adhered to.

Please contact the Leadership Formation if you wish to use any of the church buildings so we can make sure that all requirements are understood, the essential resources are supplied and we can record information re attendees.

MASS INTENTIONS



We ask for your prayers - Masses have been offered for

Fr Michael O'Dea, Margaret Hughes, Coral Richards RIP

For Mass Online go to:

<https://kapiti-catholic.org.nz/kapiti/mass-times>

Click on this link and it will take you to the Archdiocese's Youtube Channel!

<https://www.youtube.com/c/MCSHWellington?>

Most magazine-style Catholic media may be unable to produce their usual printed editions until Covid-19 restrictions are reduced further. This may require the ability of churches to reopen so wide distribution can resume until then you can access all Catholic Media here

https://www.catholic.org.nz/news/media-releases/catholic-media-online/?fbclid=IwAR12ZA4S858k1IczsS1is4yWJMsnbIPa6BwoP1USjzH_jX2PfxFABwp0QYw



ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* (paragraph 12), 2015

Parish Office: 37 Dr Taylor Tce, Johnsonville

Email: ohariuparish@xtra.co.nz Phone: 478 7137

Website: www.stfrancisoohariu.nz

Facebook Group—St Francis of Assisi Ohariu Parish

One Faith - Many Cultures

