



LEVIN-TAITOKO

“A COMMUNITY RADIATING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST”

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC PARISH

56 Weraroa Road, Levin

Website: www.stjosephlevin.com

Facebook: [St Josephs Catholic Church Levin](https://www.facebook.com/StJosephsCatholicChurchLevin)

Phone: 06 210 2891/0220406399

Email: Fr. Dennis — pp@stjosephlevin.com

Office — office@stjosephlevin.com

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

So, the virus has reached us. So I heard in the news while in the clergy meeting last Thursday. Levin has one Covid case. It proved that the virus is tricky to be controlled. Indeed, the virus is slowly creeping centrifugally.

We have to be prepared at all times. The protocols are in place. The people involved in the Mass had met to ensure the gaps are addressed.

Are they enough, though, to keep everyone safe? Time will tell. But I have confidence in everyone. I think if everyone cooperates and follows the protocol, we can all be safe in our Church. This is our way of showing love and concern for our parish whanau, especially the vulnerable ones in our community.

So, if you are not feeling well and have been into locations of interest, please have a swab test and refrain from socializing.

As I reflect on this Solemnity of Christ as the King of the Universe, I cannot help but wish that Jesus' reign would be like that of the Coronavirus - unstoppable. Unlike the virus that we need to be vaccinated to trigger immunity, it seems to me that people of today have developed a natural defense mechanism against the Good News of God's Kingdom that the Church preaches — a hardened heart. This may not be an appropriate analogy, but I cannot help to think that we have not been excellent as vectors, as carriers, as

messengers of the good news of God's kingdom. The impact is weak that it does not inflict the heart. It only thickened and hardened as time passes by.

The synod on synodality would help us potentiate the Church' evangelization and mission. We had our parish event as a way for people to participate in the synodal process. It was a good experience and a good start. But the process did not end there. I encourage the small groups in the parish to engage in the process. Individuals can do their discernment and send their reflections, insights, and dreams to the addresses provided in the newsletter.

If we are the army of God's kingdom, as Christians and Catholics in particular, we need to know not only where the dull edges of our weapon are but to understand how to use it to conquer hearts, minds, and souls. God has given us the best weapon we can ever have - love. No hardened hearts that the love of Christ cannot soften; no thickened hearts that the mercy of Christ cannot penetrate; and no atrophied hearts that the life of Christ that cannot empower.

We should prove ourselves to be unstoppable missionaries of God's kingdom and ready to inflict the world with His love.

Naku noa na,
Fr. Dennis

Saturday Vigil Mass
Sunday Morning Mass
Weekday Masses

Liturgy of the word with Communion
Adoration
Reconciliation

5:30 pm
9:15 am
9.30 am Tuesday to Thursday
12:10 pm Friday
9.30 am Monday
11:10 am Friday
Friday after Mass

PARISH NOTICES

MISSING KEY – for some weeks now one of the keys for the Parish Centre has been missing. Please return it ASAP to the lockbox or to Kerry. To all those who hold keys for the lockbox, please do not lend your key.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM (FIRST COMMUNION) will start today, 21st November, Sunday, from 10.30am. The venue is the same: Parents at the Parish Centre and children at Whaea Anna's classroom.

MALE AND FEMALE HELPERS NEEDED— 3 hours/month at the **Opportunity Shop**, opposite the Council Building on the Main Highway. Ring Tony Strawbridge 222 5030 (home) or 022 3001423 (mobile) for more info.

PLEROMA SHOP Columban Calendars at \$12 each. No Christmas cards.

REQUEST FOR PATCHWORK FABRIC – anyone has any spare patchwork/quilting fabric (Cotton only)? You can donate it to de Paul Housing Agency in Auckland. Will be made into quilts children and teenagers. Contact Bridget on 021482178 or bybridget@xtra.co.nz.

BRAIN TEASER

Last week was the World Day of the Poor. Do you know the theme for this year?

Answer: "The poor you will always have with you." Mark 14:7.

PARISH FINANCE

The parish finances have been adversely affected by the lack of Masses. Thanks to those who are enrolled in automatic payments and envelopes there has been a good amount coming in. The bills do not stop during lockdown. Hence, we are to spend money for it. I invite everyone to please consider moving to automatic payment if you haven't yet. It is a great help for the parish to be able to finance the different activities of the Parish and Archdiocese.

PARISH BANK ACCOUNT: St. Joseph Catholic Parish (BNZ) 02 0668 0115553 000.

PARISH REGISTRATION and AUTOMATIC PAYMENT FORMS available in the foyer and at the website: www.sjosephlevin.com.

TIME AND TALENT FORMS need to be returned as soon as you can so that the Liturgy Committee can start organising and planning for next year's rosters for different ministries. If you have not filled one in, please do so. We need you to be actively involved in the Church.

PLEASE DISPOSE OF MASKS PROPERLY

Online Masses

Bishop Steve Lowe (Hamilton) is saying Mass everyday at 9am at <https://www.cdh.org.nz/livestream>

TV Mass at Shine TV Channel at 2pm.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CORNER

Pope Francis talks of the need to "Go out to the margins in a concrete way...which allows you to touch the suffering and want of people." Going out to the margins, raising the profile of St Vincent de Paul in our community, is a positive way of furthering our mission to those in need, as well as adapting to the changing circumstances and needs that we see around us

today. The SVdP Society has committed to opening a Community Centre in Levin which is planned to be operating in the New Year. The intention is to address community needs in a variety of ways giving ample opportunity for anyone who wishes to support or be an active part of this initiative. More information will be provided in the coming weeks.

To contact us call Bernie (021 406427), John (06 367 2467) or Kilian (06 367 0474) (SVdP Levin Bank A/c for direct donations: 11 6932 0308328 11)

A Pastoral Letter from the Catholic Bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand

Living, Caring, Worshipping and Ministering in a Covid-19 World

November 2021

Caring for and prioritising the most vulnerable

We find ourselves in challenging times as we struggle to live with the global Covid-19 pandemic which affects our lives in many ways.

We have all had to make significant sacrifices because of the restrictions imposed as a consequence of Covid-19. We are acutely aware that some people have carried, and continue to carry, the burdens and negative consequences of Covid-19 more than others. Many among us are more vulnerable to the virus, susceptible to a higher risk of infections, hospitalisation, or death. They include those with a compromised health status or living circumstances as well as those with a chosen involvement in higher-risk front-line roles related to keeping us all safe. The principle of the 'preferential option for the poor', which is an integral part of Catholic social teaching, demands that the needs and vulnerabilities of all these people take priority as we continue to respond and adapt to the new world shaped by Covid-19.

Faith and Reason – the case for vaccinations

More than five million deaths have been directly attributable to the Covid-19 virus worldwide since the pandemic began early last year. While our combined efforts to date mean that we in Aotearoa have been spared large numbers of deaths and large numbers of seriously ill people in our hospitals, we know the catastrophic effects the virus has brought to countries with low or previously low vaccination rates. As the Delta variant spreads in our country, there are serious concerns about the capacity of our health system to cope with a surge in Covid-19 hospital admissions.

We bishops are vaccinated. We renew our call for those of you who are not yet vaccinated to do so.

We know that, by far most New Zealanders, Catholics included, are vaccinated. We have previously sought to reassure those with questions about the moral status of the vaccines and we reiterate, in the words of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, that all of the Covid-19 vaccines recognised as clinically safe can be used in good conscience.

We hear from some Catholics concerned that requiring people to be vaccinated for certain jobs or to gain entry to some places potentially undermines their freedom to choose, as well as their right to religious and other forms of association. Some have concerns about the vaccine's makeup and

its long-term effects. We accept that for most such people, the wish not to be vaccinated is based on a sincere conscience. Catholic moral teaching upholds the central importance of conscience, describing it as a person's inner sanctuary where we are alone with God and as a judgement of reason that we are obliged to follow.

Equally, the Catechism of the Catholic Church describes conscience as that which enables us to assume responsibility for the acts performed. For those who by following their consciences do not want to be vaccinated, the consequences are significant, potentially including a loss of employment and income. In these circumstances, wherever possible, all efforts should be made to find other roles or give people leave without pay for the duration of the public health emergency.

The introduction of the Vaccine Pass means that people who are not vaccinated could face restricted entry to certain venues and public events, potentially including entry into some church spaces, including Mass.

We know that the tensions emerging around 'vaccine mandates' and the 'My Vaccine Pass' are creating lines of division within families, faith communities, friendship circles and places of work. These tensions call for restraint and discipline. While we can disagree with those who have a different view to our own, the Gospel dictates we continue to show care, love and respect even while we experience the real-world consequences of the different decisions people make around getting vaccinated.

Guidelines for worshipping and ministering with Covid-19 in our midst

The 'traffic light' system will allow people to gather in churches under certain conditions; either in limited numbers if vaccination passes are not required, or in potentially unrestricted numbers by presenting proof of vaccination in the form of the official 'My Vaccine Pass'.

As Church leaders, we have been struggling with how we might best and safely allow for church gatherings to take place under this system without people feeling alienated. We believe that churches should be safe places for all people, physically, emotionally and spiritually. In the spirit of the Gospel, we also want our churches to be places of hospitality and inclusion, open and welcoming to all without prejudice or discrimination. With that in mind, we have agreed to the following guidelines:

- Parishes will provide Masses for people with a My Vaccine Pass while ensuring there is the opportunity for people without a pass to access a separate numbers-restricted option where possible.
- Accordingly, we anticipate that parishes will, either singly or in collaboration with neighbouring parishes, provide worship opportunities for the vaccinated (requiring proof of vaccination) as well as separate gatherings, subject to number restrictions, that will be open to vaccinated and unvaccinated alike (no proof of vaccine required).
- All lay people involved in public-facing public ministries related to a worship service or other parish ministries (ushers, readers, ministers of the Eucharist, collectors, those leading liturgies of the Word, Communion to the sick, home visitation) will need to be fully vaccinated at vaccination-only Masses and when performing other work where vaccination is required.
- Priests who are not fully vaccinated will, under the current public health orders, be significantly constrained in their ministry; they will be unable to exercise pastoral care in aged-care residential

settings or hospitals as well as schools. Priests who are not fully vaccinated or who do not wish to declare their vaccination status will not be able to attend and preside at vaccinated-only Church events.

- When asking a fully vaccinated priest to preside at a service open to both vaccinated and unvaccinated, parishes and priests need to give due consideration to any specific health conditions a priest may have which could make him more susceptible to the health consequences of being infected by Covid-19.
- Similarly, all church workers (whether paid or voluntary) involved in home-based pastoral care visitations need to have regard for the vaccine status of those they are visiting, along with their own health conditions which may make them more susceptible to the health consequences of being infected by Covid-19.
- Pending any changes accompanying the 'traffic light' system, the current situation also demands that parishes continue with measures designed to minimise the risk of transmitting Covid-19, such as encouraging the use of masks, social distancing, communion only in the hand, no holy water for blessing, and no shared hymn or other books.

Faith and trust in God

In these times we need more than ever to draw on our faith and trust in an all-loving God. Thus, recalling the recent re-dedication of Aotearoa to Our lady Assumed into Heaven, we pray with Pope Francis:

Mary Most Holy and Beloved Mother, help us realise that we are all members of one great family and to recognise the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

(Excerpt from Pope Francis' prayer to Mary for the end of the pandemic – May 04, 2021.)

- ✠ John Dew, Cardinal Archbishop of Wellington, Apostolic Administrator of Palmerston North and NZCBC President
- ✠ Michael Dooley, Bishop of Dunedin
- ✠ Patrick Dunn, Bishop of Auckland
- ✠ Michael Gielen, Auxiliary Bishop of Auckland
- ✠ Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Hamilton and NZCBC Secretary
- ✠ Paul Martin SM, Coadjutor Archbishop of Wellington and Apostolic Administrator of Christchurch.





Archbishop of Wellington

PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140, New Zealand

13 October 2021

This is included to remind us of the letter by Cardinal John of his instruction in coming to Mass

Dear Fathers and Lay Pastoral Leaders

Thank you for all that you are doing to keep yourselves and others safe in these Covid days. We are very aware that this virus keeps changing and it looks likely that the Delta variant will be with us for some time.

However, as more and more people are vaccinated it is time for us to open a little more, just as the Government is allowing us to do in various ways. This means that we remain vigilant and very careful. Having spoken with priests over the last few days, the overwhelming opinion is that we should go back to Sunday Masses and assist people to be together in our communities once again.

Therefore, this Sunday, as indicated last week we will go back to Sunday Masses with limited numbers, social distancing, tracking and tracing and high hygiene standards in place including the wearing of masks at all times. Please remember too that during Alert Level 2 that the dispensation from the Sunday obligation to attend Mass is still in place for those who are anxious and concerned, and those who are vulnerable or at risk because of age or health issues.

We have put a registration system in place for those who wish to use it. Some parishes already have their own systems and that is great. All we need to do is ensure that the numbers do not exceed the 100 maximum or the capacity of the church with social distancing.

Uncertainty and changing situations make us all fragile and some especially so. In his homily for the opening of the Synod last Sunday Pope Francis spoke about the importance of encounter. This is a time of encounter, when we meet our people in new and changing circumstances, in person, on the phone or virtually.

It is very important that all involved with parishioners during this time operate in a kind and gentle way, and with some flexibility. The situation with limited numbers needs careful managing and a focus on relationships and community.

We may only have an opportunity to gather for Mass for short time. If Delta and Alert Level 3 come to the Archdiocese, or the Level 2 rules are tightened to reduce numbers to 50, we will have to stop Masses again. This may be a special time when we can encounter one another before being separated again.

With all good wishes and every blessing.

Yours sincerely in the Lord

John A Cardinal Dew
Archbishop of Wellington

Archdiocese of Wellington, 22-30 Hill Street, Thorndon, Wellington 6011, New Zealand

T: 04 496 1766 E: j.dew@wn.catholic.org.nz

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

A **BIG THANKS** to Bridget, Harry, volunteer facilitators, and all who attended the Parish Synod Event last Wednesday 2021. It was quite a learning process for us on how to discern as a group. We can only get better from there.

The deadline has been extended to April 2021, so if anyone wants to contribute, please follow the directions below:

- **SMALL GROUPS IN THE PARISH.** You may like to meet in groups with which you are already involved. Leaders of the groups have already been contacted to involve you in the process and arrange a time to meet. Assistance for facilitators will be provided.
- **ONLINE:** Visit www.wn.catholic.org.nz/about/archdiocesan-synod and follow the link to the questions. Alternatively you can access the link through the news item on the Archdiocesan homepage: "Take part in the Synod".
- **E-MAIL:** Download the Word document "Synod participation response" from the Archdiocesan website. To do this go to www.wn.catholic.org.nz/about/archdiocesan-synod/. Parish Offices are also able to provide the Word document. Email your response in Word format to synod@wn.catholic.org.nz.
- **POSTAL RESPONSE:** handwrite or type your response to the questions and post it to: Office of the Archbishop, Archdiocese of Wellington. PO Box 1937, Wellington 6140.
- **VERBAL RESPONSE:** if there are reasons why you find it difficult to make a written response you are welcome to ring us to see if it is possible to provide a verbal response. Call 04 496 1715.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL CORNER

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/stjoeslevin.school.nz

Website: www.stjoeslevin.school.nz

Rest in Peace In this month of November, please pray for all the souls departed, those who are dear to our hearts, those who belong to our parish family, those whom we have not reconciled with before their death, and those who have nobody to remember them in prayer.

HEARTS AFLAME

is a national Catholic event for young adults that has been running for 30 years. At Hearts, people are drawn into a deeper relationship with Christ through the Sacraments, formation, and community. Many participants describe it as life-changing. The Planning Team invites parishioners to support the anniversary. If you would like to make a donation, please visit the website at www.heartsaflame.org.nz/donate/. Above all, prayer is always appreciated!



Why do we ... often have special places in a cemetery?

Along with other religious groups, Catholics often have a special section of the local cemetery in which to bury their dead, considering this a sacred place where the deceased await the resurrection. A cemetery which is primarily Catholic is usually consecrated by a bishop, as in the situation where a parish church has on its grounds a

dedicated area for burials. Where the Church does not own the cemetery, each grave must receive a blessing at the moment of burial by a priest who recites the assigned prayer, while he sprinkles and often incenses it, along with the coffin.

It was once the rule that Catholics be buried in the ground but in more recent times, cremation has been permitted. In previous times, those who committed suicide were not allowed to be buried in consecrated ground, but more modern science and enlightenment have changed this since no one is able accurately to judge the state of mind and soul of the person involved.

W E E K L Y S C H E D U L E

Monday, 22nd Nov	9.30am	Liturgy of the Word with Communion, St Cecilia
Tuesday, 23rd	9.30am	Holy Mass, St Colomban, St Clement and St. Columbanus
	1pm	Tuesday Social Group when in Level 1
	6pm	Divine Mercy, Samoan Group at the side Chapel
Wednesday, 24th	9.30am	Holy Mass, St Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions
Thursday, 25th	9.30am	Holy Mass, St Catherine of Alexandria
	5pm	Meditation in the Christian Tradition at the Chapel
Friday, 26th	11.10am	Exposition
	12.10pm	Holy Mass,
	5.30pm	Reading practice
Saturday, 27th	5:30pm	Vigil Mass
Sunday, 28th	9:15am	Morning Mass

Please book the venues of your events/activities at the foyer of the Church. Those who have booked will have the priority to use the venue.

Readings at Sunday Mass

(21/11/2021) **1st Reading:** Daniel 7:13-14; **2nd Reading:** Apocalypse 1:5-8;
Gospel: John 18:33-37

Responsorial Psalm: "The lord is king; He is robed in majesty."

(28/11/2021) **1st Reading:** Jeremiah 33:14-16; **2nd Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2;
Gospel: Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

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